



# Role Of Women In Household Decision Making: A Case Study Of Lucknow

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## **Abstract**

This research paper explores the multifaceted nature of women's involvement in household decision making within diverse sociocultural contexts. Drawing upon a combination of qualitative interviews, ethnographic observations, and survey data, the study examines the complex interplay of cultural norms, socioeconomic factors, and individual agency shaping women's roles in decision-making processes. Findings highlight the significance of contextual nuances in determining the extent of women's participation and influence, as well as the evolving nature of gender dynamics within households. The paper contributes to a deeper understanding of women's agency and empowerment within domestic spheres, offering insights for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers seeking to promote gender equality and social change.

**Keywords-** decision making, women, households, education, level of income, financial independence.

## Introduction

Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has recognized the right of every person to take part in the government of his or her country i.e. every human being has equal rights irrespective of gender (un.org, 2020). Women are an integral part of our society, having to play a diverse role to contribute to the economy. Growth and development on a harmonious scale is only possible when women equally participate in the development process along with men. In this paper, we will state about women led development in accordance with their participation in decision making using secondary data.

“An enlightened woman is the source of infinite energy”. -SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Women are without a doubt the underpinning of the essential unit of society for example the family. Even in traditional roles they innovate , skill , intelligence , hard work and commitment. If we can harness these attributes effectively, India’s growth can be more inclusive and educate one woman. We set off a chain reaction that transforms the life of her family and the community she lives in.

Women in rural India, despite suffering from the problems like health, malnutrition and lack of education, engage themselves in direct and allied agricultural activities, run small shops, sell by-products and handicrafts and thus generate additional income for the family.

“Women are the real architects of society” – Harriet Beacher Stowe (22 May 2009 , UNIFEM Australia Young Women's Leadership Conference, Sydney)

In the lowest strata of urban India, women, despite lack of education and problems like lack of shelter, have been catering to social changes and economic development by contributing as a substantial labourforce in various industries. Gone are the days when women were only considered only the household entities commanded by males.

The commitment of ladies is ubiquitous and all-unavoidable in each circle of life as India tries to walk consistently towards the way of development. Efforts during the post-independence era got a shot in the arm when Indira Gandhi became the first lady Prime Minister. Now we are seeing women getting empowered in all spheres of services-financial, administrative, judicial and education. The educational and occupational patterns have also changed and widened with women entering the domains, which till decade back was dominated by men. There has been an encouraging rise in the percentage of women joining the service sector specially Banking and IT.

However, societal perceptions of females and their role are often the biggest barriers to change, because they shape women’s perception of themselves. Across all strata of Indian society, people still believe women can only perform certain types of jobs and that marriage must take precedence over career. Their involvement in decision making using their active contribution in economic activities is shallow. In most developing and emerging countries , the role of women is kept idle. Women are ignored by coating as they are born to live within the kitchen and complete household needs. Considering this, the present review dissects the job of ladies in dynamic under different conditions in India.

## **Women's involvement in decision making**

The role of women in household decision-making has evolved over time. Traditionally, women were primarily responsible for domestic affairs, but societal changes and education have empowered them in decision-making processes. Women now contribute significantly to choices related to children's education, healthcare, and daily expenditures. However, the extent of their influence varies across regions and socio-economic backgrounds, reflecting the complex interplay of cultural norms and economic factors. Empowering women through education and addressing cultural stereotypes could further enhance their role in shaping household decisions.

## **Literature Review**

A household is defined as a group of people related by blood or adoption sharing the same kitchen and whole income is pooled jointly (Keynes, 1961). Usually, the chief earner or the best family member is regarded as the head of a household and the decision maker (NCEAH, 1976).

Indian society was evolving in a way that empowered women and had positive effects on them prior to independence. Women's job roles have improved across all industries since the 1960s, according to the Committee on the Status of Women. Indian culture has always portrayed women as more involved in household management and family well-being related activities than men (Devakota, Rauniyar, & Parker, 1998).

