**The Partıcıpatıon of Rural Women In Decısıons Case of Karapınar Dıstrıct of Konya Provınce**

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| **Abstract**  The aim of the study is to determine the participation of women living in rural areas in decisions. The main material of the study consists of the results of the survey conducted with women in the Karapınar district of Konya. The sample size was chosen purposefully, and questionnaires were conducted face-to-face with 20 women who voluntarily participated in the survey in Karapınar. The land assets, livestock, agricultural and non-agricultural incomes of the enterprises were determined by simple percentage calculations over the averages. The roles of women living in rural areas in the family and the level of women's participation in decisions were calculated with the Likert scale. It has been determined that the spouses decide together on matters related to the house, the purchase of agricultural tools and machinery necessary for agricultural production, the type of product, and the fact that women work in a job other than agriculture. Women, on the other hand, only decide which party to vote for in the elections. Training to be given to businesses or any fair, excursion, etc. Women's participation in activities should be ensured, and their communication with the outside world should be strengthened. |
| Keywords: Konya, Participation in Decisions, Rural Women |

1. **Introduction**

Women living in rural areas in underdeveloped and developing countries are heavily involved in agricultural production activities. However, in these countries, female farmers are eight times less likely than men to independently own agricultural land and inputs [1]. Women's labor in the agricultural sector is the unregistered, uninsured, and unpaid family workers. Women's labor is seen as a part of their natural life and causes low job perception [2]. The rate of women's participation in agricultural production varies between countries and regions. Although this difference takes shape according to culture and beliefs, other socio-economic factors are also effective [3]. Rural women differ from urban women in terms of their traditional values and the duties they undertake [4]. While women in rural areas do household chores such as cleaning, childcare, fuel supply, bread making, and feeding, they also engage in plant and animal production, handicrafts, non-agricultural work, and income-generating activities [[5](#_ENREF_4)]. Recently, women are expected to contribute to family welfare, and this trend is increasing day by day given the rapidly increasing cost of living [[6](#_ENREF_4)]. In rural areas, women constitute the main force of rural development [[7](#_ENREF_4)]. The World Bank supports “community-based development" especially in low and middle-income countries. Community-Based Development programs are an approach that works with the principles of transparency, participation, demand-oriented, accountability, and local capacity building [[8](#_ENREF_4)]. Rural development is formed by ensuring individuals' participation in development programs, the democratic participation process, and decisions that will respond to local needs. Therefore, the participation of women in decisions is very important.

In many democratic societies, important gender-related protocols are in place aimed at attracting women to decision-making roles. However, despite the implementation of these protocols, these societies face the challenge of increasing the visibility of women working in the public and other sectors in decision-making roles [[9](#_ENREF_4)].

Women's participation in family decisions, age of women, education level, average monthly income of the family, working status of women, and having children affect decision-making. Generally, women decide on household chores, and the majority of women who decide on this are working. In order to reduce the burden on working women in order to ensure conformity with the contemporary and social family structure and to improve the democratic decision-making process in the family, the participation of men in decisions regarding housework should be ensured [[1](#_ENREF_4)0]. For this reason, the aim of the research is to determine the participation of women living in the rural areas of Konya, which has large agricultural lands, in the decisions.

1. **Materials and Methods**

The main material of the study consists of the results of the survey conducted with women in the Karapınar district of Konya. The main material of the research was the primary data obtained from the questionnaires made with the women in the agricultural enterprises engaged in agricultural production. The sample size was chosen purposefully, and questionnaires were conducted face-to-face with 20 women who voluntarily participated in the survey in Karapınar.

Age, education, social security, and status of women living in rural areas in Konya Province Karapınar District were determined by simple percentage calculations over the averages. The land assets, livestock, agricultural and non-agricultural incomes of the enterprises were determined by simple percentage calculations over the averages.

The roles of women living in rural areas in the family and the level of women's participation in decisions were calculated with a Likert scale. It was interpreted by creating graphs in Excel. The Likert scale is one of the attitude measurement methods and is included in the group of graduated scales. The basic approach in the Likert scale is to give judgments about the researched subject and to rate the concentration on these judgments. For this purpose, the factor is determined first, and each factor is turned into a question in accordance with the scale conditions. Then, scale scores are created for these questions, which indicate the degree of participation of the individuals. Individuals whose attitude analysis will be made determine their own scores according to their level of participation. The scale value of the person is found with the scores calculated for the degree of participation [[1](#_ENREF_4)1]. With this value obtained, the rating of the factors that determine the attitude or attitude of the individual towards an event is made [[1](#_ENREF_4)2]. Likert scales were used as follows [[1](#_ENREF_4)1](Likert, 1932).

