

Participation of Rural Women in Child Care, Education and Training in Pakistan

Humera Amin*, Tanveer Ali¹, Munir Ahmad¹, Anila Afzal² and Farhana Nosheen³

Department of Agriculture Extension, University Agriculture College of Sargodha, Pakistan

¹University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan

²Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan

³Department of Home Economics, Government College University, Faisalabad, Pakistan

Abstract

The study was planned to analyze the role of rural women in childcare, education and training of rural women, acknowledgment and their competency and capabilities in Tehsil Faisalabad. The population of this study consisted of all married couples (384 husbands and 384 wives) belonging to families engaged in agriculture in Tehsil Faisalabad. The frequency tables and descriptive statistics (Means, standard deviations) were obtained. Almost 9% husband, 46% wives and 6% both were involved in the child care. Similarly 9% husband, 51% wives and 26% both were involved in child education and training. As the house is considered first training institution of the children and mother as a first teacher, therefore, vocational institutes should be developed in the rural area to address the childcare and education.

Key words: Rural women, Child care, Education, Training, Pakistan

Introduction

In different spheres of life women's involvement is higher such as in food security, managing the household and some field activities. Women have primary responsibility of domestic activities, childcare, and education. In spite of all these, there is no recognition of their work even at home or in field activities. Even with the developments in capabilities of females in rural area, gender disparity still limits their access to health, resources, and information. Lack of their involvement in making decisions negatively affects their capabilities.

Most pertinent studies from the different countries over the world such as Australia, India, Canada, Sub-Saharan Africa, Afghanistan and Bangladesh were reviewed. Such studies concluded that housewives spent much time in family care as head members.

***Corresponding Author:** Humera Amin
Department of Agriculture Extension, University
Agriculture College of Sargodha, Pakistan
Email: humeraamin@yahoo.com

Sociologically a woman is abided to provide food and care of family members. If she is rearing young kids she has to spent more time for their look after.

(Biswas et al., 2001). Primary duties of rural women were childcare and domestic task. Along with these responsibilities in the house, woman had to work at farm also (Shaleesha and Stanley, 2000). The women are not involved only in domestic work. However, their mothering ability places them as persons who involve in look after of their kids (McIntyre et al., 2003). Voluntary look after duties, most of the time, create conflict with economic matters of their families (McPhee & Bronstein, 2002; Mason, 2003 and Tyyska, 2001). In paid employment rural women give preference to soft duties. Women want to be good performers in multidimensional duties at the same time they want to mothers (McPhee and Bronstein, 2002; Roy et al., 2004). Females are involved in various actions within the sphere of handicrafts along with their childcare and education (Grace, 2005). It was also noted that the rural women has participated in important roles in wide range of income generating activities and childcare (Pal, 2001). In rural families women have the basic responsibility of caring children (USAID, 1982).

Women undertook the responsibility of various household tasks including care of young ones and elder members. Along with these tasks they have to perform marketing tasks which enhance the burden notably (Nazli and Hamid, 2007). The operational situations for rural female were harsh and complicated (LFSP, 1994). Even the rural women have to carry out all essential chores such as childcare to make sure the living of the rural household. Moreover, females are usually subordinates to men. They are considered valuable for the childcare and other family activities (Sultana et al., 1994 and FAO, 1995). A study in Sindh was conducted involving lady health workers associated with the family planning along with health care programmes. It was reported that women were involved for the child health care such as feeding, bathing, medication (Omer et al. 2002; Akram, 2002).

Keeping in view the role of rural women in childcare, education and training the present study was planned to analyze the role of rural women, acknowledgment and their competency and capabilities in Tehsil Faisalabad. Ultimately these results will be helpful in policymaking and allocation of the resources to the rural women to make the optimum utilization for the improvement of literacy rate in rural areas.

