

SOCIAL EXCLUSION AMONG RURAL WOMEN IN THEIR DECISION MAKING POWER

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Abstract

Social exclusion refers to processes in which individuals or entire communities are systematically blocked from rights, opportunities and resources (e.g. housing, employment, healthcare, civic engagement, democratic participation) that should be normally available to members of society. In our male dominant society, women, especially rural women face more deprivation from their rights and have the lower decision making power in getting education, marriage decisions, to avail health facilities, and unable to participate in political spheres as well. Keeping in view the importance of research problem, the study was designed to identify the social exclusion among rural women in their decision making in the Punjab. A sample 240 respondents was conducted through multistage sampling technique. Data was collected through well designed interview schedule. In order to achieve study objectives review of literature on the related subject was reviewed. At first stage two Tehsils were selected randomly. At 2nd stage, four areas of each Tehsil were selected randomly. At 3rd stage thirty female respondents were selected conveniently from the each randomly selected area. Data was collected through quantitative method. It was found that the level of development increases with the increase of giving power of decision making to rural women. Women inclusion of decision making in different categories like employment, equal access to education and legal rights, marriages etc, moving toward improvement and creating balance in society.

Key words: women, decision making.

1. INTRODUCTION

Social exclusion is a difficult process that consists of many perspectives. It includes the lack of resources and all types of rights, and the inequality that rural women faced to decision making and participate in the normal activities, whether they comes social, economic or cultural sectors. It affects all the aspects of human life in the society (Willits, 2006). There is a broadening need for concentration specially on rural women because rural living and liabilities influences them differently than men, such attributes as under-representation in decision-making activities such as their lower access to transport, more women being in the elderly age groups, deprived from health facilities, marginal economic status, lack of property rights, difficulties in access to the labor force, much greater family and caring responsibilities, relative invisibility in much agricultural and rural development programs. There is need for the inclusion of women's subjective experiences as a legitimate tool of research in understanding the rural way of life (Hughes, 2006).

Women Social exclusion refers to processes in which females, especially in rural areas are hampered from rights, possibilities and resources (e.g., decision making, democratic participation, property, housing, Education, employment, healthcare, civic engagement) which are the normal availabilities for the society members (Robert, 1987). In Pakistani society, it seems to be linked with rural women's inferior role, a way through which man shows their superiority, by keeping the women fearful of them and create mystery around them by being erratic in their behavior. This behavior impediment women's involvement in household decision making activities and reduce their contribution in social development (ESCAP, 1997).

In rural areas of Pakistan women are in poor state. Only about 10 percent of women have been enjoying their rights while the other 90 percent are squashed on the name of prestige and their life have been scarified on the name of honor killing and other illegal customs which have no place in Islamic teachings and are manmade rules for women and make their life like hell (Anju and Sidney, 2002). Man who considered himself a head of family thinks that they feed them and also gives them the place of living. They considers that if they don't subdued the women rights then how they say themselves that they are owner and women are under their feet. And on other side women have no knowledge about their proper rights, that's why they became their victim easily (Atta, 2000).

2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was design to identify and analyze social exclusion among rural women in their decision making power. In order to achieve this objective existing literature on the related subject was reviewed. Cross sectional study was conducted and quantitative approach was used in this study. The sampling was consisted of three steps. At first stage two Tehsil were selected randomly. At 2nd stage four U.C of each Tehsil were selected randomly. At 3rd stage thirty female respondents were selected conveniently from the each randomly selected area. A sample of 240 was selected through well prepared interview schedule. Descriptive analysis such as frequency distribution, percentages mean and standard deviation was used to describe the data. Relationship among different variables was examined through. Bi-variate analysis.

Table 01: Distribution of female respondents according to their socio economic characteristics (n=240)

Age(Years)	Frequency	Percent
20-30	96	40.0
31-40	83	34.6
40-60	61	25.4
Mean 35.8583		SD 9.89848
Education(No of years)		
0-5	93	38.8
8 - 10	79	32.9
12 to 16	68	28.3
Mean 7.9167		SD 5.07613
Monthly income (Rs)		
1000-5000	91	37.9
6000-11000	45	18.8
12000-45000	22	9.2
Mean 7079.7468		SD 6739.18818

Table 1 indicates that 40.0 percent of the respondents belonged to the age group of (20-30). While 34.6, and 25.4 percent of the respondents had 31-40, and (41-60) years of age respectively. The overall mean of women age was 35.85 with standard deviation 9.89 years. Educational attainments show that 38.8 percent of the respondents had 5 year education and 32.9, and 28.3 percent had (8-10), and (12-16) years of education. The overall mean of women education was 7.91 with standard deviation 5.07. Table shows that about 37.9 percent of respondents had 1000-5000 monthly income, while 18.8 and 9.2 percent had 6000-11000, 12000-45000 monthly income respectively. According to Long (2010), When women have no access to knowledge and resources, they are no more competent to lead change in families and communities. More importantly if there is no environment of free-judgment then there will be no development.

