

**FAMILY DECISION-MAKING PATTERN OF HUSBAND AND WIFE: AN
URBAN CASE STUDY IN BANGLADESH**

By

RAHIMA KHANAM

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra
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DEDICATION

**TO MY PARENTS (LATE MD. SHAMSUL BARI AND ANOWARA BEGUM),
HUSBAND (DR. M. MAHFUZUL HOQUE) AND SONS (SANI M. RIZWANUL
HOQUE AND ONI M. ENAMUL HOQUE)**

Abstract of thesis submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Chairman: Associate Professor Jariah Masud, Ph.D.

Faculty: Human Ecology

The focus of the study was on family decision-making pattern of husband and wife. Family decision-making pattern of husband and wife was operationalised as who makes decisions and to what extent husband and wife were involved in decision-making regarding allocation of resources within the family.

The study was conducted in Mymensingh district of Bangladesh. The sample of the study consisted of 60 couples with nonworking wives and 60 couples with working wives from selected areas of Mymensingh district, Bangladesh. The data were collected using the questionnaires based on

interview technique. In addition, qualitative data were also collected as supportive material using focus group discussion.

The study found that husbands with nonworking wives had more involved in family decisions compared to their wives. Both husbands and wives of couple with working wives jointly shared decisions on family matters.

The context of the research explored the variables that significantly contribute to explaining the variation of the family decision-making pattern of husbands and wives. The results of multiple regression analyses in the wives' model showed that wives' education and employment were found to have a positive effect on wives' involvement in family decision-making. The results of multiple regression analyses in stepwise method also showed that for model 1 and 2, R square was 44 percent and 56 percent. Between the two (education and employment) predictor variables, wives' education was found to contribute more significantly towards wives' involvement in family decision-making.

The husbands' model revealed that wives' employment and wives' education had a negative effect on husbands' involvement in family decision-making. While husbands' gender ideology and husbands' training had a positive effect on husbands' involvement in family decision-making. The results

of multiple regression analyses in stepwise method also revealed that for model 1, 2, 3, and 4, R Square were 34 percent, 42 percent, 45 percent and 47 percent respectively. Among the four predictor variables, wives' employment was found to contribute more significantly towards husbands' involvement in family decision-making. These findings indicated that wives who are unemployed their husbands tend to have more involved in family decision-making. Access to education and training provide women with opportunities to participate in economic activities outside home, which increase their status and enhance their role to make decision regarding allocation of resources within the family. Women's involvement in family decision-making contributes to women's empowerment.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah.

**POLA MEMBUAT KEPUTUSAN KELUARGA DI KALANGAN SUAMI ISTERI:
SATU BANDAR KES KAJIAN DI BANGLADESH**

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Kajian ini memfokus kepada pola membuat keputusan keluarga di kalangan suami isteri. Pola membuat keputusan keluarga dioperasionalisasikan sebagai siapa membuat keputusan dan sejauh mana suami dan isteri terlibat dalam membuat keputusan mengenai pengagihan sumber-sumber dalam keluarga.

Kajian dijalankan di daerah Mymensingh, Bangladesh. Sampel kajian terdiri daripada 60 pasangan dengan isteri tidak bekerja dan 60 pasangan dengan isteri bekerja dari kawasan-kawasan terpilih di daerah Mymensingh, Bangladesh. Data dikumpul menggunakan borang soal selidik berasaskan kaedah temubual. Sebagai tambahan, data kualitatif turut dikumpul sebagai bahan sokongan melalui perbincangan kumpulan fokus.

Kajian mendapati suami dengan isteri yang tidak bekerja mempunyai lebih kuasa untuk membuat keputusan keluarga berbanding isteri. Kedua-dua suami isteri dari pasangan dengan isteri bekerja berkongsi membuat keputusan tentang hal-ehwal keluarga.

Konteks penyelidikan ini meneliti pembolehubah yang signifikan dalam menghurai variasi pola membuat keputusan di kalangan suami isteri. Dapatan analisis regresi berganda ke atas model isteri menunjukkan bahawa pendidikan dan pekerjaan isteri mempunyai kesan positif terhadap penglibatan isteri dalam membuat keputusan keluarga. Hasil kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa melalui kaedah “stepwise” yang dijalankan ke atas model 1 dan 2, R persegi (*R square*) ialah 44 peratus dan 56 peratus. Antara kedua-dua pembolehubah ramal, pendidikan isteri didapati menyumbang dengan lebih signifikan ke arah penglibatan isteri dalam membuat keputusan keluarga.

