



Family Related Factors and Self Concept as Variables in Professional Women Decision-Making

KEYWORDS

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ABSTRACT *The objective of the present study is to reveal the decision-making pattern of professional women who are working as doctors, engineers, lawyers and teachers. Stratified random sampling technique was employed. Sample of 120 professional women with age groups of 25-45 years were selected for the study. Tools used were decision-making pattern inventory constructed by the investigator; self-concept test by Raj Kumar Saraswat. The study showed that there existed a significant difference in decision-making pattern of women doctors, engineers, lawyers and women teachers. In case of professional women, decisions at home are dominated by mother/ mother-in-law and other family members, which are followed by wife. Further, decision-making pattern of professional women having small family significantly differed from those having large family. Decision-making pattern of respondents having high self-concept and average self-concept differ significantly. Then, significant difference existed in the decision-making pattern of professional women according to their type of family. Also, significantly less difference existed in the decision-making pattern of married and unmarried professional women.*

INTRODUCTION

Concept of Decision-Making

Decision-making is the cognitive process leading to the selection of a course of action among several alternatives. Every decision-making process produces a final choice. It can be an action or an opinion. It begins when we need to do something but don't know what. Therefore, decision-making is a reasoning process, which can be rational or irrational, can be based on explicit assumptions.

Different areas of Decision-Making: An effort has been made to select such decisions by widening decision areas making them relevant to both sexes in their culture context.

- Decisions relating to expenditure on food
- Decisions relating to expenditure on entertainment
- Decisions relating to visiting friends
- Decisions relating to children's education
- Decisions relating to expenditure on clothing
- Decisions relating to house hold items
- Decisions relating to savings

Meaning of self concept

Self-concept is an individual's perception of self. It is termed as an organization of qualities the individual attributes to himself and a system of central meaning he has about himself and his relation to the world himself (Kinch, 1968). Self-concept is a person's inner world, a composite of a person's thoughts, feeling, strivings, hopes, fears and fantasies and his attitudes pertaining to his worth (Jersild, 1952).

Review of Related Literature

Das (2014) found that the participation in the panchayat raj election is mostly influenced by their male counterpart. Only 16.25 percent of the women have given view regarding the self-motivation behind participation in PRIs. This poor level of awareness is due to the existing illiteracy among the rural women, secondly, they are also politically illiterate and thus are not politically conscious; thirdly, they are dependent on their male counterpart and thus, finds no need of gathering knowledge or have no queries too.

Jan and Akhtar (2014) got highly significant differences between married and unmarried women, related to their empowerment. Women generally possess low decision making power and are mainly dependent on masculine and/or familial decision making. Mohanty, et.al. (2013) studied capacity building and decision-making of rural Odisha women through participation in microenterprises. The results reveal that the range of economic activities led by the microenterprises helped the rural Odisha women to earn income of their own. Jefford (2012) found that Mid-wives take a woman-centred approach to care and need to be able to make an independent decision if and when the woman is unable to participate fully in decision making. Kiran, et.al. (2011) explored that majority of the women had medium or low level of empowerment. Further women who were illiterate/less educated were less empowered and generally belong to the scheduled caste category. Swain and Wallentin (2008) studied indicators of women empowerment that include involvement in decision-making on family planning, on children's marriage, on buying and selling of property, on sending daughter to school and use of birth control. In an explicit study on women empowerment in society and family by Kumar and Paul (2007) revealed that it is closely linked to decision-making process and autonomy in decision-making is measured in terms of participation of women in household responsibilities. Malhotra (2003) identified some interpersonal indicator of women empowerment such as women's participation in decision making, control over sexual relations, ability to make child bearing decisions, use of contraceptives and obtain abortions, control over spouse selection, marriage timing and freedom from violence. Vigil, et. al. (2013) explored four factors that affect decision-making: commitment to the single role of motherhood; perceiving that mothers were happiest as homemakers; lack of confidence in planning for multiple roles, and active involvement in the decision-making process. Roth and Mbyzo (2001) found that both partners educated and in couples in which women work for pay, both partners were significantly more likely to report that both of them participate in the final decisions than where the couples without education or in which the wife did not work for pay. Lait and Rehmat (2001) found that men's retirement has a differ-

ent impact than women's retirement on decisions about household affairs and performance of feminine tasks. Marieke (2001) argued in his study that perception of social support were based on part in the structural conditions of individual marital arrangements, specifically household decision of labour and decision making. The study suggested the structural arrangements within marriages likely impact individuals perceptions of social support and that the closer couples come to equal labour and decision making in the household, the more supported each partner is likely to feel. Women play a great role in over all development and progress of the nation. But their participation in different fields either directly or indirectly is still behind in many aspects. In most cases, women are considered inferior to men, and their life is restricted within the four walls of the house. For taking any decision, less power is given to women, as they have the right to take decisions regarding various items, as that of the men. So, in order to make women aware about their influence on society, nation and for attaining their respectable status within the family, the present study was undertaken. Rights should be given to women, to make decisions regarding various aspects in the family and society. Thus, the present study is under taken to highlight the areas where women lag behind in their decision making power.

