

**SUMMARY  
AND  
CONCLUSIONS**

## CHAPTER V

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Management is one of the important areas that require careful decision making and planning on the part of individual to bring about the change in the quality of life. Decision making is a learned process rooted in the past, carried on in the present, shaping the future. Decision making has been an activity of the family ever since the inception of the family. It requires plans and actions. (Paolucci, 1966).

Decision making is one of the important components of management that requires concrete planning on the part of the family members to perform the activities (Gross and Crandall, 1967). "It is the central activity of management that help the family to decide how to take actions effectively so as to bring about satisfaction among individuals".

When we examine the management role of women in any area of work, we find that women contribute approximately half, if not more, to the economic development of the country. Since women's contribution in economic development is vital, there is a need of proportionate increase of her involvement in decision making process. Women's active involvement in decisions is important for rapid economic growth. The role of women is vital specially in the management of farm and house. Rural women play a key role in

production activities, economic and domestic activities, which increase their management responsibilities.

Extent of involvement of most of the women in decision making process in both urban and rural areas is different. Generally women in urban areas make decisions with the consent of other family members. Therefore mostly joint decisions are made in the family. Members in the family, like head of the family, elder member or husband make more decisions and wife have few opportunities to make decisions related to money matters. In nuclear families most of the women make joint decisions with their husbands and some minor decisions were taken independently (Parimala, 1964; Kala Rani, 1975; Talwar, 1984; Agarwal, 1986 and Sinha, 1988). Men generally dominated in majority of farm decisions in rural families. Decisions related to money matters in the family were taken by head of the family or husbands. In cattle rearing women's participation was only at the recognition stage and few reached to final stage of decision making (Radhudkar and Jondhare, 1962; Puri, 1971; Rao, 1980; Rani and Bhave, 1981; Khan, 1981 and Verma, 1984).

Women's participation in decision process were affected by many factors such as their age, education, employment status, size of land holding, caste, their relational position in the family and type of family (Gill, 1971; Kataria, 1973; Kaur, 1981; Kaur and Sharma, 1985). It was observed that generally the elder women in the family were more consulted in decisions in the families. Those women who

were illiterate, were more dependent on male members for decisions. This was prominent in low caste families. Women with small land size were more involved in decision making. It was found that in nuclear families women made joint decisions with their husbands but in joint families most of the decisions were made by heads of the family (Verma, 1984).

Since, women's contribution in productive activities for the development of families is vital women should be given equal chance to make decisions in the family. This study was designed to determine the decision making role of the farm women in management of household, farm, livestock and income generation work.

#### Objectives of the study

1. To study the background characteristics of the respondents.
2. To assess the selected personality traits of the respondents influencing extent of involvement in decision process.
3. To find out the extent of respondents' involvement in decision making process related to management of
  - i. household
  - ii. farm
  - iii. livestock and
  - iv. income generating activities.

4. To find out the extent of involvement of respondents in decision implementation process.
5. To identify the factors influencing the extent of involvement of respondents in decision making and decision implementing.

### Methodology

The study was conducted in the hill region of district Nainital, Uttar Pradesh.

#### SAMPLE SELECTION

A multistage purposive cum random sampling design was adopted, treating purposive selection of Nainital district at the first stage, random selection of blocks of hill region at the second stage, random selection of villages at the third stage and selection of ten per cent of the families from the total families of each selected villages at the final stage. The ten per-cent families consisted of 23 families from large land holding, 64 from medium and 113 from small land holding groups.

#### TOOL CONSTRUCTION

A interview schedule was constructed. It comprised of two parts. Part-I contained the census information of the hill region pertaining to the background characteristics of the sample and the families. Part II dealt with the detailed information regarding extent of women's involvement in decision making and decision implementing. It also included

the questions related to women's income generating activities and the role they played in money matters.

#### VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE TOOL

The instrument was validated prior to its use for the pilot study, by seeking the experts' opinion, of a panel of ten judges, from eminent institutions of Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana. The objective of assessing the extent of women's involvement in decision making process required a standardised scale to measure it. Therefore a five point continuum rating scale was developed. An exhaustive and detailed list of statements on various decisions was framed related to household, farm, livestock management and income generation work. The instrument was validated by experts from social work, center for advanced studies in education Maharaja Sayaji Rao University of Baroda. One sixty eight statements were included in the scale for the pilot study.