Table 02: Characteristics of the respondents according to factors effecting the women empowerment

Factors	To a great extent		To some extent		Not at all		Mean	St.dev	Total	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq	%			Freq.	%
Barriers in decision making	94	39.2	125	52.1	21	8.8	1.6958	.62311	240	100.0
Insufficient economic activities	88	36.7	129	53.8	23	9.6	1.7292	.62512	240	100.0
Unequal wages	111	46.3	110	45.8	19	7.9	1.6167	.62958	240	100.0
Discrimination in employment	86	35.8	143	59.6	11	4.6	1.6875	.55479	240	100.0
Domestic violence	133	55.4	97	40.4	10	4.2	1.4875	.57842	240	100.0
Unequal access to education	106	44.2	128	53.3	6	2.5	1.5833	.54248	240	100.0
Women prime role is rearing children	105	43.8	75	31.3	26	25.0	1.8125	.80937	240	100.0
Unquestioned husband loyalty	96	40.0	117	48.8	27	11.3	1.7125	.65699	240	100.0
Unquestioned in laws loyalty	108	45.0	107	44.6	25	10.4	1.6542	.66059	240	100.0
Believing males are superior than female	109	45.4	114	47.5	17	7.1	1.6167	.61615	240	100.0

Table 2 shows that 39.2 percent of the respondents participated to a great extent, while 52.1, and 8.8 percent of respondents to some extent and not at all respectively in barriers in decision making. And their mean is 1.6958 and standard deviation is .62311. About 36.7 percent of the respondents participated to a great extent, while 53.8 percent and 6.9 percent of respondents participate to some extent not at all respectively in insufficient economic activities for women. According to Yee (2005), this social imbalance causes dispossess women ability to do work, especially employment, which conducts to women having a higher risk of poverty. And their mean is 1.7292and standard deviation is .62512.

About 46.3 percent of the respondents participated to a great extent, rather 45.8 percent and only 7.9 percent of respondents participated to some extent and ‘not at all’ in unequal wages respectively. And their mean is 1.6167 and standard deviation is .62958. About 35.8 percent of the respondents participated to a great extent, while 69.6 percent and only 4.6 percent of respondents participated to some extent and not at all in discrimination in employment respectively. And their mean is 1.6975 and standard deviation is .55479. About 55.4 percent of the respondents participated to a great extent, further 40.4 percent and only 4.2 percent are to some extent and not at all respectively in domestic violence. And their mean is 1.4875and standard deviation is .57842. About 42.2 percent of the respondents participated to a great extent, while 53.3 percent and only 2.5 percent of respondents participated to some extent and not at all respectively in unequal access to education. And their mean is 1.5833 and standard deviation is .54248. About 43.8 percent of the respondents participated

to a great extent, and other 31.3 percent and 25.0 percent of respondents participated to some extent and not at all in women prime role is rearing children. And their mean is 1.8125 and standard deviation is .80937.

About 40.0 percent of the respondents participated to a great extent, while 48.8 percent and 11.3 percent of respondents participated to some extent and not at all in unquestioned husband loyalty. And their mean is 1.7125 and standard deviation is .65699. About 45.0 percent of the respondents participated to a great extent, while 44.6 percent and only 10.4 percent of respondents participated to some extent and not at all in unquestioned in laws loyalty. And their mean is 1.6542 and standard deviation is 0.66059. About 45.4 percent of the respondents participated to a great extent, while 47.5 percent and only 7.1 percent of respondents participated to some extent and not at all in believing that male are superior then female. And their mean is 1.6167 and standard deviation is 0.61615. According to Bailey, (2006). At the individual level social exclusion was connected to a several of factors, including gender in equality, material deprivation, male are preferred to attaining education , monopoly of male, in every aspect of household as head. These factors have worse effects on rural women, family, community and society’s development.

Table 03: Values of Pearson’s correlation co-efficient of different socio-economic variables with livelihood strategies

Variables	Correlation co-efficient	Level of significance
Education	-0.132*	0.041
Income	-0.236**	0.003
Material deprivation	0.237**	0.000
Property rights	0.257**	0.000
Social distance between husband and wife	0.260**	0.000
Social distance between husband and wife and their families	0.281**	0.000

The Pearson’ correlation co-efficient is calculated and its value is -0.132 indicates that there is relationship between education of the respondents and decision making power of rural women at 5% of level of significance. The Pearson’ correlation co-efficient value is -0.236 indicates that there is significance relationship between income of the respondents and empowerment of rural women at 1% of level of significance. It can be said that higher income of the family less are the effects on women empowerment. The Pearson’ correlation co-efficient value is 0.237 shows that there is significance relationship between material deprivation of the respondents and implications on decision making power is at 1% of level of significance. It can be said that if material deprivation increases then obviously social exclusion increases and high are the implications on the livelihood.

There is significant relationship between Lack of property rights of the respondents and its implications on socially excluded women. Its value is 0.257. The Pearson’ correlation co-efficient is calculated and its value is 0.260 reflects that there is a relationship between the respondents and social distance between husband and wife and implications on decision making power. The value 0.281 reflects that there is a relationship between of the respondents and social distance between husband and wife and their families and social exclusion among rural women in decision making power.

3. CONCLUSIONS

It was concluded that rural women are not much aware about their rights. It was observed that Pakistani society is regarded as male dominant society; therefore men adopted very coercive behavior towards their wives mainly in rural areas. It is concluded that women cannot get equal opportunities of decision making and not become more empowered until and unless traditional values are not being changed. It was observed that women face the more mobility problems especially in rural areas. If women were given equally rights of decision making then of course they perform their role in family development but if they were excluded from rights no family or society will be progressed.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Keeping in view the conclusions of the study, it is recommended that women are very important part of our society. They must be given equal importance as males to participate in the development of society. Females especially those living in rural areas must be involved in decision making regarding various social issues in the society.

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