Objectives

- To know the decision-making pattern of women doctors, women engineers and women lawyers and women teachers.
- To find out the decision-making pattern of professional women having low and high self-concept.
- To reveal the decision-making pattern of professional women having small and large family.
- To explore the decision-making pattern of professional women having nuclear and joint families.
- To find out the decision-making pattern of married and unmarried professional women.

Hypothesis

- There is a significant difference in decision-making pattern of women as doctors, engineers, lawyers and teachers.
- Decision-making pattern of professional women varies with the level of self-concept.
- Decision-making pattern of professional women having small family significantly differs from those having large family.
- Significant difference exists in the decision-making pattern of professional women according to their type of family.
- No significant difference exists in the decision-making pattern of married and unmarried professional women.

Sample

Respondents of the study were women belonging to different professions and it was dedicated to collect information from 120 professional women. The distribution of sample of women as doctors, lawyers, teachers and engineers (30 each). According to the size of family of respondents: small family (100), large family (20). According to the type of family of respondents: nuclear (90), joint (30). According to the type of family of respondents: unmarried (80), married (40).

Design

To collect the data, stratified random sampling technique was employed. Four groups were formed namely doctors, engineers, lawyers and teachers. 30 respondents from each

strata were collected randomly from different places.

Tools

Two tests were employed to collect data from respondents keeping in mind the objectives of the study.

- Decision-making pattern inventory constructed by the investigator.
- Self-concept test by Raj Kumar Saraswat.

Procedure

The self-constructed questionnaire to know the decision-making pattern was administered to 120 professional women. The data were collected using stratified random sampling technique. The respondents were given instructions how to fill up all these items and were instructed not to have any item blank. After collection of data, it was tabulated according to different categories as per the objectives of the present study, total responses were obtained for each category. The responses thus, obtained were statistically treated.

Statistical Analysis

Percentage calculations were calculated to analyze the data for different variables.

Results

H1: There is no Significant Difference in Decision-making pattern of women as doctors, engineers, lawyers and teachers: The first hypothesis of present study was to find out the decision-making pattern of respondents namely women doctors, engineers, lawyers and teachers. Percentage calculations were done and the results have been represented in table 1.

Table 1: Decision-making Pattern of Women as Doctors, Engineers, Lawyers and Teachers

Profession	Percentage of Decisions Dominated by			
	Husband	Self	Mother/Mother-in-law	Others (Father-in-law, son, daughter)
Doctor	20	42	21	17
Engineer	29	41	20	10
Lawyer	34	35	20	11
Teacher	22	48	28	02

The results of above table reveal that the mostly decisions are taken by the women in the family. In case of women doctors 42% decisions have been taken by wife, 20% by husband followed by 21% mother-in-law. In case of women as engineers, 29% decisions have been taken by husband and 41% by wife. Further, in case of women as layers 34% decisions have been taken by husbands, 35% by wife, 20% by Mother-in-law and 11% decisions are taken by other family members. Then in case of women as teachers, it has been found that wife plays a dominant role in taking household decisions. 48% decisions have been taken by wife, 22% by husband, 28% by mother-in-law and only 2% by other family members.

H2: Decision-making Pattern of Professional Women vis-a-vis their Self-Concept: The second hypothesis of the present study was to find out variance in decision-making pattern of professional women vis-a-vis their self-concept. To know the significant difference in decision-making pattern of respondents with respect to their self-concept, two groups were formed, respondents having high self-concept and those having average self-concept. Decision-making pattern of respondents were compared using chi-square

test. The results have been represented in table 2.