Materials and Methods

Tehsil Faisalabad was selected as the universe for this study. From Faisalabad tehsil eight villages were selected at random. From each selected village 48 farm families were randomly selected, thus making a sample of 384 farm families comprising husband and wife leading to a total 768 respondents. The data were collected through a pre-tested interview schedule designed for this purpose. The data thus collected were analyzed and interpreted by using appropriate statistical package to draw the conclusions and to suggest measures for improvement.

All villages selected were canal irrigated and fertilized land for the crop production. Couples were selected for the interview. From each village 48 farm families (couples) were selected for interview (Hassan, 2008). From the eight villages farm families (husband & Wife) were selected for the interview. From each selected farm families one married couple was identified as respondent of the study.

The data from 768 respondents of 384 farm families were collected. The data collected were entered on Microsoft Excl[®] Spread Sheet. All the data were tested for the normality. The data were subjected to the analysis using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS[®]) version 10. The frequency tables and descriptive statistics (Means, standard deviations) were obtained. Further the frequencies were subjected to the analysis of variance using the SAS[®], 1998.

Results and Discussion

The study was designed to thrash out the role of rural women in home management and agricultural development in Tehsil Faisalabad. The results are submitted as under:

The level of education is the basic measure to determine the status of the society. In the literate society the population has better understanding and competency to cope with different household and agricultural activities. In present study the education was included in the interview schedule. The respondents were asked about their formal education in term of years. The years of education were categorized into illiterate (0 year), primary (5 year),

middle (8 year), Matriculation (10 year), Intermediate (12 year), Graduate (14 year) and Postgraduate (Above 14 years).

Educational status of the rural women may be attributed to the family system and its structure. If the family is dominated by the male gender by number then no female gets the opportunity of education. Therefore the family system was included in the study.

By definition, a family system functions because it is a unit, and every family member plays a critical, if not unique role in the system. As such, it is not possible that one member of the system can change without causing a ripple effect of change throughout the family system. Family is the foundation of the society and division of labour between the husband and wife and the care of their children is the most important functions of the family. The society has such family system known as civilized society. There are two different family systems present in our society; one is Joint family system and other nuclear family system. Family system plays a major role in the household and agricultural activities. The family system determines the role of husband and wife in our society. The respondents were asked whether they shifted after marriage or lived with their parents and now how many are the members of family. In the social context only two family systems prevail i.e. Joint and nuclear.

In our culture joint family system exists due to low-income level and limited resources available to them. Data regarding the family system revealed that most of the respondents were living in the joint family system (70.6%) However, 29.4% of respondents were living in nuclear family system. Observational data indicated that joint family system was mainly headed by the male and responsible for the upbringing of the dependents. Rural women of the joint families were involved more in the home management and agricultural activities. Joint family system helps to care each other and distribution of the off-farm and on-farm activities.

Naturally, mothers have a specific clearly defined role regarding the care of their children. Childcare includes nursing, bathing, feeding, etc. The women in side the boundary of the house govern mostly all these activities. These roles were selected to measure the involvement of the rural women in childcare along with the household chores. To measure the involvement in these roles different activities were selected and included in the interview schedule. These activities were easily understandable for the respondents.

The frequency of involvement in child care (5 sub-activities) was asked from husband and wife respondent separately. Their perceptions regarding

involvement of husband, wife, both and none of them in each activity as perceived separately by husband and wife respondents. Average calculations were made for involvement of husband, wife, both and none of them by the adding the frequencies of responses of both husband and wife respondents and then dividing the total by 2. These frequencies were used for analysis of variance (ANOVA). The analysis of variance shows that involvement of who (husband, wife, both and none of them.) significantly differs from each other. Means obtained from the analysis of variance were compared using the LSD test which show that the participation of wives was significantly higher (46%).

Mother has to provide more care to her kids. She can bear any hardship for her children. By culture, mother spends a considerable amount of time for holding, bathing, feeding children (Biswas, et al. 2001). Due to affection and loving nature of the mother she feels pleasure to engage in the childcare activities. Estimation of her involvement in the childcare can give an idea of her inputs in childcare.

