CHAPTER - II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The studies related to woman and her household decision-making role are mainly related to areas such as: woman involvement in purchase of food items, clothes etc.; woman involvement in farm or agricultural related activities; role of woman in decision regarding education and marriage of children; role in decision regarding family planning; difference in decision-making power of working and non-working woman; impact of joint and nuclear family on the decision-making power of woman.


Puri (1971) has conducted a study entitled, “Rural Families and Decision-Making Pattern” on rural women in Mehrauli block of Delhi. She found that the rural women were associated with decision making in a number of areas but the role of the head of family was decisive. Decision-making pattern regarding the education of children was significantly associated with age, type of family, occupation and urban contract. Women played an important role in area of decision making regarding marriage of children, payment of dowry, education of children, selection of occupation and expenditure pattern.

Goldstein (1972) in his study under the topic, “Indian Women in Transition: A Banglore Case Study” concluded that working women didn’t necessarily maintained full control over their incomes. The data were collected for year 1966-1967 from Banglore. The purpose of
study was to learn about changes in lives of educated Indian women. She discovered that 77 per cent of the employed women in her sample of highly educated women gave more than 50 per cent of their earnings to their families. This means that for financial independence it's important to have control over one's earnings. This raised several questions as to how much of respondent's salary was spent by them on themselves: how much was contributed to the household for overall expenses and how much control did they exercise over their own earnings. Though the author wanted to find the effect of college education but the findings were limited to descriptive account and didn't helped to built up theoretical knowledge. Author concluded that few women wanted extreme freedom and didn't want to marry and wanted full economic independence and for some education was fashionable.

Donald, J.H. (1975), in his study entitled, "Family Role Structure and Housing Decisions", tried to explore the determinants and effects of family role structures in house buying decisions. Author also explored the question of whether it made any difference as how roles were allocated within the family by analyzing the correlation of role structure with decision process variables. He also presented comparisons of both husband and wife role perceptions in two different cultural settings. The data for the study were obtained by personal interviews and mail questionnaires were used to obtain information from both husbands and wives in 206 households from the Hartford metropolitan area of Connecticut, and 317 households in the Preston-Lancaster area of Northwestern England. The results of the study indicated that in a family, house buying decisions were affected by household characteristics which were often used as bases for market segmentation. Education, occupational prestige, and the wife's employment status appeared to play important role. The results further indicated that role structure had relatively little direct influence upon other types of behavior within the decision process and
Interrelationships between roles in housing decisions and expenditures for related goods were more promising.

Robert (1982) in a cross country article entitled, “Perception of Martial Roles in Decision-Making Cross Pressure in a German and Italian Sample” had reported that the Italians were more liberal than the Germans to leave to the wife the duties traditionally assigned to her. The article was concerned with the degree of sharing in domestic tasks and decision-making. The research focused on the effect of nationality, age, sex, marital status, presence of children, and social class on these role behaviors. The sharing of household roles was possibly most evident in the early years of marriage and after the child-rearing period when the wife’s employment necessitated both spouses shared these roles. On the question of comparing the two nations, the chi-square test found eight of the task items and six of the decision-making items to be statistically significant. Sharing was generally more frequent in the German sample. In all areas of decision-making except for planning of major things the share of women in decision making was 4/5th of Germans and 3/5th of Italians.

Seltzer, J.A. (1997) in his study entitled, “Wives’ Role in Household Decision-Making in Rural Guatemala” examined the family and women’s characteristics that affect women’s decision making autonomy in the household in four departments of Guatemala. The findings of the study indicated that the degree of women’s autonomy varied across the types of decisions: buying food items, buying medicine, control of money, and choice of medical care. Women’s sole decision making was highest for food purchase. The decision making autonomy index regressed on wives, husbands, and household characteristics revealed that wives with husband’s working on construction and related work had more decision making autonomy. Wives whose husbands did not work have more autonomy than wives whose husbands worked in agriculture. Land ownership reduced wife’s decision making. Older women and better educated women had
more autonomy. Women who had cash earnings had more autonomy.

Coisque (2000) in the paper entitled, “Mexican Married Women's Autonomy and Power within the Household” examined some individual and contextual determinants of Mexican married women’s power, a Global Index of wife’s level power is estimated, wife’s autonomy and her work activity relationship was estimated and finally the quantitative results were lightened and complemented by women’s own testimony. Secondary data were used from 1995 National Survey of Family Planning and 9 poor states of Mexico were mainly concentrated upon. Author concluded that women’s autonomy appeared as a more tractable dimension, which registered more significant changes by effect of women’s increased, educational and labour opportunities than power did.

Dutta (2002) in the study entitled, “Women’s Power and Authority within Middleclass Households in Kolkata” examined gender equality within families of urban middle-class Bengali women in Kolkata. The study revealed that some equality and consultation between wives and husbands in the exercise of domestic authority had emerged in the families of middle-class Bengali women as a consequence of the increased commonness of paid employment among educated women. Another contributing factor to the shift in authority patterns has been a change in the approach taken by husbands to domestic’s role. Although paid employment appeared to have slightly increased women’s power in family decision-making, the total equality of power between husband and wives was yet to be realized. Husband still retained the final say in major domestic decisions.