1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Undecided, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly agree. 1: Never, 2: A few days a year, 3: A few days a month, 4: A few days a week, 5: Every day.

1. **Results and Discussion**

72.10% of the population in the research region is in the 15-59 age group, 12.04% is in the 7-14 age group, 12.04% is in the 50-+ age group and 11.43% is in the 0-6 age group. 48.28% of the population is male and 51.72% is female.

Table 1. Population status in the research area (Number %)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age | Gender | Number | Ratio of Total Population | Ratio of Age Groups to Total Population (%) |
| 0-6 | Male | 0.10 | 4.76 | 11.43 |
| Female | 0.15 | 6.67 |
| 7--14 | Male | 0.25 | 11.90 | 12.04 |
| Female | 0.30 | 0.13 |
| 15-49 | Male | 1.50 | 71.43 | 72.10 |
| Female | 1.50 | 0.67 |
| 50-+ | Male | 0.25 | 11.90 | 12.04 |
| Female | 0.30 | 0.13 |
| Total | Male | 2.10 | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| Female | 2.25 | 100.00 |

48.19% of the population in the research region are primary school graduates, 28.92% are high school graduates, 14.46% are secondary school graduates and 8.43% are university graduates. 52.50% of primary school graduates are female and 44.19% are male. According to the results of a similar study, it has been determined that there is no clear difference between the level of education and the participation of women in the decision-making mechanism related to agricultural production [[1](#_ENREF_4)3].

Table 2. Educational status of the population in the research region (Number %)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Educational Status | Gender | Number | % |
| Primary school | Male | 0.95 | 44.19 |
| Female | 1.05 | 52.50 |
| Middle school | Male | 0.35 | 16.28 |
| Female | 0.25 | 12.50 |
| High school | Male | 0.75 | 34.88 |
| Female | 0.45 | 22.50 |
| University | Male | 0.1 | 4.65 |
| Female | 0.25 | 12.50 |
| Total | Male | 2.15 | 51.81 |
| Female | 2.00 | 48.19 |

Considering the social security status of the population in the research region, 54.55% are Bağkur and 45.45% are social insurance institutions (SSK).

Table 3. Social security status of the population in the research region (Number %)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Social Security Status | Gender | Number | % |
| Bağkur | Male | 0.80 | 57.14 |
| Female | 1.00 | 52.63 |
| SSK | Male | 0.60 | 42.86 |
| Female | 0.90 | 47.37 |
| Total | Male | 1.40 | 100.00 |
| Female | 1.90 | 100.00 |

Considering the ownership status of the lands in the research area, 65.48% is property land, 17.86% is rent and 16.67% is common land.

Table 4. Ownership status of lands in the research area (da,%)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Decar | % |
| Property | 41.25 | 65.48 |
| Rent | 11.25 | 17.86 |
| Partner | 10.50 | 16.67 |
| Total | 63.00 | 100.00 |

Considering the production pattern of the lands in the research area, wheat is grown at 51.98%, barley at 20.63%, corn at 10.71%, alfalfa at 10.32%, sugar beet at 4.76%, and carrot at 1.59%.

Table 5. Land production pattern in the research area (da, %)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Decar | % |
| Wheat | 32.75 | 51.98 |
| Barley | 13.00 | 20.63 |
| Sweetcorn | 6.75 | 10.71 |
| Clover | 6.50 | 10.32 |
| Sugar beet | 3.00 | 4.76 |
| Carrot | 1.00 | 1.59 |
| Total | 63.00 | 100.00 |

The livestock assets of the enterprises in the research area are considered cattle and small cattle. 57.14% of the bovine stock is the cow and 42.86% is the calf. All of the small cattle are sheep.

Table 6. Presence of cattle and sheep in the research area (Head %)

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Cattle Assets | Head | % |
| Cow | 2.40 | 57.14 |
| Calf | 1.80 | 42.86 |
| Total | 4.20 | 100.00 |
| Small Animal Presence | | |
| Sheep | 56.25 | 100.00 |
| Goat | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Total | 56.25 | 100.00 |

When looking at the tools and machines used in the research area, it was determined that the tractors and trailers were the most.