### **1)\*Women's autonomy in household decision-making: a demographic study in Nepal**

**(Dev R Acharya, Jacqueline S Bell)**- this paper focused on how the socio-demographic factors influence the women decision making regarding health resulting in the outcome of variation in women's autonomy in the development region across all outcome measures. Western women are more likely to make decision in own health care (1.2-1.6), while they are less likely to purchase daily household needs (0.6-0.9).\*

### **2)\*Women's Participation in Household Decision Making and Justification of Wife Beating: A Secondary Data Analysis from Pakistan's Demographic and Health Survey**

**(Zohra S. Lassi,1,\* Anna Ali,1 and Salima Meherali)**-In this study, data from the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) were used to measure empowerment and its predictors among women in Pakistan. Women's empowerment is significantly influenced by women's region of residence, wealth index, and education.\*

**3)\*Role of Education and Women's Decision-Making Power In Families**-The motivation behind the examination is to break down the job of training in the family dynamic course of ladies. Ladies strengthening in the public eye and family are firmly connected to dynamic impact. Conventional orientation jobs mirroring men's support in business circles and ladies' in homegrown circles have impeded ladies in their capacity to take part in navigation. support eventually will prompt the reason for ladies strengthening and a superior local area. The result of this exploration came out that there is a positive connection among instruction and ladies' independent direction. To advance ladies' jobs in navigation, it is important to establish a climate that will permit ladies to partake in instructive projects and offer the advantages. Thus, there is restricted observational proof that ladies' strengthening, estimated as ladies' cooperation in family choices, decreases orientation imbalances. There is a positive connection between the gig and training of ladies and the dynamic support.\*

## **Objectives**

Specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- 1) To find out which factor plays an important role in determining the active participation of women in household decision making.
- 2) To find out the percentage of women (working or not working) having an ownership of any financial asset like property, jewelry or any financial asset.
- 3) To understand the barriers for active participation of women in decision making.

## **Hypothesis**

The empowerment of women through education and economic independence positively correlates with an increased influence in household decision-making, as measured by factors such as joint or individual ownership of various assets and buying of household items.

Hypothesis one regarding education :

HO: Education empower female decision making in household

H1: Education does not empower female decision making in household

Hypothesis one regarding level of income :

HO: Higher income empower female decision making in household

H1: Higher income does not empower female decision making in household

## **Methodology**

The data will be collected through a survey done using a questionnaire. The sample is of 130 women and based on their responses the participation of women in the household decision making will be measured. The response on the questionnaire will assess the decision making of the women in their household. A data collection was done online through Google form and was based on the primary researcher's place of living. The responses were collected through questionnaire methods. Essential information was gathered to accomplish the targets of the review. For collection of the primary data, comprehensive survey was conducted to collect information for the following aspects:

1. Demographic profile of the respondents:

marital status, age, education, parent's occupation , children etc.

2. Employment, income derived from various sources, assets, and ownership of resources and social Participation.

3. Participation in household decision making by the respondents on various social and economic matters.

## **Sample**

The study involved selecting a group of 130 women from city Lucknow. Considering the study's objectives, research questions, and sample size, the method of random sampling was considered appropriate for collecting data.

The below table shows the profile of our 130 respondents.

Table 1 : Profile of Respondents

## 1.1 Employment

Women	Total = 130	percentage
working	70	53.85
Not working	60	46.15

Source:primary

## 1.2 Education : Total = 130      percentage

high school	21	16.15
intermediate	17	13.21
graduation	44	33.84
post graduation	40	30.7
PhD	8	6.1

Source: primary

## 1.3 Income level of respondents = 130      percentage

No income	65	50
2-5 lac per annum	30	23.09
5-10 lac per annum	21	16.15
10-15 lac per annum	8	6.15
above 15 lac per annum	6	4.61

Source: primary

## Analysis and Interpretation

The data on household decision making ability of women in households of lucknow based on their education and income level were descriptively analyzed.