Roy and Niranjan (2004) in the paper entitled, “Empowerment of Women in India: Indicators and its Evidence” investigated the relationship between the indirect and direct measures of autonomy. How women's empowerment was associated with these indicators was also examined. Data were collected from eligible women aged between 15-49 years from Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. The variables related
to women’s empowerment were categorized into three parts (i) indirect indicators including education, occupation, age and education difference between spouses, (ii) direct indicators including involvement in decision making, freedom of movement, and access to money, (iii) evidence of empowerment comprised measures of self-worth, favourable attitude towards girl’s education and practice of family planning. The results of study highlighted that women in Tamil Nadu showed a greater autonomy in decision making about their own health care, freedom of movement and access to money. On the other hand, women in Uttar Pradesh were found to have a greater self worth, in the sense that they were more critical about wife beating. It was also concluded that women had least autonomy in terms of freedom of movement, which constituted an important indicator of the empowerment.

Becker, Becter and Yglesias (2006) in the study entitled, “Husbands’ and Wives’ Report of Women’s Decision-Making Power in Western Guatemala and their Effects on Preventive Health Behaviors”, made an attempt to measure married women's decision-making power by asking women the question as to who had a 'say' and/or 'final say' in number of household decisions. A sample of 1000 women in 53 communities in three departments of western Guatemala was selected using a stratified random sampling approach. A standard household questionnaire was used to identify the respondents as well as to obtain data on household characteristics. Husbands of interviewed women were interviewed and questionnaires were similar and were designed to obtain information on the respondent’s knowledge, attitude and behavior regarding material health. Results revealed that relative to their husbands, wives tend to under-report their household decision-making power. In case of couples where both partners were educated and in case of couples where women worked for pay, both partners were significantly more likely to report that both of them participated in the final decisions than in the case of couples who
were not education or in which the wife did not work for pay.

Khandai (2006) in the study entitled, “A Study on Decision Making Pattern of Urban Working and Non-Working Women in Home Activities in Dharwad District of Karnataka State” delineated the areas of decision making, socio-personal characteristics, constraints and stress management techniques adopted by the urban working and non-working women in home activities. A Purposive sampling and Random sampling was adopted for the collection of primary data of 140 respondents from Dharwad District. For Further analysis simple correlation and test of significance was used. Author found that most of the women belonged to middle age group, middle sized family and were married. Majority of working women were post graduate, worked in college, had medium level of income, belonged to nuclear family, and had high level of social participation and high level of mass media participation. On the other hand non-working women were educated up to high school, had low level of income, belonged to joint family and had medium level of social participation.

Rahman (2007) in the study entitled, “Participation of Adolescents in Household Decision-Making Process in Bangladesh” investigated the extent to which the female adolescents participated in decision-making process in household matters and assessed the factors which influenced such participation in both rural and urban areas of Bangladesh. A quantitative and a qualitative study designs were adopted for this study. A Cluster sampling technique was used to select the sample. A sample of 3362 female adolescents irrespective of their marital status was selected using a Cluster sampling technique. To complement the results found in quantitative analysis, a series of focus group discussions were also conducted among the adolescents. The analysis revealed that a large proportion of the studied adolescents did not participated in any decision-making process in their household matters. Only about one-third (31.1 per cent) of the adolescents participated in any household matter; however, the
acceptance of their opinions was minimal. In spite of little participation of adolescents in family matters, Multivariate Logistic Regression Analysis revealed that older adolescents aged 15-19 years, years of schooling, work status, and the family members with a positive attitude toward female education appeared to be the influencing factors for adolescent participation in household affairs. The study concluded that gainful economic activities of adolescents and female education were the key elements for participation of female adolescents in different household matters.

Acharya et al. (2010) in the study entitled, “Women’s Autonomy in Household Decision-Making: A Demographic Study in Nepal” investigated influence of socio-demographic factors on women’s autonomy in decision making about health care, purchasing goods, visiting family and relatives and also explored the links between women’s household position and their autonomy in decision making. Secondary data of 8257 married women aged 15-49 years were analysed from Nepal. Four types of decisions were included in the study: own health care, making major household purchases, making purchase for daily household needs and visits to her family or relatives and Multivariable Logistic Regression was used to examine the relationship of all the variables. The study found the positive association of women’s autonomy in decision making with their age, employment and number of living children. Women from rural area had less autonomy and women’s increased education was positively associated with autonomy in own health care decision making. Author suggested that women from rural areas need specific empowerment programme to enable them to be more autonomous in the household decision making. It was observed that Women’s autonomy by education, wealth and development region needed further investigation to observe the variations within each stratum. A more comprehensive strategy could enable women to access community resources to challenge traditional norms and to access
economic resources.