Graphic1. Agricultural tools and machinery in the research area

The total annual income of the individuals in the research region is 125,126 TL. 71% of this income consists of agricultural income and 29% of non-agricultural income.

Graphic 2. Agricultural and non-agricultural income (%)

It has been determined that the women in the research region do post-meal cleaning, washing dishes, purchasing food, making beds, and cleaning the house every day.

Graphic 3. Jobs of women in the study area

The power to decide on any issue in the daily life of the individual is called "decision-making". Decision-making is the process of choosing among alternatives according to the values and preferences of the individual [[1](#_ENREF_4)4] (Harris, 2008). Participation of participants in the decision-making process can be affected by their perceptions of their decision-making rights [[1](#_ENREF_4)5] (Arshad et al., 2010).

Considering the situation of rural women deciding on household expenditures, it has been determined that 55% of them decide together and 45% of them are made by their spouses.

Graphic 4. Decision-making on household expenses

When the participation of rural women in family decisions are examined, it has been determined that the spouses decide together to purchase clothing (3.15), household goods (3.05), the number of children desired to have (2.95), the expenditure of family income (2.80), the purchase of equipment (2.65) and the use of new technological tools (2.55). It has been determined that the man decides to buy and sell the land (2.40), work in a non-agricultural job (2.35), produce a new agricultural product (2.2), and sell the products (2.2). It has been determined that only women decide which political party to vote for in the elections.

Graphic 5. Rural women's participation in family decisions

(1: Female, 2: Male, 3: Spouses together, 4: With family members)

When the participation of rural women in business decisions is examined, it has been determined that they do not participate in the decisions of purchasing land (1.80), renting land (1.65), purchasing animals (1.65), and selling animals (1.65). It has been determined that they do not agree with the decisions of employing foreign workers (1.40), purchasing tools and machinery (1.40), using credit (1.40), selling products (1.40), participating in agricultural training (1.35), land processing (1.30), using fertilizers (1.25) and using pesticides (1.15).

Graphic 6. Participation of rural women in business decisions

(1: Strongly Disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Undecided, 4: Agree, 5: Strongly Agree)

Looking at the information sources used by rural women, it is seen that family members (3.5) meet a few days a week, other farmers (2.2) a few days a month, agricultural engineers (1.70), dealers (1.55) and district agriculture directorate (1.5) meet several times a year. It was determined that they did not receive information from the internet (1.40), social media (1.15), printed publications (1.05), visual publications (1.05), universities (1.00), and research institutions (1.00).

Graphic 7. Information sources used by rural women

(1: Never, 2: A few days a year, 3: A few days a month, 4: A few days a week, 5: Everyday)

1. **Conclusion**

When the work done by women in the research area is examined, it has been determined that they frequently do housework such as cleaning after meals, washing dishes, and preparing meals, and they do not actively participate in the marketing of these products, although they also produce value-added products such as yogurt, cheese, bread, and pickles. It should be ensured that women are included in the working life by providing training on marketing, entrepreneurship, and food safety.

When the participation of women in business decisions is examined, it is determined that the majority of women do not have a say in decisions, men decide, and women generally have a say in domestic affairs. In order to ensure the participation of women in business decisions, awareness training should be given to both women and men about the work women do in the business.

It has been determined that the spouses decide together on matters related to the house, the purchase of agricultural tools and machinery necessary for agricultural production, the type of product, and the fact that women work in a job other than agriculture. Women, on the other hand, only decide which party to vote for in the elections. Training to be given to businesses or any fair, excursion, etc. Women's participation in activities should be ensured, and their communication with the outside world should be strengthened.

The person who is active in the economic and social profits received in the family is usually a man. In order for women to be effective in the economic and social field, first of all, women should be registered and their participation in the activities to be carried out for the enterprise should be monitored.

In the research area, women generally carry out animal husbandry activities. Participation of women in animal husbandry training should be ensured. In addition, studies should be carried out to market the products obtained by women from both plant production and animal production by converting them into value-added products.

In order to improve women's participation in family decisions and business decisions, to improve themselves so that women can work in different business lines and have a greater say in the decisions to be taken, training and projects should be organized, extension services should be offered, women's entrepreneurship should be encouraged, and these initiatives should be supported both within the family and by the state. Women's participation and decision-making powers require a reorientation of actual agricultural and rural development programs.

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