

# 1 Decision making pattern of farm Women in different farm and non-farm activities

## 5 ABSTRACT

7 The present study was undertaken to study the decision making pattern of farm Women  
8 in different farm and non-farm activities with following objectives i) to study the selected  
9 personal and socio personal and socio-economic characteristic of rural women and ii) to  
10 analyze the decision making pattern of rural women in different farm and non farm activities  
11 The study was conducted in Six Districts of Assam. A purposive cum simple random  
12 sampling technique was adopted for selecting the respective samples for the study. Altogether  
13 1200 farm women were selected for the present study. Data was collected personally by  
14 interview method. The findings reveals that farm women belonged to low socio-economic  
15 status, less than fifty per cent of farm women took independent decision in maintenance of  
16 house (35.25%), followed by buying food items for family consumption (34.17%) and crop  
17 harvesting and transporting (33.75%). majority (78.75%) of farm women took joint decision  
18 in purchase of household items, purchase of implements (73.66%) followed by selling of  
19 crops and where to sell (72.42%), buying of clothes for family members (67.25%).

21 **Key word :** Decision making, rural women, Farm and Non-farm activities, socio-  
22 economic characteristic

## 29 Introduction

30 Women are the backbone of agricultural workforce and also make essential contributions  
31 to the agricultural and rural economies in all developing countries. Their roles vary  
32 considerably between and within regions and are changing rapidly in many parts of the  
33 world, where economic and social forces are transforming the agricultural sector. Compared  
34 to men, women are generally involved in a wider range in crops, livestock and agro-based

35 activities. Despite their role in different activities of farming, their involvement in decision making  
36 process is still seems questionable. Most of the farmer in India are women (Shiva, 1991) and  
37 also many decisions from seeds to resources such as land, labour and input allocation,  
38 marketing, storage are taken by women themselves or jointly with their husband or with the  
39 family members. It is understood that women responsibility in agriculture is far more than  
40 male because of their involvement in multifarious activities. In villages farm women are fully  
41 occupied and over burdened with three fold responsibility of home, agriculture and livestock  
42 management Malapit et al. (2019) and ( Holland and Rammohan, 2019) .Despite their great  
43 involvement in India's agricultural economy, they remain most downtrodden and oppressed,  
44 seeking recognition and reward for their effort. Formalized restraints of seclusion within the  
45 four walls of their home, ineffectiveness in living and work decision are still the traditional  
46 codes. We know that decision making is the root of all human activities. Therefore success  
47 and development of farming and family living depend upon how well the family makes its  
48 decisions and contribution of women in such decision as manager of her family are valuable.  
49 Thus the present study was taken with following objectives, to throw light on the real picture of  
50 decision making pattern of women

- 51 i) To study the selected personal and socio-economic characteristic of rural women.
- 52
- 53 ii) To analyze the decision making pattern of rural women in different farm and non farm
- 54 activities

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## 56 **Materials and Methods:**

### 57 2.1. Sample and sampling procedure

58 The study was conducted in three agro-climatic zones of Assam state in India : Upper  
59 Brahmaputra Valley Zone, Central Brahmaputra Valley Zone and North Bank Plain Zone. A  
60 multistage purposive cum- random sampling design was followed. From each selected agro-  
61 climatic zone two districts, (total six) were selected purposively. Again from each selected  
62 district one sub-division (total six) were selected purposively considering the involvement of  
63 farm women in agricultural activities. From each selected sub-division two blocks total  
64 (twelve) were selected purposively. From each selected block four villages were selected  
65 randomly. Thus 48 villages were selected for carrying out the study. From each selected  
66 village 25 farm women, (total 1,200) were selected randomly.

### 67 2.2.Variable and its measurements

68

#### 69 2.2.1. Socio-economic status

70 This refers to the position of the respondent in society and was determined by various social  
 71 and economic variables such as caste, land holding, education, type of house, main family  
 72 occupation, family type, family size, material possession and organizational membership of  
 73 farm women. The socio-economic status of farm women were measured by the socio-  
 74 economic scale developed by (Trivedi,1963) with slight modification. On the basis of score  
 75 obtained by the farm women they were categorized into the 3- three categories: Low with  
 76 score range below  $\bar{X} - Sd$ , medium with  $\bar{X} - Sd$  to  $\bar{X} + Sd$  and high with above  $\bar{X} + Sd$ .

77 2.2.2 Participation of farm women in decision making in different farm and non-farm  
 78 activities

79 Decision making is a thinking process. Nevertheless, farm women knowingly  
 80 or unknowingly participate in decision making process in farming as enterprise, which is  
 81 based on her long- standing field experience (Dube *et al.*, 1988). In the present study it refers  
 82 to the decision in farm and non-farm activities.