Khan et al. (2010) in the study entitled, “Determinants of Women Empowerment: A Case Study from District Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan” investigated the reasons behind low women empowerment and suggested suitable measures to raise their status in society. A sample size of 300 households was selected using Multistage Random Sampling technique from the District of Rawalpindi, Punjab, Pakistan. The study concluded that education, political participation and working for pay were important determinants of women empowerment in the Punjab Province of Pakistan. Women also improved their empowerment status with increase in their conjugal age and cooperation of husbands. They also suggested that education was a basic right of every individual, therefore educated woman was more likely to be aware of her rights and to take up paid job, which would further lead to increased women empowerment.

Khan and Sajid (2011) in their article entitled, “Effects of Women’s Education and Marriage Period on their Decision Making Power at Household level in Gujrat-Pakistan” narrated the perceptions of married women about their decision making power at family level, keeping in view their education and period for which they had been married. The survey was conducted in urban setting of Gujrat Pakistan from where 135 married women were selected as respondents and Chi-square test of homogeneity was used. The results highlighted the perceptions of educated women and women who had been married for more than six years, felt that they were significantly associated in the process of decision making, while illiterate women and those who were married for less than six years had no such perception.

Sultana (2011) in the article entitled, “Factors effect on Women Autonomy and Decision-Making Power within the Household in Rural Communities” discussed the women’s autonomy and decision-making
power of rural women within their household in Bangladesh. Author examined the women’s position within the family with respect to their role in the intra-family decision making, their degree of control over some selected items. A Multiple Linear Regression Analysis and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were used to get better results of the study. The results revealed that women’s decision making power at household level was significantly affected by level of her educational attainment, occupation, income and gender based awareness.

Carlsson (2012) in his paper entitled, "Household Decision Making in Rural China: Using Experiments to Estimate the Influences of Spouses", studied many economic decisions made jointly within the household. Random sample of households in rural China was used. The results showed that spouses individuals risk preferences were more similar, richer the household and higher the wife’s relative income contribution. A couple’s joint decision was typically found to be determined by the husband, but women who contributed relatively more to the household income, women in high-income households, women with more education than their husbands, and women with communist party membership had a stronger influence on the joint decision. In richer households and where the wife was older than the husband, stronger influence of wife on joint decisions was observed.

Das (2012) in the study entitled, “Autonomy and Decision Making Role of Tribal Women: A Case Study of Santoshpur Village in Sundergargh District of Odisha” examined the decision making role of tribal women, the extent to which the decision making role of tribal women was affected by their socio-economic status and also made a comparative note on decision making role of Tribal and Non-Tribal women. The study was carried out in three tribal hamlets of Santoshpur village in Sundergargh district of Odisha and primary data were collected from 225 households. The findings of the study stated that the tribal women enjoy autonomy at their household level, enjoy equal rights along with their husbands in economic matters and
social aspects. On other hand their Community participation was passive and autonomy level was low due to low literacy rate and misemployment. Therefore, government’s focus on developing the literacy rate among the tribal women was suggested in the study.

Khan and Noreen (2012) in the study entitled, “Microfinance and Women Empowerment: A Case Study of District Bahawalpur (Pakistan)” explored the socio-economic determinants of women empowerment, focusing on the women who have availed the micro-credit. Primary data were collected from 400 female clients by face to face interview from Bahawalpur district in Pakistan. Women empowerment was measured by constructing simple index based on five indicators related to child health, education, selection of spouse of children, purchase of basic goods and decision of household savings. The results showed that women empowerment was considerably influenced by age, education of husband, father inherited assets, marital status, number of sons alive and amount of microfinance. It emphasized that microfinance was a major explanatory variable, which had shown positive effect on empowerment of women.

Arooj et al. (2013) in the study entitled, “Paid Work and Decision Making Power of Married Women Cross Sectional Survey of Muzzaffarabad Azad State of Jammu & Kashmir” focused primarily on women’s autonomy in decision making while little attention was paid to their freedom of expression. Socio-economic and socio-demographic factors affect women’s autonomy in decision making, so their association was elicited in the study. Basically three decisions: birth control decision, financial decision and freedom of expression were investigated by collecting data from 500 married-working women in Muzaffarabad Azad Kashmir. Chi-Square analysis was used to examine the association. The study results revealed positive association of age, residence, education, professional differences, job nature, and monthly income of married women with autonomy in decision making.

Davis (1970) in his study entitled, “Dimensions of Marital Roles in Consumer Decision-Making” highlighted the purchase decisions relating to purchase of automobiles and furniture in the four suburbs of Chicago in 1969. He concluded that husbands showed a definite stronger influence in automobile purchase and the wives showed a relatively stronger influence in the furniture purchases. For both the products, husbands showed a comparatively higher influence for allocation decisions and wives showed comparatively higher influences in selection decisions.

Dhillon (1980) in his study entitled, “Rural Women in Decision-Making Action” highlighted the decision making pattern of rural women in Mangat block of Ludhiana District. He found that women had greater say in matters of purchasing household goods as compared to farm issues. Women held ranks of second and third level of importance for purchase of luxury items. The men had lesser confidence in solely depending on their wives for matters pertaining to the farm. Rural house wives participated actively in decisions relating to social ceremonies and exchange of gifts. Decision making for exercise of political right of voting was regarded as exclusive male preserve.