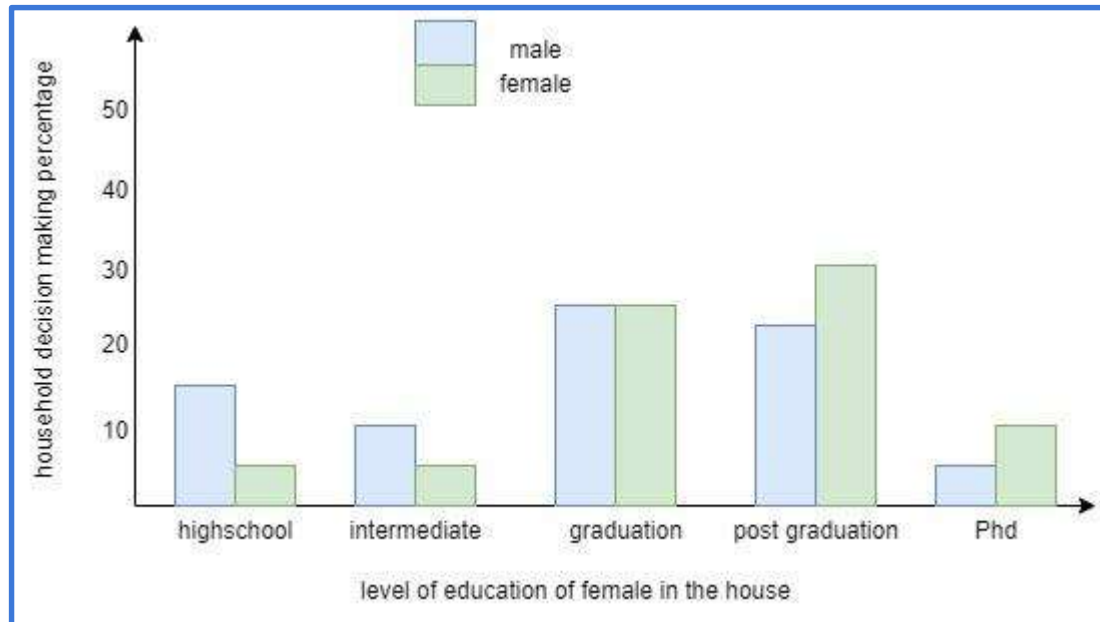


Fig. 2.1 Source: Primary

The figure 2.1 depicts the relationship between the level of education attained by the female respondents and the percentage of who (male or female) takes the decision in household. It is quite evident that as the level of education in females is low the authority of decision making is with male partners and with attainment of education comes the increase in involvement of females in the decision making.