To measure the personality traits of the rural women a two point likert type scale was developed. Seventy five statements were given to ten experts selected from Faculty of Education and Psychology, Center for Advanced Studies in Education and Faculty of Home Science, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. The scale was analysed quantitatively by doing item analysis to increase its validity and reliability. Twenty four items were retained after item analysis. Test retest technique was applied to determine the

reliability co-efficient of the test. The reliability co-efficient found to be  $r=0.71$ .

#### METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Data were gathered personally from respondents, using an interview schedule, from December 1991 to April 1992.

#### ANALYSIS OF DATA

The data were analysed using both descriptive (frequency, percentage, mean and SD) and relational statistics (Multiple Regression Analysis, Step-wise Regression Analysis, Pearson-Product Moment Correlation, Chi-square, and Analysis of Variance). The entire analysis was done by the three land holding groups.

#### Major findings of the study

The highlights of the findings of this investigation are reported below.

##### I. FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENTS

1. There were 86.50 per cent male heads and 13.50 per cent female heads of the family. The mean age of the heads of the family was 51.98 years.
2. Illiteracy was found among 36.50 per cent of the heads of the family. In most of the women headed families women were illiterate.

3. About 79 per cent of the heads of the family who were gainfully employed, of these 54.50 per cent also did farming. Women heads were employed in farm work only.
4. Joint families were predominant i.e. 56 per cent and the mean size of the families was 6.43 members.
5. About 67.0 per cent respondents were working on the farm with their family member.
6. In addition to farming the sources of income of the families were dairy or poultry, business, service, income generating activities. About 86 per cent families of SLH group were earning more money from dairy or poultry, and all families of LLH group were earning money from farming. Among the MLH group 65 per cent had income from service, 28.12 per cent from business, 89 per cent from income generation work, and 26.56 per cent were gainfully employed.

About 93 per cent families had monthly income between Rs. 960 and Rs. 1700, 76 per cent had income between Rs. 1701 and Rs. 4200, and 31 per cent families belonged to the income Rs. 4201 to Rs. 8200. Forty five per cent of families were supported by 3 or more earning members but 11.50 per cent families had only a single earning member.

## II. PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

7. Most of the respondents belonged to the younger age group and Mean age was 37.14 years.

8. About 13.50 per cent respondents were heads of the families, they were either widows or wives of migrant husbands. About 95.0 per cent respondents were married.
9. About 40.50 per cent respondents were illiterate, and 59.50 per cent of them were literate.
10. Eighty six per cent respondents were found to be self-employed and 14 per cent were gainfully employed outside the home.
11. Eighty two per cent respondents possessed risk taking trait, 72 per cent were resourceful, 71.50 per cent had good communicating skills and 69.50 per cent were confident. Traits like knowledgeable, intelligence and leadership quality were lacking among respondents.
12. It was found that 21.50 per cent wives were eldest in the family. Among daughters-in-law, 23 per cent were eldest and 18 per cent were youngest in the family.

### III. ROLE OF RESPONDENTS IN DECISION MAKING

#### 1. Household decisions

13. Only one third respondents from all land holding groups were involved independently in decisions related to food management. Of these 41 per cent decided about menu for special occasions, 39 per cent about how to store food grains, 42 per cent took independent decision on what to cook for sick person. Decisions related to bulk purchase of food material was taken

mostly by men only, except in case of respondents of MLH group.

14. On the whole it was found that major decision making related to family clothing such as type of clothing, place of purchase and clothes for different occasions was male dominated. But minor decisions related to care and maintenance of clothing were taken by 13.50 per cent respondents wholly and by 77 per cent respondents partially.
15. Major decisions like additions to be made in the house, new installation to be made, minor decisions like selection of furnishing materials and use of furnishing materials and its renovation were taken partially by the respondents. ~~Twenty~~ to 27 per cent respondents were partially involved in decisions like maintenance and furnishing of house, changes to be made, white washing and repairs. This trend was found in all land holding groups.
16. On the whole irrespective of any specific land holding groups, involvement of respondents in major decisions like savings, investment and credit was only 7 per cent. The women who took such decisions were heads of the family.
17. In relation to respondents' decisions making as to money to be spent on food was done by 15.50 per cent, for clothing 28.50 per cent, on housing 7.50 per cent, on education 6 per cent, on marriage 7.50 to 11 per cent, on social and religious activities 10.50 and 7.50

per cent respectively, on child care 6 per cent, on health and hygiene 7 to 10 per cent and on recreation 7.50 per cent. On farm activities expenditure decision making was almost nil except in money to be spent on purchase of seeds where 5.50 per cent were involved in paying of wages to labourers 6.50 per cent were involved.