Rani and Bhave (1981) in their study entitled, “Decision-Making Pattern among Rural Families” highlighted the decision making pattern among rural women of Hayatnagar block of Ranga Reddy district of Andhra Pradesh. They had concluded that with regard to decision-making patterns pertaining to the purchase of land, amount
to be spent on seeds, purchase of fertilizers, purchase of farm power and farm implements husband was the leading person to take decision. Husband and wife both were involved in decision about place and amount to be spent on children's education and their marriage. Wife had a responsible position in decision making about the quality of food material to be purchased and type of material for clothing. A majority of women showed active participation regarding decisions about their children's education and marriage and they wished the same to continue.

Bajwa (1984) in his study entitled, “Decision-Making by Rural Women in Selected Household Activities” conducted in Ludhiana district, found that the percentage of women having say in decision making was higher for food items to be used, purchase of clothes for children and parents, meal planning, sanitation and cleanliness, medical consultation during pregnancy, child rearing practices including their ceremonies etc. Decisions related to children’s education, marriage and dowry were taken jointly by the husband and wife. Women had practically no say in decision making relating to saving, loan transactions and purchase of land. Author concluded that healthy society can only exist if the family is structured on the balance of power and an even participation of both genders in decision-making.

Nimbalkar and Throat (1984) in their study entitled, “Decision-Making Process in a Rural Family” of Maharashtra state examined that in a rural family most of the decisions regarding household and agricultural matters were taken by the family head alone. It was observed that in agricultural matters the head of the family decided jointly with his son to a certain extent, since the son had to take responsibility of the farm after his father. In about 14 per cent to 18 per cent cases the wife was consulted for only household matters. The wife was not involved in making independent or joint decisions concerning agricultural matters.
Sajogyo (1987) in his study entitled, “The Role of Women in Different Perspectives” concluded that in Indonesia decisions were usually shared, with men intervening in domestic matters and women intervened in agricultural and economic fields. Decisions concerning purchase of land, shifting to new house, education of children and their marriages were discussed together though the husband’s decision was final.

Stevenson, J. (2002) in paper entitled, “Roles and Decision Making”, highlighted decision making on farms and households of New Zealand. Author found that women operating enterprises had a higher degree of motivation and considerable satisfaction from their work. There was little difference in enterprise decision making regarding financial, production and marketing between males and females. While men were the major decision makers on the farms, exercising this responsibility across finances, production and marketing. Women were more involved in household decisions having sole responsibility over the daily/weekly budget in two thirds of the households. Just under a third of the women had responsibility for major household purchases while two thirds of the couples made joint decisions on household purchases. Child health and education were mainly joint decisions but women had exclusive control in this area in just under a third of the households.

Bourqia (2007), in his study of survival, change and decision-making, undertaken between 1994 and 1995 in three villages in the Taforalt-Taourist Region of the Oujda Province in Eastern Morocco entitled, “Morocco: Women’s role in household decision”, concluded that women had a surprisingly large decision making role at the household level. However, their decision making was often behind the scenes, and therefore, socially invisible. The study highlighted the fact that where women had their own poultry; they decided when to sell it and controlled the resulting income. Women were consulted about children’s schooling, health treatments and other relatively major
expenditures. When home remedies were to be used, decisions on health treatments were taken by the wife. Women influenced family decisions about where to live, and were found by the study to exert a strong influence on male children to migrate to the city and on female children to marry city men. Both parents discussed decisions on marriage and dowry. The general rule seemed to be that whenever money is involved, the final decision is the man’s, and he would also be formally recognized as having made the decision. Men decided on children’s education, because of cost implications. In health care, the women made decisions on home remedies, but when money was needed and the husband was to provide it, then the decision was his. The study suggested that women should be given better access to information which can become the basis for their empowerment and increased participation in decision making.

Boonto (2008) in the study entitled, “Women’s Decision-Making Power in the Rural Family in Northeastern Thailand” identified the existing pattern of social relationship that related to the power, roles, and responsibilities of a wife and a husband, in the rural area of Northeastern Thailand and also verified the influencing factors of women's decision-making in the family. Primary data were collected through quantitative survey of 449 married women in the rural areas of three provinces. Study was analyzed with Descriptive Statistics and Inferential Statistics. The results showed that the decision-making of wife and husband were of equity pattern, married women could make their own important decision without consulting their husband, such as using contraception material, keeping control of assets, controlling family expenditure and the saving of money. Further, the self-decision making of women regarding their own life and their family life had a positive effect of factors like women’s opinion of gender role and responsibility of husband and wife in family, kinship dependence and migration experience before marriage.