83 Table 1. The categorization and scoring was done as follows:

Category	Score
No participation	1
Joint participation	2
Independent participation	3

84  
 85 Table 2. Similarly, according to the maximum obtainable score and scores  
 86 obtained by the farm women they were classified as follows :

Category	Score Range
Low	Below $(\bar{X} - Sd)$
Medium	$\bar{X} - Sd$ to $\bar{X} + Sd$
High	Above $\bar{X} + Sd$

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 88 **Analysis of data**

89 The collected data were coded, tabulated and analyzed in accordance with the  
 90 objectives of the present study by using appropriate tests and techniques.

91  
 92 **3.Results and Discussion**

93 **3.1 Socio-economic status of farm women**

94 Majority 55.08 per cent of farm women of the study areas belonged to middle age  
95 group i.e.30-40 yrs. Large majority (91.66%) of farm women were married. 44.75 per cent of  
96 farm women belonged to general caste. 41.33 per cent of farm women belonged to the  
97 category of marginal farmer. 38.50 per cent of farm women had education up to middle  
98 school. 46.42 per cent farm women had mixed type of house. 46.50 per cent of the farm  
99 women's family occupation was farming. Majority (77.89%) of farm women belonged to  
100 nuclear family. The data reveals that majority (63.95%) of farm women belonged to small  
101 family. Cent per cent of farm families possessed hoe and hand tools, followed by desi plough  
102 (99.08%) and bullock (98.25%). Majority 60.91 per cent of farm families possesses two  
103 wheelers. 87.08 per cent of farm families possess mobile followed by television (70.42%).  
104 Large majority (95.42%) of farm families possess traditional chullah. 64.09 per cent of farm  
105 women were member of one organization. 52.60 per cent of farm women belonged to low  
106 socio-economic status.

107

108 **3.2 Decision making pattern of farm women in different farm and non-farm activities**

109 Empowerment of farm women in decision making is a need of the time in  
110 agrarian country like India, where farming is a family occupation. Farm women who are  
111 associated with their husband in various activities have greater role in decision making  
112 process. Thus timely and judicious decision making ability of the farm family have a direct  
113 bearing on the development of agriculture sector. The farm women of Assam though  
114 deprived of getting timely extension service, they were contributing a lot to the agricultural  
115 development in the selected regions. It is therefore imperative to assess the participation of  
116 farm women in decision making in different farm and non-farm activities.

117 **Table 3. Distribution of farm women according to decision making pattern in different**  
118 **farm and non-farm activities** **N=1200**

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Sl. No.	Decision making activities	Decision making pattern					
		Independent participation		Joint participation		No participation	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>Farm activities</b>							
1	Purchase of land for cultivation of crops	36	3.00	628	52.33	536	44.67
2	Purchase of Implements	73	6.03	884	73.66	245	20.41
3	Selection of crop varieties	42	3.50	745	62.08	413	34.42
4	Amount of manure and fertilizer to be purchased	21	1.75	421	35.08	728	63.17
5	Plant protection	9	0.75	351	29.25	840	70.00
6	Crop harvesting and transporting	405	33.75	753	62.75	42	3.50
7	Hired labour for transplanting	146	12.16	623	51.92	431	35.92
8	Retention of grain for consumption	93	7.75	677	56.42	430	35.83
9	Selling crops and where to sell	71	5.92	869	72.42	260	21.66
10	Seeking loan for farm resources	10	0.83	564	47.00	626	52.17
11	Buying and selling of livestock and poultry	312	26.00	645	53.75	243	20.25
12	Buying food items for family consumption	410	34.17	471	39.25	319	26.58
<b>Non-farm activities</b>							
13	Children's education	175	14.58	704	58.67	321	26.75
14	Buying of clothes for family members	204	17.00	807	67.25	189	15.75
15	Purchase of household items	35	2.92	945	78.75	220	18.33
16	Maintenance of house	423	35.25	511	42.58	266	22.17
17	Saving of money	310	25.83	571	47.58	319	26.58