18. Only 6.50 per cent respondents decided the amount to be saved for future, 2 per cent decided how to invest money and about 7 per cent took decision regarding the amount to be kept in the post office independently. Whenever decisions were made relating to purchase of farm machines and durable goods for households most of the respondents were just consulted. Decisions relating to amount to be borrowed, purpose of borrowing and repayment of the amount were made by male members in the family and respondents were just consulted.
19. Regarding major decisions related to education of the children and occupation, it was found that respondents' independent involvement was only 6 per cent. Between 31.50 to 35.50 per cent took joint decisions where respondents' role was partial and only 6 to 7 per cent took independent decisions. These respondents were mostly women heads of the family. Respondents had no say in deciding whether to join literacy programmes or not, and had to depend on the decisions taken by husbands and elders in the family. Extent of

involvement in decisions like education of female and male adults and occupation of son decreased with increase in land holding size.

20. In all land holding groups most of the decisions, major and minor related to marriage of children, like selection of bride and bride groom, type of marriage, selection of place, dowry to be given, dowry to be taken, items to be given for dowry and social and ritualistic decisions were taken jointly among 40 to 61 per cent families and respondents partially participated in decisions. But 11 per cent respondents who were heads of the family had to take all these decisions fully independently.
21. Decisions related to arranging of social activities at home, visits to relatives, arranging prayers and worships at home, rituals to be carried out, were taken jointly where participation of respondents was 56 to 89 per cent. In minor decisions more respondents participated among all land holding groups.
22. Major decisions related to family size, like adoption of family planning measures, number of children to have, completing family with male or female children were taken independently by majority of respondents of all land holding groups. Only 43.50 per cent respondents had no say on decisions related to spacing between children. Although child rearing responsibilities were carried out by respondents

exclusively, they were not allowed to take decisions related to care of children independently.

23. About the health of the family members both major and minor decisions were mostly taken by the male members i.e., regular check up, kind of medical facilities to be given and immunization of children. Since respondents had not much sense of hygiene, not many respondents were involved in decisions related to hygiene. The extent of involvement of respondents of SLH and MLH groups was low in most of the major and minor decisions.

24. There was not much scope for decision making related to recreation activities, because there were not many facilities of recreation and sources of entertainment. The most prevalent was visiting temples where 32 per cent respondents were partially involved in decisions and decision about visiting of relatives was taken by more respondents of MLH group.

## 2. Farm decision

None of the respondents were involved when the decisions were made regarding type of insecticides to be purchased, level of production, frequency of spraying of pesticides, installation of hand pump and tube well and taking of farm credit.

Major decisions like purchase and sale of land, farm machines and agricultural implements, seeds acquired

for sowing purpose, marketing of products, amount to sell, place to sell were male dominated decisions and only 12 per cent respondents who were heads of the family took these decisions independently.

About 48 per cent respondents were partially involved when the decisions were taken related to purchase of fertilizers, 41 per cent about selling of surplus farm products, 58 per cent about cropping pattern to be followed, 22 per cent, methods of sowing and 39 per cent about use of plant protection measures. Decisions about type of fertilizers to be used was taken by 65 per cent respondents, diversification of agricultural produce 67 per cent, new implements to be used 21.50 per cent, methods of harvesting 9 per cent, threshing of crops manually 91 per cent, type of grains to be retained 62.50 per cent and spending of additional farm income 81.50 per cent respondents. Decisions like storage of food grains and fodder were wholly taken by respondents independently.

### **3. Decisions related to livestock management**

26. Major decisions regarding purchase and sale of livestock, were male dominated. But decision regarding medicines to be given to livestock was taken by male members.

Only 11 per cent respondents were independently involved when decision was made about purchase of

livestock, although final say was of men only. The number of livestock to be kept was decided by 32 per cent partially and by 11 per cent women head of the family independently. In minor decisions like feeding of livestock 37.50 per cent respondents took decisions independently and 38 per cent jointly.

Respondents involvement in decisions regarding disposal of milk and milk products and keeping accounts was found more. About 46 per cent decided independently the place of selling of milk. Twenty per cent respondents totally and 76.50 per cent partially controlled the money earned from livestock.