Model suami pula membuktikan bahawa pekerjaan dan pendidikan isteri mempunyai kesan negatif terhadap penglibatan suami dalam membuat keputusan keluarga. Sementara itu, ideologi gender dan latihan suami mempunyai kesan positif terhadap penglibatan suami dalam membuat keputusan keluarga. Hasil kajian juga membuktikan bahawa melalui kaedah

“stepwise” ke atas model 1, 2, 3, dan 4, R persegi ialah masing-masing 34 peratus, 42 peratus, 45 peratus dan 47 peratus. Di antara keempat pembolehubah ramal, pendidikan isteri didapati menyumbang dengan lebih signifikan ke arah penglibatan suami dalam membuat keputusan keluarga. Dapatan ini menunjukkan bahawa suami kepada isteri yang tidak bekerja lebih cenderung untuk terlibat dalam membuat keputusan keluarga. Pendidikan dan latihan menyediakan lebih peluang kepada wanita untuk mengambil bahagian dalam aktiviti ekonomi di luar rumah, seterusnya meningkatkan status dan menambah kuasa mereka membuat keputusan mengenai pengagihan sumber-sumber dalam keluarga. Penglibatan wanita dalam membuat keputusan keluarga menyumbang ke arah pemberian lebih kuasa dan status boleh meningkatkan wanita.

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I certify that an Examination Committee met on 2nd October 2003 to conduct the final examination of Rahima Khanam on her Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled "Family Decision-Making Pattern of Husband and Wife: An Urban Case Study in Bangladesh" in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulations 1981. The committee recommends that the candidate be awarded the relevant degree. Members of the Examination Committee are as follows:

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work except for quotations and citations, which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at UPM or other institutions.

RAHIMA KHANAM

Date:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

BAU	Bangladesh Agricultural University
BBS	Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics
BFRI	Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institution
BINA	Bangladesh Institute of Nuclear Agricultural
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
DANIDA	Danish Development Agency
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HNWG	Husbands with Nonworking Wives Group
HWWG	Husbands with Working Wives Group
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NWG	Nonworking Wives Group
PC	Pourosova Commissioner
RM	Ringgit Malaysian
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
TNO	Thana Nirbahi Officer
TK	Taka Bangladeshi
UNDP	United National Development Programme
UPM	Universiti Putra Malaysia
WAPDA	Water and Power Development Agency
WWG	Working Wives Groups

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Throughout the world, irrespective of class, religion, society, status, education, skill and income women in general are in a subordinated position. Worldwide recognition of this fact as well as the unequal participation of women in development process has created a global awareness of the issue. The western women's movements for equal right in the 1960's and 1970's have brought about much praise and criticism especially from male and female observers from developing countries.

As a result, the First World Conference on Women was held in Mexico in 1975, which declared 1975 as the International Women Year and the subsequent ten years (1976-1985) as the United Nations Decade for Women. It was the first global effort to give recognition to women's active participation in the economic development of a nation as well as for the family's well being. During the years 1975 to 1985, declared as the Decade for Women, efforts

were focused on highlighting the important roles of women and on documenting women's inequitable position in society and in the development process.

The Women in Development (WID) approach began from an acceptance of existing social structures, rather than an examination of why women had fared less from development strategies during the past decades. The WID approach focused only on how women could better be integrated into ongoing development initiatives (Moser, 1989). The WID approach offered little defense against this reality because it did not challenge the basic social relations of gender.

Later, the WAD (Women and Development) approach emerged in the second half of the 1970s. It focuses on the relation between women and development processes rather than purely on strategies for the integration of women into development (Rathgeber, 1990). Its point of departure is that women always have been important economic actors in societies and that the work they do both inside and outside the household is central to the maintenance of those societies but that this integration serves primarily international structures of inequality.

Furthermore, a shift in approach, principally in academic research, has recognised limitations of focusing on women in isolation and has drawn attention to Gender and Development Analysis (GDA) (Okaley, 1972 and Rubin, 1975). Women were concerned about the manner in which the problems concerning women were perceived in terms of their sex, namely their biological

differences from men, rather than in terms of their gender, that is the social relationship between men and women, in which women have been systematically subordinated (Oakley, 1972)

According to Whitehead (1979) men and women play different roles in society with their gender difference shaped by ideological, historical, religious, ethnic, economic and cultural determinants.

Gender is defined as a socially constructed role ascribed to males and females; these roles are learned, change over time and vary widely within and between cultures (Rathgeber, 1990). Culture comprises attitudes and emotions, customs and human values. It is articulated that a man's culture and a woman's culture are different, being dependent on their customs and practice (Subbamma, 1985).