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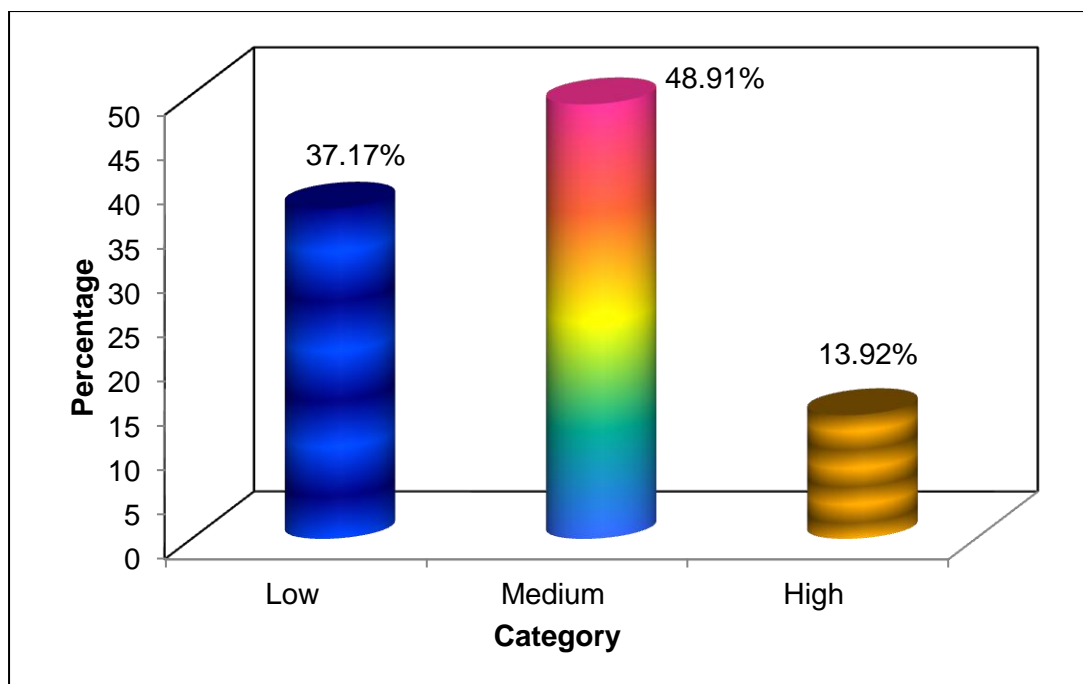
125           The data presented in **Table 3 shows** that less than fifty per cent of farm  
126 women took independent decision in maintenance of house (35.25%), followed by buying  
127 food items for family consumption (34.17%), crop harvesting and transporting (33.75%),  
128 buying and selling of livestock and poultry (26.00%) and saving of money (25.83%).

129           It is interesting to observe that majority (78.75%) of farm women took joint  
130 decision in purchase of household items, purchase of implements (73.66%) followed by  
131 selling of crops and where to sell (72.42%), buying of clothes for family members (67.25%),  
132 crop harvesting and transporting (62.75%), selection of crop varieties (62.08%), children's  
133 education (58.67%), retention of grain for consumption (56.42%), buying and selling of  
134 livestock and poultry (53.75%) and purchase of land for cultivation of crops (52.33%). This  
135 finding is in line with Sharma (1992), Premevati and Seetharaman (2002) and Saikia *et al.*  
136 (2013).

137           Equal participation of farm women in decision making process indicates that  
138 they have an important role in decision making which is an important aspect of  
139 empowerment.

#### 140 **4.4.1.1 Overall participation of farm women in decision making pattern in both farm** 141 **and non-farm activities**

142           Fig. 1. shows that 48.91 per cent farm women had medium level of  
143 participation in decision making followed by low (37.17%) and high level (13.92%)  
144 participation.



145  
 146 **FIG. 1. DISTRIBUTION OF FARM WOMEN IN OVERALL PARTICIPATION IN DECISION**  
 147 **MAKING**

148  
 149 From the literature reviewed, it is observed that, traditionally women had no  
 150 definite decision making role in majority of family affairs because of the dominance of male  
 151 members in the joint family system. The situation now seems to have changed owing to the  
 152 disintegration of this family system in the rural areas. Considering the data it is observed that  
 153 women farmers took active role in decision making both in farm and non-farm activities. It is  
 154 felt that farm women participation in farming decision might help in the adoption of  
 155 agricultural messages related to field crops received from the extension trainings. Moreover,  
 156 this finding might develop the awareness among extension personnel to include a  
 157 proportionate number of farm women in their planned extension activities along with other  
 158 clientele.

159 To sum up, farm women are socio-economically empowered to some extent  
 160 due to availing different extension services by them. It was observed that farm women had  
 161 ownership of economically important resource like milch animal, had access to credit,  
 162 majority of farm women saved money in between Rs. 1000 to 5000, enjoy liberty to some  
 163 extent in incurring the expenditure. It was further observed that farm women had little  
 164 exposure to communication media, sometimes had contact with extension agencies, had good  
 165 social exposure, low level of leadership ability and took part in decision making.

166 Empowerment is a complicated process, which comprises of short-term and  
167 long-term strategy. To empower the farm women there is need to increase their access to new  
168 information as well as to credit. Further, by increasing their social and institutional  
169 participation at all levels by strengthening training programmes for them, there should be  
170 long drawn strategy for increasing their access to and control over appropriate technology.

171 Less than fifty percent of farm women took independent decision in crop harvesting and  
172 transporting (33.75%) followed by as maintenance of house (35.25%) and buying food items  
173 for family consumption (34.17%). 48.91 per cent farm women had medium level of  
174 participation in decision making followed by low (37.17%) and high level (13.92%)  
175 participation.

#### 176 **Conclusion:**

177 The findings indicate that decision-making patterns in farm work seem to be changing  
178 and women have increasingly become important members of the family as decision-makers,  
179 both on the farm as well as at home. This indicates that farm women were socio-  
180 economically empowered to some extent due to availing different extension services.

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