More respondents of MLH and LLH groups took more decisions related to keeping of account, more respondents from SLH and MLH groups took decisions related to rate of selling the milk products. More respondents of SLH groups were consulted when decisions were made about purchasing of livestock.

**4. Decisions related to management of income generating activities**

27. On the whole respondents' involvement in decisions related to income generating activities was very low. They were used as labourers, not decision makers in this area. In major decisions like, type of activity to start, size of production, acquiring inputs, control of inputs, purchase of equipment and raw materials,

quality of raw materials, independent decision making by the respondents was nil. In major decisions like storing of raw materials only 12 per cent respondents were independently involved.

28. The decision making profile of the respondents in various areas revealed that percentage involvement in household decisions was moderate, but in decisions related to farm, livestock and income generating activities, percentage involvement of respondents was low.

#### IV. ROLE OF RESPONDENTS IN DECISION IMPLEMENTING

29. Fifty per cent respondents went for shopping once in a while and among these, 34.50 per cent were not fully responsible for this task. Buying of clothing was shared by 50 per cent of men and women. Respondents' participation in tasks where a lot of money had to be spent i.e. buying of durable goods was only 12.50 per cent. Eighty six per cent respondents went with their husbands or family members to buy gifts for social and religious occasions. But in performance of household chores like fetching of water, collection of wood for fuel, collection of fodder, cleaning of surroundings, cleaning of house and kitchen, home decoration, stitching of clothes, care of children, care of ill person, social and religious activities respondents' participation was very high.

Respondents' participation in controlling of the resources was found to be low on the whole. Only 22 per cent were involved in budget making, 11.50 per cent in cutting down the expenditure, 11 per cent in saving plans, 9 per cent in investment plans, and only 7 per cent in taking of loan.

The household activities were very frequently supervised by 64 per cent respondents.

30. Regarding farm activities, ploughing and marketing of farm produce were male dominated task and only 8.50 per cent respondents helped partially.

A large number of respondents carried out presowing activities independently. Fifty seven per cent respondents were involved in selection of crop variety, 35 per cent in selection of crop, 69 per cent in paddy transplanting, 64 per cent in maintaining of plant population, 71 per cent in weeding and hoeing tasks, 42 per cent in applying of fertiliser, and 62.50 per cent in storage of farm produce.

About 41 per cent carried out the presowing activities with the help of other family members, 65 per cent worked partially for irrigation of land, 77.50 per cent for application of pesticides, all for harvesting and tying of bundles, 75 per cent for transportation of crops, 85.50 per cent for cold crushing, 47 per cent for harrowing, 48.50 per cent for

winnowing of crops and 75 per cent for post harvest activities. Storing of animal fodder was prominently done by women.

Respondents' participation in controlling of activity related to farm was very low, where only 13 per cent were involved.

Thirty three per cent respondents supervised the farm work very frequently and 60 per cent did so along with other family members. Those who supervised the work alone were mostly women heads of the family.

31. As far as the initiation of tasks related to livestock was concerned, 72.50 and 71 per cent respondents did not participate in purchasing and selling of livestock. Those involved in above two activities either wholly or partially were heads of the family. About 44 to 58.50 per cent respondents participated in milking of cows. Of these 32 per cent wholly and 34 per cent partially participated in the activity.

The money earned through these activities was controlled by respondents between 28 to 56 per cent.

It was only in this area where respondents played a fair role in controlling money matters.

Sixty six per cent respondents supervised the tasks related to livestock.

32. Respondents' participation in initiation of income generating activities was higher compared to decision making. About 47.50 to 56 per cent respondents carried out activities such as production, purchasing and storing of raw materials and products, storing and marketing of ready products.

But their involvement in controlling i.e. estimation of future production, fixing rate for sale of products, and keeping accounts was low.

Respondents' participation in supervision of income generating activities was 46 per cent.

33. The participation profile of respondents in various activities showed that percentage participation of respondents was moderate in household management but it was low in management of farm, livestock and income generating activities.

Further analysis was done to find out the role of respondents in money matters related to her own earnings and involvement in decision making.

34. Out of total 200 respondents 130 respondents were involved in income generating activities, out of which 89 per cent were involved in growing vegetables, 76 per cent in growing fruits, 11 per cent in processing of cinnamon and bay leaves, 9 per cent in beekeeping and 7.81 per cent in making of wool articles. Few were

involved in flower growing, sericulture, food preservation and stitching of clothes etc.