It has been observed that wives were mainly involved in the all activities identified for the child care (feeding to the children, massaging children, examining to the doctor, and managing to take medicine to the children) except managing hair cutting, Husbands were mainly involved in for managing hair cutting (20.83%). The average contribution of wives in the childcare was (179) as compared to the husband (32) (Table 1).

It has been further revealed that average activity of rural wives was higher (179) as compared to the husband (32) Table 2. To the analysis of variance revealed that the roles of husband, wife or both were significantly differ from each other. Further the means obtained from the analysis of variance were compared using the least squared test. The least square difference test showed that the means having same letters are not considerably different from each others.

It is further revealed that mean number of individuals in each category (husband, wife, both, none of them) who performed different activities in child care roles were calculated by adding the (n) values of both husband and wife respondents in each category and their dividing total by the number of activities i.e. 5 in case of Table 1. The data are presented in Table 2. An ANOVA was seen and it was found that there were considerable differences between the means indicating that the mean involvement of wives was significantly that the mean involvement of husbands in the child care role.

Most of the rural females have strong desire to fulfill their responsibilities and expectations of being good mothers. By culture, rural women are responsible to

take care of their children. If children are small, mother spends a considerable time for feeding, holding and bathing. However, the adult ones remain unattended for some of the activities such as message, bathing, feeding. Mother has more affection to her kids, so she, can bear any hardship for her children. In this context a famous religious proverb "haven is beneath the mother's feet" revealed the importance of mother on account of her response.

Previous studies have indicated that the childcare is the primary duty of the rural women and their role is higher as compared to their husband (Shaleesha and Stanley, 2000). Mothering ability has placed women in the role of primary caretaker to the children (McIntyre et al., 2003; Mason, 2003). However, unpaid care giving responsibilities often conflict with occasions for women to provide economic activities for their families (McPhee and Bronstein, 2002; Mason, 2003; Tyyska, 2001). If they have choice to work for pay, they may also fulfill childcare responsibilities (McPhee and Bronstein, 2002). Moreover, women had a strong desire to succeed at the multiple responsibilities and expectations of being good mothers however, these roles are often frustrated by the context of poverty (Roy et al. 2004). It has been concluded that a special education and training should be arranged for the rural women to take care their kids in all respect to bring up a responsible member of the society.

Alongwith childcare, education and training of children is an important component, which is acknowledged by the different schools of thoughts. Therefore this segment was considered as an important part of the childcare and included in the present study. Informal education of the children depends upon the mother who spares more time for the care, education, and training. Mostly the mothering role is considered basic in the education and training. Both the husband and wives were asked to respond either yes or no regarding their involvement in the child education and training activities. The data collected concerning this aspect have been presented in Table 3 given on next page.

The frequency of involvement in child education and training activities (8 sub-activities) was asked from husband and wife respondent separately. Their perceptions regarding involvement of husband, wife, both and none of them in each activity as perceived separately by husband and wife respondents. Average calculations were made for involvement of husband, wife, both and none of them by the adding the frequencies of responses of both husband and wife respondents and then dividing the total by 2. The concerned data are presented Table 4. These frequencies were used for analysis of variance (ANOVA). The analysis of variance shows that

Table 1 Frequency distribution of husband and wife respondents according to their responses regarding child care

Role/Activity	Response of Husband(n=384)								Response of Wife(n=384)							
	Husband		Wife		Both		None of them		Husband		Wife		Both		None of them	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%
Feeding to the children	0	0	275	71.6	20	5.21	89	23.18	0	0	287	74.7	19	4.95	78	20.3
Massaging children	0	0	219	57	3	0.78	162	42.19	0	0	223	58.07	3	0.78	158	41.2
Taking children to the Doctor	75	19.53	145	37.6	30	7.81	134	34.9	71	18.49	165	42.97	28	7.29	120	31.3
Medicine to children	15	3.91	180	46.8	41	10.7	148	38.54	11	2.86	185	48.18	39	10.2	149	38.8
Managing hair cutting	80	20.83	55	14.3	19	4.95	230	59.9	77	20.05	62	16.15	15	3.91	230	59.9