Morin and Cohn (2008) in the study entitled, “Women Call the
Shots at Home; Public Mixed on Gender Roles in Jobs” tried to explore decision-making in the typical American home. Men and women living as couples were asked about who generally makes the decisions in four familiar areas of domestic life. Namely, who decided what you do together on the weekend? Who managed the household finances? Who made the decisions on big purchases for the home? And who most often decided what to watch on television. The author concluded that in 43 per cent of all couples it was the woman who made decisions in more areas than the man. By contrast, man made more of the decisions in only about a quarter (26 per cent) of all the couples interviewed. And about three-in-ten couples (31 per cent) divided the decision-making responsibilities equally. In case of weekend plans, nearly half i.e. 46 per cent of all couples made this type of decision together, and in another 6 per cent of couples, neither partner was the regular decision-maker. But among those couples where one partner consistently took the lead, it was the woman and not the man who most often made the call on weekend activities (28 per cent vs. 16 per cent). A larger percentage of couples (46 per cent) jointly made decisions about buying major items for the home. But again, in families in which one person made most of these decisions, it was the woman and not the man who had the last word when purchasing big-ticket items for the home (30 per cent vs. 19 per cent). Overall, women were somewhat more likely than men to manage household finances (38 per cent vs. 30 per cent). Fewer than three-in-ten couples (28 per cent) equally shared responsibility for making family financial decisions. In 27 per cent of all couples, it was the woman who decided what to watch on T.V., the man decided in 26 per cent of couples and in about a quarter of all homes, what to watch was decided together.

Khanduri and Chandra (2011) in the paper entitled, “Participation of Women in Decision Making Process in the Rural Gaghwal of Uttarakhand”, revealed the process of decision-making related to home and farm affairs by women from Chamoli district of
Uttarakhand. The study was based on 110 women respondents selected randomly. The results of the study showed that maximum decisions were taken by all family members followed by women n men, women alone and male alone. The participation of women in decision-making related to home affairs was lower than farm affairs, while in case of males, the situation was just reverse. Women performed more than 80 per cent home and farm activities but their participation in decision-making was less than 20.91 per cent, showing a clear-cut gender bias in the society. Author further suggested improvement in the education of women in rural areas of Uttarakhand.

Singh, B. and Srivastava, S. (2012) in the study entitled," Decision Making Profile of Women of Ummednagar Village of Jodhpur District", tried to ascertain the component wise decision making profile of woman of arid region of western Rajasthan. The study was conducted in Ummednagar village of Tehsil Mandore of Jodhpur district and Stratified Random Sampling technique was used to select the respondents and data were collected through a specially designed interview schedule. Author found that most of the decisions related to livestock, household and allied activities were taken jointly by female members and their male counterparts. However, males dominated in the decisions related to selection of breed and health care practices due to their technical knowledge. In household activities the decisions related to purchase of goods and construction etc. were also male dominated. The activities like purchase of food items, clothing, marriage and education was done by female members. Male members mostly took decisions that required technical competence.


Carven (1963) in his study entitled, “The Family Role in
Decision-Making” emphasized on the role of husband and wife in arriving at decisions which involved outlays of farm and family financial resources from the areas of Wisconsin and Washington. The author concluded that home decisions were likely to be made jointly at all economic levels than farm decision. Farm families of low and medium income were more likely to make decisions jointly than the families of high income and those who live on highly specialized farms. As farm size increased and level of living improved, there was tendency for wife to become less involved in farm management decisions. Further, decisions of minor nature were more likely to be made by husband and major decisions were jointly taken.

Mitchell (1967) in his study entitled, “Interaction and Family Planning in the French Urban Family” tried to answer the question whether the socio-economic variables were more closely related with the success of the couples practice of family planning than the variables of positive interaction, namely, agreement, communication and equality in decision making. He found the latter to be more closely related with the success of the family planning. He further found that the higher the degree of wife's dominance in decision making, the more frequently the couples avoided excessive fertility.

Narwal (1981) in his study entitled, “Rationality in Decision-Making of Farm Women Regarding Home Improvement under Uncertain Conditions” reported the rationality in decision making of farm women in Hisar District. The data were collected from 100 farm women with help of interview schedules and analysed in percentages and correlation of coefficient was applied. The study revealed that participation of women in agriculture and animal husbandry activities was medium, whereas their participation and consultation in the household activities was found to be higher in majority of the cases. Age was found to be positively significant with decision-making on the event of death of the earning family member and indebtedness. The age at time of marriage, number of children, size of land holding,
educational status of family, socio-economic status and media exposure, were not related with rationality in decision making. Decisions regarding serious illness, in urban contacts were found negatively significant.

Devi and Rayalu (2002) in their article entitled, "A study on differences between self and joint decisions in personal affairs, children’s affairs and household affairs for both working and non-working women in urban families", conducted in Hyderabad, emphasized that both working and non-working women had more power in self decisions than joint decisions in both personal affairs and children’s affairs. There were no significant differences in the mean values of overall self and joint decisions related to household affairs of both working and non-working women. Both the groups of women took both self and joint decisions equally in household affairs. The working women had more power than non-working women with reference to all the affairs under both self and joint decision. Working women had more resources available, had better access to resources, had higher decision-making capacity and took more actions concerning personal, children’s and household affairs related to both self and joint decisions.