Involvement of both wives and daughters-in-law was 84 to 91 per cent in growing of vegetables, 55 to 57 per cent in growing of fruits, but 12.94 per cent wives were involved in beekeeping and 12.61 per cent in processing of cinnamon and bay leaves.

35. The initial mean amount of investment to start beekeeping was Rs. 455.55, for flower cultivation, Rs. 128.33, for fruits, Rs. 107.20, for vegetables, Rs. 103.08, for stitching of clothes, Rs. 93.33, sericulture, ~~for~~ food preservation Rs. 90 and for making of wool articles Rs. 82.

The mean amount of monthly expenditure was Rs. 57, on wool work, Rs. 46.11 on beekeeping and Rs. 30 on stitching of clothes.

36. About 53.79 per cent respondents managed the money earned by them with other family members and only 38.60 per cent women managed alone as they were heads of the family. Majority of the wives managed money, but only 10.50 per cent eldest daughters-in-law participated in this work.
37. Most of the respondents either wives or daughters-in-law disbursed money on family's food, clothing, education and health. Only 17.08 per cent could save, and 5.05 per cent could invest the money. Those who

could save money were either women heads of the family or the wives of the migrant husbands.

38. About 24.68 per cent respondents had full control over their earnings, 49.36 per cent had partial and 29.94 per cent had no control over their earnings. About 26 per cent wives, and 23.94 per cent daughters-in-law had full control over earnings. Twenty five per cent daughters had full or partial control over money earned by them.
39. It was found that only 24.68 per cent respondents were free to use the money, whereas 57.59 per cent could sometimes spend money freely. But 17.72 per cent had no freedom to use money. Those respondents who had full freedom to use money were either female heads or the family or women whose husbands were working at other places away from homes. Wives were more free to spend money than daughters-in-law. But eldest daughters-in-law were more free to spend money than younger ones.
40. About 31.64 per cent respondents were consulted and their advice was sought partially. Only 21.50 per cent were consulted and their advice was fully accepted. About 15.18 per cent respondents were consulted, but their advice was not accepted and 31.64 per cent were not consulted at all.
41. About 81 per cent respondents' advice was accepted because they had good communicating skill and could express well. Thirty nine per cent respondents were consulted because they were the only persons in the

family and had to solve problems by themselves. These respondents were either the female heads or the respondents whose husbands had migrated outside the villages. In 42 per cent families respondents took active part when consulted because they were mature and could give acceptable solutions to the problems. Sixty three per cent respondents were not consulted as they were illiterates, 51 per cent were neither confident nor had good communicating skills and were not mature enough to give solutions to the problems.

V. HYPOTHESES TESTING TO ASSESS RELATIONSHIP AMONG THE VARIABLES SHOWED FOLLOWING FINDINGS

42. Regression analysis revealed positive significant influence between the extent of decision making and variables : Education of the respondents (T = 2.90 Sig. at .004, df=5,194) head of the household (T = 8.94, Sig. at .01, df=2,197), relational position (T = 2.64; Sig. at .01, df=3,196), selected personality traits (T = 5.45, Sig. at .001, df=1,198) and exposure to developmental programmes (T = 2.05, Sig. at .01, df=4,195) had positive influence on the extent of decision making.

Beta coefficient was non significant in case of work status, age, ordinal position, family type, size of the land holding and socio-economic status of the

family at 70 per cent, having no influence over extent of involvement in decision making.

43. Among the personality traits, it was found that risk taking, communicating skills, resourcefulness and self confidence were traits that influenced the decision making involvement of respondents more than others. Among these four, risk taking was the most influencing trait. The risk taking and self confidence combination possessed by respondents showed the high involvement of respondents.
44. The extent of participation in household activities had a significant association with the variables, education (Chi-square= 14.33, Sig.at 0.01, df=4), employment status (Chi-square=16.67, Sig.at 0.01, df=2), and family size (Chi-square = 13.57, Sig. at 0.01, dt=4).
45. Participation in farm activities had a significant association with variables, of age (Chi-square = 15.57; Sig. at 0.01, df=4) employment status (Chi-square = 16.01; Sig.at 0.01, df=2), socio-economic status (Chi-square = 18.84; Sig.at 0.01,df=4), land holding size (Chi-square = 8.76; Sig.at 0.05, df=4) and relational position (Chi-square = 15.82; Sig.at 0.01, df=4).
46. Extent of respondents' participation in livestock activities showed a significant positive association with variables, employment status (Chi-square = 13.31; sig. at 0.01, df=2) land holding (Chi-square = 18.30