Table 2 Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) of the respondents regarding the role in child care

Child Care	Husband	Wife	Both	None of them
Total average frequency	164.50	898.00	108.50	749.00
Mean	32.90	179.60	21.70	149.80
SD	39.52	82.58	13.83	53.51

Table 3 Frequency distribution of husband and wife respondents according to their response regarding their involvement in Education and Training of Children

Role/Activity	Response of Husband(n=384)								Response of Wife(n=384)							
	Husband		Wife		Both		None of them		Husband		Wife		Both		None of them	
	f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%
Creating interest in children to learn	50	13.02	120	31.3	211	55	3	0.78	48	12.5	135	35.16	198	51.6	3	0.78
Providing religious education	75	19.53	105	27.3	204	53.1	0	0	71	18.49	107	27.86	206	53.7	0	0
Managing formal education for children	35	9.11	175	45.6	44	11.5	130	33.85	30	7.81	193	50.26	32	8.33	129	33.6
Training regarding wearing dress	10	2.6	205	53.4	50	13	119	30.99	9	2.34	215	55.99	45	11.7	115	30
Train to respect elders	48	12.5	189	49.2	146	38	1	0.26	43	11.2	193	50.26	148	38.5	0	0
Teaching proper speaking manners	44	11.46	182	47.4	158	41.2	0	0	42	10.94	190	49.48	152	39.6	0	0
Teaching skills concerning home economics	0	0	310	80.7	0	0	74	19.27	0	0	325	84.64	0	0	59	15.4
Training regarding making Handicraft	20	5.21	239	62.2	15	3.91	110	28.65	19	4.95	255	66.41	10	2.6	100	26

Table 4 Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) and ranked order of the respondents regarding the role in education and training of children

Roles Training and Education of Children	Husband	Wife	Both	None of them
Total average frequency	272.00	1569	810	422
Mean	34.00	196.1	101	52.7
SD	23.69	66.14	85.7	58.2

involvement of who (husband, wife, both and none of them.) significantly differs from each other. Means obtained from the analysis of variance were compared using the LSD test which show that the participation of wives was significantly higher (51%). The data presented in Table 3 indicate that according to the participation of the husbands more number of wives were involved in almost all activities related to the education and training role. The participation ranged from 27.34% in case of providing religious education to their children to 80.73% in case of teaching skills to children (females) concerning home economics. The wives had similar perceptions. According to them their participation in providing religious education to their children was 27.86% and it was highest (84.64%) in case of teaching children (females) skills concerning home economics. The participation of husband was highest in providing religious education to their children (19.53% as per husband's perceptions and 18.49% as per wives perceptions). Their participation was nil in case of teaching skills regarding home economics. The overall participation of rural wives for child care and education was higher (196) in respect of their husbands (34).

It can be concluded from the data presented in Table 3 that in the rural areas of Faisalabad Tehsil the role women mainly perform education and training of children. The participation role of males (husbands) in this role is very limited (up to 12.5%). One of the implications of this finding is in order to change the future of the people of the study area (Faisalabad, Pakistan) female education must be emphasized and gender mainstreaming in education should be take care of by the provincial government. According to the identified gender roles in the study area, an educated woman (wife) can make the whole family educated and trained but an educated man may have the potential to earn more money to pay for the school fees of his children.

Almost all activities to education and training role were reported to be performed jointly as reported by 54.95% of husbands in case of training children regarding making handicrafts. These were about 30% of husbands and wives who reported that none of them (husband and wife) were even involved in activities related to managing formal education for their children; training children regarding wearing dress; training regarding making handicrafts. Grandfather or grand mothers may have done these activities.

The results of the study regarding childcare and education are in accordance with the results of Nazli and Hamid, 2007; Biswas et al. 2001; Cleaver and Schreiber, 1994; FAO, 1995; Rajika and Smith, 1997; Shaleesha and Stanley, 2000; McIntyre et al., 2003 and Grace, 2005).