Harvey and Beckman (2002) in the study entitled, “Relationship Power, Decision Making and Sexual Relations: An Exploratory Study with Couples of Mexican Origin” explored how couples of Mexican origin define power in intimate relationships, what made men and women feel powerful in relationships, and the role of each partner in decision-making about sexual and reproductive matters. Interviews were conducted with each partner of 39 sexually active couples and data were analysed using content analysis. Results indicated that power was perceived as control over one’s partner and the ability to make decisions. Women said they felt more powerful in relationships when they made unilateral decisions and had economic independence. Men felt powerful when they had control over their partner and
brought home money. Respondents agreed that women made decision about household matters and children, while men made decisions related to money. Findings indicated that whereas couples shared decision-making about sexual activities and contraceptive use, men were seen as initiators of sexual activity and women were more likely to suggest condom use.

Joshi (2004) in the paper entitled, “Female Household-Headship in Rural Bangladesh: Incidence, Determinants and Impact on Children’s Schooling” elucidated the characteristics of female-headed households and the impact of female-headship on children’s schooling. Secondary data were used from Mattab sub district, Bangladesh and female household heads were either widows or married women. Further, two-stage Least Squares, strategy was used and the results indicated that children residing in households headed by married women had stronger schooling attainments than children in other households, while children of widows were more likely to work outside the home.

Odufuwa (2007) in the study entitled, “Women Participation in Household Automobile Decision Making in a Developing Economy- Nigeria” explored the roles of the women members of household in decision-making concerning acquisition of private automobile by the household. A total sample consisted of 1500 respondents from a cross-sectional survey in Lagos, Nigeria. The findings showed that the husband was the sole decision maker in the acquisition of private automobiles in the households. However, a notable fraction of households (about 34 per cent) were noted for joint decisions between husband and wife. The author also observed that socio-economic background and economic resources of most women was a significant factor that determined their involvement or participation in household automobile acquisition decision-making.

Sikod (2007) in the paper entitled, “Gender-Division of Labour and Women’s Decision-Making Power in Rural Households in
Cameroon” studied how gendered decision of labour impacts women’s decision-making power, and whether the traditional division of labour leads to inefficient allocation of resources that retard development. The international trade theory of comparative advantage to examine the household division of labour and implications for decision making was used in the study. Author concluded that women with some income-earning power were consulted more often by their husbands, especially on issues that required their (women’s) financial contribution. This implied that the women’s earning power was important to her ability to bargain with the husband over issues in the household: it was a way of taking away some of the powers of the man.

Srinivasan (2009) in the paper entitled, “Social Networks and Decision Making: Women’s Participation in Household Decisions”, used secondary data from NFHS-3 2005-06 and emphasized that decision were not made in isolation but in consultation with other members, even matters relating to health were also decided in consultation with the other members of the community. Author suggested that the networks helped the individuals learn to handle problematic situations. Social network was conjugal role relationship, and degree of segregation in the role relationships of husband and wife varied directly with the connectedness of the family’s social network. The more connected the network, the greater the degree of segregation between the roles of husband and wife and vice-versa.

Urdinola and Wodon (2010), in their paper entitled, "Income Generation and Intra-Household Decision Making: A Gender Analysis for Nigeria", focused on the contribution or determinants which were the main contributor to household income, and whether that affected the ability of the household member to participate in decision making areas. The data were used from Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ) survey implemented in eight Nigerian states in 2003. The results showed that in Nigeria, most of the household decisions were
made by men. Men had most of the decision-making power regarding the use of productive assets such as land, crop sales, and shelter. Women on the other hand participated more often in decision regarding expenditure on food, health and education. In low income households women decision making power was less as compared to high income households. The husband income affected the decision making role of wife.

Sanjeev (2011) in the paper entitled, “Role of Indian Women in Decision Making Process” highlighted position of women in decision making process in contemporary times, factors responsible for insufficient participation and also gave suggestions. Author studied secondary data and concluded that political awareness among women had increased over the period of time but they were still deprived of decision making positions. The author found insufficient participation of women in political scenario, representation in Supreme Court and High Courts, administration and management, family, business, religious organizations, labour unions and media establishment was not noticeable. The basic factors responsible for insufficient participation were traditional thinking, economic dependency, heavy load of domestic work and hesitation towards public life. It was recommended that government should frame a national policy on women and it must be coupled with the national development planning. Not only governmental and technical efforts but also informal workout was needed, where men and women both should be understood as the agent of development without discrimination.

Rural and Urban comparison was done by Mukherjee and Bisheva (1975), Spencer (1981), Taj et al. (2004).