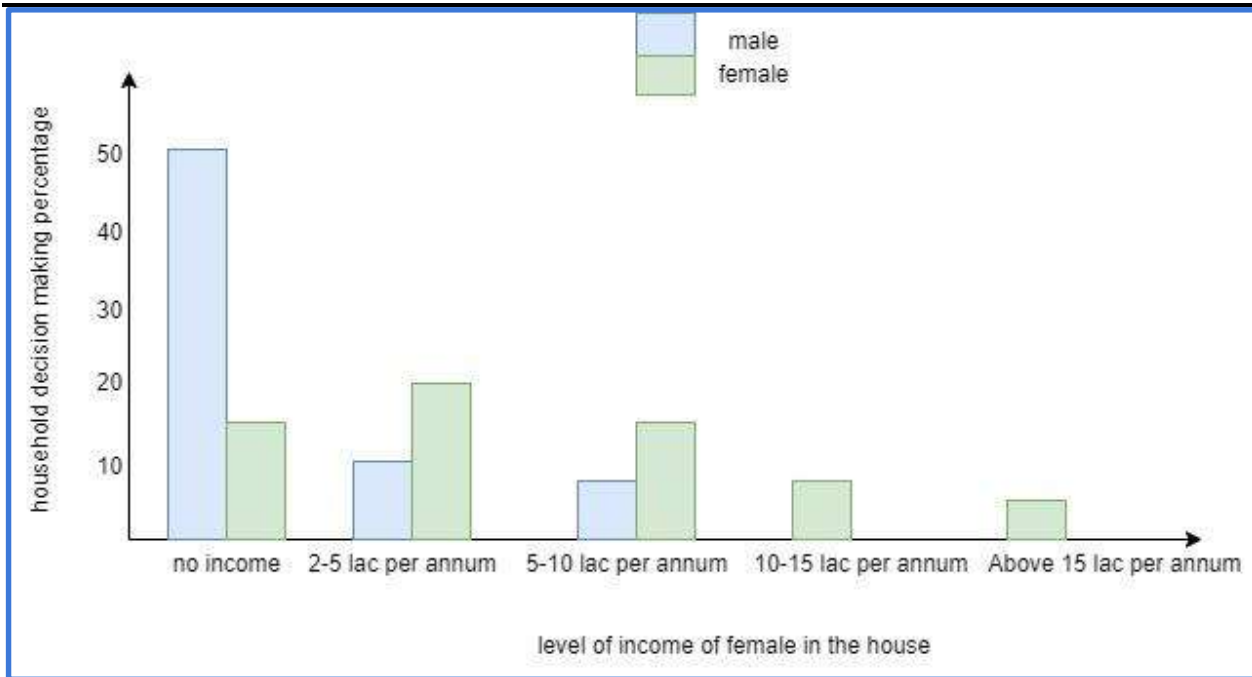


Fig. 2.2. Source: primary

The figure 2.2 depicts the relationship between the level of income earned by the female respondents and the percentage of who (male or female) takes the decision in household. The female respondents with no income or not working the percentage of male decisionmakers in the household is more than double. The percentage reduces with the increase in level of income earned by females in house. Certainly with financial independence women start contributing more and the authority of making decisions gets divided. Surely there are other factors which play a certain role with financial independence being certainly one of the core factors.

### Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis one regarding education :

Anova: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
female deicision maker	5	74	14.8	195.7		
malie decision maker	5	56	11.2	41.2		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	32.4	1	32.4	0.273533	0.615144	5.317655
Within Groups	947.6	8	118.45			
Total	980	9				

HO: Education empower female decision making in household

H1: Education does not empower female decision making in household

Since the analysis shown above has a higher P-value than the significance level. And the F value is less than F Critical value, indicating we cannot reject our null. Therefore the null hypothesis is not rejected, that is, *Education empowers female decision making in households.*

Hypothesis one regarding level of income :

Anova: Single Factor						
SUMMARY						
Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
female decision maker	5	51	10.2	37.2		
male decision maker	5	79	15.8	547.7		
ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	78.4	1	78.4	0.26808	0.618632	5.317655
Within Groups	2339.6	8	292.45			
Total	2418	9				

HO: Higher income empower female decision making in household

H1: Higher income does not empower female decision making in household

The Anova test shown above has a higher P-value than the (0.05) significance level. And the F value (0.26) is less than (5.31) F Critical value. Thus, we cannot reject null. Therefore, *higher income empowers female decision making in households.*

## **Findings and conclusion**

The following are the major findings of the study:

1. Household decision- making role of women changes with further growth in education and income. Education plays an important part in the decision making capability of women. Women's decision- making power increases, when they're empowered with education.
2. Though numerous factors affect the capability of women to take part in the household decision- making process, yet education along with financial earning plays a decisive part. Education and financial independence is important for women because it enables them to respond to the challenges.
3. It was noted in the study that the utmost of less educated and non working women were facing constraints to make decisions regarding their children's education, choosing healthcare, their occupation etc.



Women's educational attainment, occupation and income were appreciatively related to their decision-making power.

It's suggested that policy makers at government positions should pay attention to the education and employment of women. The study also suggests that interventions are necessary especially for uninstructed women who enjoy lower freedom and lower power in decision timber. These interventions relate to adding education and income opportunities for women that might increase their decision- making power as well as their commission. This should produce further job openings for them. So that women come more independent in the decision of life. This support eventually will lead to the cause of women commission and a better community. There's a positive relationship between education and women's empowerment. In order to promote economic development, it's necessary to promote women's empowerment.

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