There should be workshops arranged for the rural women with the purpose to educate them regarding the child education. As the house is considered first training institution of the children, and mother as a first teacher, therefore, vocational institutes should be developed in the rural area to address the childcare and education. Nepolien Bonapart once asked his nation, "Provide me educated mothers I will provide you the better society".

References

- Akram A, 2002. Water fetching and its impact on women's health. A case study of village Pothi Bala, district Poonch, AJK., M.Sc. Thesis, Anthropology, Quid-i-Azam University, Islamabad. .
- Biswas WK, D Bryce and P Bryce, 2001. Technology in Context for Rural Bangladesh: The Options from an Improved Cooking Stove for Women. Faculty of Engineering, University of Technology, Sydney, Australia.
- CDGF (City District Government Faisalabad), 2006. Pre-Emptying Poverty and Promoting Prosperity. Strategic development plan 2006-2011.
- Cleaver KM and GA Schreiber, 1994. Reversing the Spiral: The Population, Agriculture, Environment Nexus in Sub-Saharan Africa. Directions in Development Series. Washington, D.C. World Bank.
- FAO, 1995. Women agriculture and rural development, A synthesis report of the Near East Region, FAO, Rome.
- Grace J, 2005. Gender role in agriculture. Case studies of five villages in northern Afghanistan. Afghanistan Research and Evaluation Unit, Afghanistan.
- Hassan YZM, 2008. Analysis of the obstacles to gender mainstreaming in agricultural extension in the Punjab, Pakistan: A case study of District Muzaffargarh. PhD Thesis, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad, Pakistan.
- LFSP, 1994. Labour Force Survey of Pakistan. Fedral Bureau of Statistics, Islamabad, Pakistan.
- Mason A, 2003. Population change and economic development: What have we learnt from the East Asia experience? Applied Population and Policy 1: 3-14.
- McIntyre L, NT Glanville, KD Raine, JB Dayle, B Anderson and N Battaglia, 2003. Do low-income lone mothers compromise their nutrition to feed their children. Canadian Medical Association Journal, 168: 686-691.

Participation of rural women in child care

- McPhee DM and LR Bronstein, 2002. The journey from welfare to work: Learning from women living in poverty. *Affilia*, 18: 34-48.
- Nazli H and S Hamid, 2007. Concerns of food security, role of gender, and intrahousehold dynamics in Pakistan.
- Omer K, NM Ansari, S Mhatre and N Andersson, 2002. Evidence-led training and communication tools for lady health workers in Sindh, Pakistan. Final Tech. Report. CIET in collaboration with the National Programme for Family Planning and Primary Health Care. Govt. of Sindh, Pakistan.
- Pal MS, 2001. Women in Bangladesh: country briefing paper. Asian Development Bank. Pp: 798-821.
- Rajika B and J Smith, 1997. Rural women in India: Assessment of educational constraints and the need for new educational approaches. *J. Research in Rural Education*. 13: 183-196.
- Roy TK, S Kulkarni, and Y Vaidehi, 2004. Social Inequalities in Health and Nutrition in Selected States. *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol 34, No 7, February 14-20.
- Shaleesha A and VA Stanley, 2000. Involvement of rural women in aquaculture: An innovative approach. *Naga*. The ICLARM 23: 3.
- Sultana N, H Nazli and SJ Malik, 1994. Determinants of female time allocation in selected districts of Pakistan. *The Pakistan Development Review*. 33: 4.
- Tyyska V, 2003. Women, citizenship and Canadian child care policy in the 1990s. Occasional Paper 13, 2001. Retrieved November 23, 2006 from <http://www.childcarecanada.org/pubs/op13/index.html>.
- USAID, 1982. (United States Agency for International Development and Washington Development Associates) *Land and Labor in Guatemala: An Assessment*, Washington DC.