Mukherjee and Bisheva (1975) in their study entitled, “Martial Decision-Making and Family Planning” examined the behavior of rural and urban couples in Haryana, Tamil Naidu and Meghalya and they found a positive association between joint decision making in certain areas of family life and the adoption of family planning practices. The
main findings of their study showed that adoption of family planning methods were more frequent among the couples who decided jointly about family size than among those who either did not make any family size decision or in whose case the decision was unilateral. So far as the decision-making with regard to the interval between successive child birth was concerned, the couple in whose case the wife had a high level of influence over the decisions (regarding gap in birth of children), were more likely to be the users of family planning methods than those couples who did not take any decision.

Spencer (1981) in a case study entitled, “Women in Developing Economy-A West African Case Study” examined the role of women in household decision making and impact of agricultural development projects on the work done by women. The data from 150 rural households were drawn through micro-level surveys conducted in Sierra Leone. Author found that women played a minor role in agriculture related decisions, while they were found to be playing an important role in household decision-making as well as in decisions related to borrowing of money. He found that women shared equally the proceeds of sales of the cash crops as well as the profits derived from retail trade. With urbanization, women played an increasing role in decision-making, replacing men as the major decision-makers in certain cases. Rural-urban migration had no adverse effect on women as the household shifts to more cash earning activities.

Taj et al. (2004) in the study entitled, “Assessment of rural and Urban Women’s Participation in the Decision Making in Family Matters” assessed the rural and urban women's participation in the decision-making in family matters. Data were collected from 150 women respondents, 75 each from rural Tarnol area and urban Dhok Ramzania of Islamabad. A Stratified Random sampling technique was adopted to achieve a representative sample. Number of decisions were taken into consideration, namely decision about family size, education of children, career selection of children, marriage of children,
construction of house, saving, visit to parents and relatives etc. It was found that a significant proportion of urban respondents often consulted their family members about education of children and this trend was higher than rural respondents. Rural and Urban respondents had very little control over the budget. It was found that in urban areas respondent's husband accepted often their wives' viewpoint while rural area respondents' husband did not readily accept their wives viewpoint.

Education as an only determinant of women role in decision making was studied by Erci (2003), Furuta and Sarah (2006), and Chanda et al. (2012).

Erci (2003) in the article entitled, “Women’s Efficiency in Decision Making and Perception of their Status in the Family” enquired women's efficiency in decision making, perception of their status within the family, and their demographic characteristics. Primary data were collected from 310 women who applied to the Maternal-Child Health and Family Planning Center in Erzurum, Turkey for the study. Author concluded that women's decision-making rate was lower than that of men, except for selecting clothes. Couples joint decision-making rate was high on personal matters but low on official matters and education level of women affected their decision making in the family. Women's perception of their positions in the family was related to their status and decision making and majority of the women perceived themselves as wives sharing everything within the family.

Furuta and Sarah (2006) in the paper entitled, “Women’s Position within the Household as a Determinant of Maternal Health Care Use in Nepal” investigated how a women's position within her household may affect the receipt of health care. Data of married women aged between 15-49 years from the 2001 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey were analyzed to explore three dimensions of women's position within their household decision-making,
employment and influence over earnings, and spousal discussion of family planning. Logistic Regression Model was used to assess the relationship of these variables to receipt of skilled antenatal and delivery care. The result showed few women reported participation in household decision-making, and even fewer had any control over their own earnings. However, more than half reported discussing family planning with their husbands. Though associations were not consistent across all indicators, spousal discussion of family planning was linked to an increased likelihood of receiving skilled antenatal and delivery care. Women's secondary education was also strongly associated with the greater use of health care. The study found that gender inequality constrained women's access to skilled health care in Nepal.

Chanda et al. (2012) in their paper entitled, “Educational Status of the Married Women and their participation at Household Decision Making in Rural Bangladesh” focused on the decision making process of married women in different areas of rural households of Bangladesh and their level of education. The data were collected from 120 married women through direct interview using an interview schedule at Maharajpur, one of the unions of Jhenidah district in Bangladesh. The study revealed that 93.3 per cent women who had education their consent was sought while arraigning their marriage, 46.7 per cent had high level of purchasing power and 86.7 per cent of the respondents who had completed higher level of education made voting decisions by themselves in contrast to illiterate and primary educated women who did not show such independence in these decisions.

Family structure as factor in women's decision making role is discussed in two studies by Singh (1975), and Singhal and Munjal (1986).

Singh (1975) in his study entitled, “The Study of Women in India: Some Problems in Methodology” observed that establishment of nuclear families as a result of women's employment had created
women friendly environment where they had greater chances for exercising their wills. But joint families restricted the freedom of women with regard to movement outside the home, decision making in financial matters running the household.

Singhal and Munjal (1986) in their study entitled, “Role of Women in Making Crucial Home and Farm Decisions” in Haryana, concluded that in majority of the cases, the decisions were independently taken by men in nuclear families (65.5 per cent) and jointly with other members in joint families (64.10 per cent). Women's participation in decision making was the least in both the types of families. In joint families, husband, wife and elders together took the decisions (25 per cent) as compared to nuclear families (18 per cent). The pattern suggested that as families became nuclear, the role of older parents as decision maker decreased and men's role as decision maker gained importance.