- Sig.at .001, df=4), family type (Chi-square = 12.56, Sig. at 0.01, df=2) and family income (Chi-square = 55.36; Sig.at 0.01, df=4).
47. An association was found between age (Chi-square = 15.50, Sig. at .001, df=4), education (Chi-square = 23.17, Sig.at 0.01, df=4), employment status (Chi-square = 18.97, Sig.at 0.01, df=2), size of land holding (Chi-square = 22.33, Sig.at 0.01, df=4) family income (Chi-square = 20.64, Sig. at 0.01, df=4) and participation in income generating activities.
48. A positive correlation of extent of respondents' participation in decision making and participation in household activities, ( $r=.63$ , sig.at .01, df=198), and livestock activities ( $r=.45$ , sig. at .01, df=198) revealed that those respondents who participated more in above activities were also involved in decisions related to household and livestock management. But regarding the extent of decision making related to farm management and participation in farm activities and involvement in decisions concerning income generating activities and participation in income generating activities, it was inferred that respondents participated more in farm and income generating activities but their participation in decisions related to farm and income generating activities was low.
49. It was found that those respondents who managed money earned by them ( $T = 4.23$ , Sig.at .00001, df=2,197) had control over their earning ( $T = 5.71$ , Sig.at .00001,

df=1,198) freedom to use money earned ( $T = 3.10$ , Sig.at .0022, df=3,196) were considered as important earning hands ( $T = 3.84$ , Sig.at .0002, df=4,195) participated more in decisions, than those who were not involved in above matters.

### Conclusions

On the basis of the findings of this investigation the following conclusions are drawn.

1. Rural women from hill areas were not much involved in buying decisions regarding food management. Involvement of respondents of MLH group was found to be low in the above decisions compared to SLH and LLH groups.
2. Very few respondents of all land holding groups specially the women heads of the family and wives of migrant husbands were involved in major decisions related to clothing management like type of clothing material and place of purchase. But in minor decisions related to care of clothes, their involvement was high.
3. On the whole respondents' involvement in decisions related to maintenance of house and home decoration was low among all land holding groups. But in decisions related to additions to be made in the house, new construction to be done, selection, use and renovation of furnishings, partial involvement of respondents was observed.
4. Women had no power to participate in decisions like taking loans, savings and investments. Their power to spend money in home and farm was very low, and also their access to sophisticated resources for the farm and household. They had no right to own land.

5. Decisions related to education and occupation of the children were mostly taken by men. Only 6 per cent women heads of the family independently decided about education and occupation of their children.
6. Most of the decisions related to marriage of the children were taken jointly in the family, where respondents played a partial role.
7. Almost all decisions related to social and religious activities were taken independently or in group by the respondents.
8. Large number of respondents were involved independently in decisions related to size of the family, and care of the children.
9. Most of the respondents did not participate in decisions related to health and hygiene problems. These decisions were mostly taken by male members.
10. Since recreational activities were not much prevalent in hill regions, about one third respondents were involved in joint decisions related to visits to relatives, temples, going for movies and fairs. These decisions were male dominated.
11. Respondents' involvement in financial decisions and decisions required technical know how related to farm decisions was low. Respondents' involvement in decisions about level of crop production, frequency of spraying of pesticides and taking of farm credits was nil.

12. Involvement in decisions regarding buying and selling land, machines, agricultural implements, seeds, insecticides, pesticides, fertilizers, and marketing of farm products was very low.
13. Decisions related to storage of products, and animal fodder were totally female dominated.
14. Involvement in decisions related to cropping pattern, type of fertilizers to be used, irrigation facilities to be provided, diversification of agriculture, threshing of crops manually, type of grains to be retained for household consumption, and spending of additional farm income was partial.
15. Role of respondents in decisions related to livestock management revealed that the role played by the respondents in decisions related to purchase of livestock was significant but their role decreased in decisions related to selling of livestock. Their participation in decisions related to care of livestock was high. Decisions related to disposal of milk and milk products were taken more by respondents of SLH and MLH groups than of the LLH group.
16. Respondents' involvement in decisions related to selling of products, and deciding about selling price of the products was nil. These decisions were taken by men only. Decisions related to activities like purchasing and storing raw materials, selling of products in the local market, keeping of accounts and using of money for the family was taken by a little

less than one third of the respondents. Most of these respondents were heads of the family.