Table 2: Decision-making Pattern of Professional Women vis-a-vis the Self-concept of Respondents

	Percentage of Decisions Dominated by			
	Husband	Self	Mother/ Mother-in-Law	Others (Father-in-Law, Son, Daughter)
Average Self-concept	20	25	27	28
High Self-Concept	22	39	20	19

The table 2 indicates that decision-making pattern of respondents having average self-concept and higher self-concept differ significantly. In case of women with average self-concept, it has been found that wife plays an average role in taking household decisions and each category participates almost equally in decision-making. In case of women with high self-concept, it has been found that wife plays a dominant role in talking household decisions. As compare to women with low self-concept, the women with high self-concept takes as much as 39% (14% more than low concept women).

H3: Decision-making pattern of Professional Women having small family significantly differs from those having large family: The third hypothesis of the present study was to find decision-making pattern of professional women having small family significantly differs from those having large family. Percentage calculations have been applied and results have been represented in table 3

Table 3: Decision-making Pattern of Professional women vis-a-vis size of family (in %)

Family Size	Percentage of Decisions Dominated by			
	Husband	Self	Mother/ Mother-in-Law	Others (Father-in-law, son, daughter)
Large	26	14	48	32
Small	35	45	15	05

The findings in the table 3 indicates that in large families 48% decisions have been taken by mother/ mother-in-law, whereas 32% by other family members only 14% by self (wife). While in small families, 45% decisions have been taken by self (wife), 35% by husband and 15% by mother/ mother-in-law.

H4: Significant difference exists in the Decision-making Pattern of Professional women according to their type of family: The fourth hypothesis of the present study was to find significant difference in the Decision-making Pattern of Professional women according to their type of family. Nuclear family means only husband, wife and their children live together and joint family is one where parents of husband/ wife and brother, sister of husband/ wife also live with them. Percentage calculations have been applied and results have been represented in table 4.

Table 4: Decision-making pattern of professional women vis-a-vis type of family (in %)

Type of family	Percentage of Decisions Dominated by			
	Husband	self	Mother/ Mother-in-law	Others (Father-in-law, son, daughter)
Nuclear	26	35	20	19
Joint	12	25	40	23

The findings in the table 4 reveal that in nuclear families, 35% decisions have been taken by wife (self) followed by 26% by husband, 20% by mother-in-law and 19% by other family members. In joint families, 40% decisions by mother-in-law, 25% by self (wife), 23% by other family members and only 12% by husband.

H5: Significant difference exists in the Decision-making Pattern of married and unmarried Professional women:

The fifth hypothesis of the study was to find that significant difference in the Decision-making pattern of married and unmarried professional women, for it, percentage calculations were done and results have been presented in table 5.

Table 5: Decision-making pattern of Professional women vis-a-vis the marital status of respondents (in %).

Marital Status	Percentage of Decisions Dominated by			
	Husband	Self	Mother/ Mother-in-law	Others (Father-in-law, Son, Daughter)
Unmarried	-	14	53	33
Married	30	50	10	10

The table 5 indicates that when the role of married and unmarried women have been considered, 50% decisions are taken by self in the case of married ones, whereas only 14% decisions are taken by them in case of unmarried ones. Mothers take 53% decisions in case of unmarried ones. So it is clear that mostly very small percentage of decisions are taken by unmarried women and majority of them are taken with the help of other family members.

Conclusion

- In the modern age the professional women especially teachers have a great role in the decision-making in her family.
- In case of professional women, decisions at home are dominated by mother-in-laws and other family members, which are followed by wife.
- There exists a significant difference in decision-making pattern of women doctors, engineers, and lawyer's and women teachers.
- Decision-making pattern of respondents having high self-concept and average self-concept differ significantly.
- In large families, mother/ mother-in-law followed by father-in-law dominates decisions. In small families, wife followed by husband and mother-in-law dominates decision.
- There is a significant difference in decision-making pattern relating to family decisions in large and small family.
- In nuclear families, the decisions are dominated by wife followed by husbands. In joint families, decisions are dominated by mother-in-law followed by daughter-in-law.
- Un-married women take mostly very small percentage of decisions and majority of them are taken with the help of other family members.
- Decision-making pattern of married women significantly differ from decision-making pattern of unmarried women.
- In the modern society, the mostly decisions are taken by mother/father of the women. So, it is clear that interference of women parents is much more in the family of her daughter.

Suggestions for Further Research

- Research study pertaining to decision-making pattern as perceived by men can also be conducted.
- Decision-making pattern as perceived by different members of family can be conducted and compared.
- Women should be made aware of techniques to take right decisions at right time and there should be interventions to make them able to take decisions out of family too.
- Daughters should be encouraged to help in taking decisions at home.

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