Vogel (1978) in his study entitled, “Professional House-Wife: The Carrier of Urban Middle Class Japanese Women” stated that women of Japan received their husband's pay from them, paid all bills, bought food and made most of decisions concerning major expenditures, with some mutual consultation. They gave their husbands a spending allowance and took care of savings, investments, banking and budgeting themselves. Author argued that housewives were more skilled, respected, and powerful than they might seem at first glance. Women in the role of housewife were vital to the success of their children, husbands, and nation, as they provided the tutoring, cooked the meals, and facilitated the paid labor that simultaneously enabled capitalist production and reproduced the next generation. Author's argument became the accepted view about the housewives in Japan.

Sundari, T.K. (1999) in his study entitled, "Female Autonomy in Tamil Naidu", examined the extent of female autonomy that Tamil women enjoyed in their personal lives, within their households. The
author estimated the gender power dynamics between married couples on the basis of study in five districts of the state. The study concluded that Tamil women enjoyed a greater autonomy than their North Indian counterparts in terms of almost every aspect of household power dynamics i.e. decision making authority, access to and control over resources and to some extent freedom from threat by husbands.

Kadam (2012) in his study entitled, “Empowerment of Women in India-An attempt to fill the Gender Gap”, elucidated the status of women and efforts made towards the same, in past and as well as in present, the necessity of empowerment of women and the available schemes for the women empowerment in India. Secondary data were used and the author concluded that status of women in India was not same in all the periods of history. In ancient period they enjoyed equal status with men, in the medieval period, the position of Indian women deteriorated. During British rule and after independence many efforts were made for improving the status of women in India. The author suggested that no doubt the government of India had framed number of schemes and laws for women empowerment, but strict implementation was quite essential to get the desired results.

**Summary of the Reviewed Studies**

From the review of above mentioned studies it can be concluded that women played a significant role in decision making regarding purchase of household items like food, clothes, health and matters related to children etc. The above conclusion was supported by the studies given by Dhillon, Narwal, Spencer, Rani and Bhave, Bajwa and Seltzer. But Nimbalkar Throat’s study highlighted that only in 14 per cent to 18 per cent cases the wife was consulted for household matters.

Women’s input in decisions concerning farming matters was considered to some extent, whereas women were not involved independently in the agricultural decision-making. The final decision
regarding such matters was taken by men and in most of the cases head of the family took this final decision. This fact was supported by the studies done by Dhillon, Spencer, Sajogyo, Narwal, Nimbalkar and Throat.

Decisions related to children's education and marriage were taken jointly by husband and wife but the final decision was of husband as it involved money. This was highlighted by the studies given by Sajogyo, Rani and Bhave, Bajwa, Bourqia.

Women were less involved or not at all involved in matters related to purchase of expensive durables, land, house, matters of saving, investment etc. This was concluded by Sajogyo, Bajwa, Rani and Bhave research studies.

Women played a dominant role in decision-making regarding their own health and family planning. The couples decided jointly about family size and matters concerning family planning. Acharya et al., Roy and Niranjan, Mukherjee, Boonto, Bourqia, Arooj et al. and Mitchell supported the above role of women in household decision-making.

Decision-making power of working women was more as compared to non-working women. Working women had better access to household resources. This was confirmed by Sikod, Devi and Rayalu. Contrary to it, Goldstein found that working women did not maintain full control over their income.

That, wives of daily wage earners had greater autonomy as compared to wives of land owners is a prominent conclusion drawn by Seltzer. In the case of low and medium income families farm decisions made were more joint in nature as compared with high income families and highly specialized farms, according to Carven and Narwal.

Husband showed stronger influence in automobile purchase, while wife showed a strong influence in furniture purchase. This decision-making area was highlighted by Davis.
With regard to decision-making in joint and nuclear families, men were the final decision makers. In nuclear families, the role of older parents as decision makers was lesser. This pattern in household decision-making was highlighted by Singh, Singhal and Munjal.

Determinants like age of women, education, income, social status, number of children, marriage period all played important role in women's decision making power within the household. This was supported Puri, Goldstein, Donald, J.H., Robert, Seltzer JA, Coisque, Dutta, Roy and Niranjan, Becker, Becter, and Yglesias, Khandai, Rahman, Acharya et al., Khan et al., Khan and Sajid, Sultana, Carlsson, Das, Khan and Noreen and Arooj et al.. Like higher education, old age, higher income, high social status, long marriage period etc. all leads to increase in women's decision making power.

The above review of literature has highlighted several decision-making areas involved in household matters keeping in focus women's decision making power. The decisions related to purchase of food items, durables, savings, investment, farm related matters, children's education, marriages, family planning etc. are highlighted in the studies. Affect of many determinants has been studied by several researchers. There are several other decisions and determinants which need to be highlighted such as women's role in decisions regarding casting of vote, own marriage, participation in social and religious activities, control over own as well as husband's income, monthly expenditure decisions etc. In the present study an effort has been made to highlight the remaining areas of household decision making.