17. The decision making profile of the respondents in various areas revealed that percentage involvement in household decisions was moderate, and in farm, livestock and income generating activities involvement was low.
18. Respondents' participation in buying activities which was mostly done by male members in the family was low among all land holding groups. Their participation in money centred activities was low. But participation was very high in household, social and religions activities. Respondents' participation was high in initiation and supervision of household activities but it was low in control of money resources in the family.
19. A large number of respondents of all land holding groups were wholly and partially performing tasks related to farm. Respondents' participation was found low in tasks like irrigation, spraying of pesticides, marketing of farm produce and taking of loans. Seven per cent respondents mostly heads of the family, had to supervise number of farm works, performed more complicated activities at farm which were men centered. One third of the respondents supervised work partially.
20. Respondents' participation in buying and selling of livestock was low in all land holding groups. But in tasks related to care of livestock, participation was fairly high. The notable finding here was that respondents played a significant role in controlling of

money earned from livestock. In supervision two third of the respondents were occasionally involved.

21. Participation of respondents of all land holding groups in some of the tasks related to activities like growing of flowers, fruits and vegetables was low. Participation of men was more, mostly in controlling and supervising the activities. But in activities like beekeeping, poultry keeping, and stitching, respondents' participation was high in initiating, controlling and supervising.
22. The participation profile of respondents in various activities showed that percentage participation of respondents was moderate in household, farm and low in income generating activities and livestock activities.
23. Although large number of respondents were contributing income to the family through productive work, few managed their own earnings, few had full control over their earnings and were free to use their earnings. Few of them could invest a little bit of money monthly to run productive work.
24. In spite of playing a significant role in productive work, women were not involved in marketing of products of any type. All the sophisticated implements required for production were mostly in the custody of male members. Women had to work as labourers in all types of productive work and the production was mainly handled by the male members who kept the profits.

### Implications of the study

The findings of the investigation brought out a number of important implications :

1. Involvement of rural women in decision making was found to be very low in farm related tasks inspite of their high involvement in agricultural tasks. Therefore, there is a need to design courses and training programmes to educate and train women, both illiterate and literate specially to teach the process of decision making and importance of participation in decision making.
2. Management training and support can help the rural women to develop their potential qualities and enhance the sustainability of productive and skillful undertakings by them.
3. Involvement of rural women in decision making of SLH group was found to be low. Lack of education had emerged as the major constraint in involvement in decision making. Home economists, women development organisations, extension administrators and extension personnel have a significant role to play in educating the rural women through literacy programme.
4. Involvement of rural women in decisions related to financial matters and their participation in management of money such as savings, investment, taking of loans, keeping of accounts was very low. In such matters talks, discussions, exhibitions, and plays could be of

greater use. This had implications for agricultural universities, Home science colleges and other educational institutions in training women about credit and marketing facilities, to open accounts, invest money and take loans.

5. The above mentioned organizations should also motivate rural women to participate in various developmental programmes to increase their efficiency, to be more skillful. This may increase their empowerment status. Human development training programmes, agricultural skills and as mentioned above management training programmes should be formulated and rural women should be motivated to join them.

Recommendations for future research

A few suggestions for future research are submitted as under :

1. A comparative study of the management process i.e. decision making and decision implementing of the women of all three regions i.e. hills, bhabar and tarai needs to be undertaken.
2. Decision making is an important indicator of the empowerment status of women. A study can be planned to find out the indicators of the empowerment status of women of hill regions.

### Action programmes

The following action programmes need to be undertaken by the government and other welfare organizations.

1. The government needs to invest adequate amount of funds for conducting programmes related to management and development in four areas, viz., Household, farm, livestock management and income generation work.
2. The state government needs to arrange intensive literacy programmes accompanied by supportive human development training and essential agricultural skills and management training.
3. Women should be given experienced in decision making process, including participatory personnel management and budget management.

To solve the problems of women's low involvement in decision making process, the national policy and programmes should ensure adequate knowledge and training among women which will increase their skill in decision making, leading to more involvement in decision making process, and hence improving their empowerment status.