

## Chapter 5

### **Analysis and Findings of Field Survey in Sikkim**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The main objective of this chapter is to understand the position of women in the state of Sikkim in general and agriculture sector in particular. So, an attempt has been made in this chapter to examine the problems faced by women in rural Sikkim and especially those women who are engaged in agriculture activities.

The Field Study Area consists of 12 villages from four districts of Sikkim in which three villages from each district were selected. For the purpose of this study 200 women, 50 from each district. The main objective is to figure out the socio economic features of households, in terms of education, access to media, work force, occupation, land holding, income levels and their status. Only the female members engaged in agriculture related activities were interviewed, with the help of close and open-ended questionnaires. Close-ended questions give accurate answers and open-ended question helps to find out extra input or information from the respondents. Door-to-door methodology is being used to interact with the respondents.

The primary focus of this chapter is to study and understand women representation in the agriculture setting; awareness of the rights, policies and programmes of women in general and agricultural women in particular; and also to find out the problems faced by women along with their views to strengthen their position.

Thus the first section deals with socio economic profile of the study area. Second section will study the position of women in agricultural sector specially the decision making process. Thirdly it tries to highlight the challenges women face and their lack of awareness of their rights and privileges.

## 5.2 DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

Table 5.1 represents the demographic structure of the study area which consists of rural household where majority of the population is engaged in agricultural setting and related activities. Out of 200 women (respondents): Lepcha community represents 22.5%; Bhutia and Sherpa community represents 33%; and Nepali community represents 44.5%. The age of respondents falls into three groups: women below the age of 20 years represent 13.5%; between the age group of 20-40 represent 53%; and above 40 years represent 33.5%.

**Table 5.1**

### **Community, Age Wise Distribution of the Respondents**

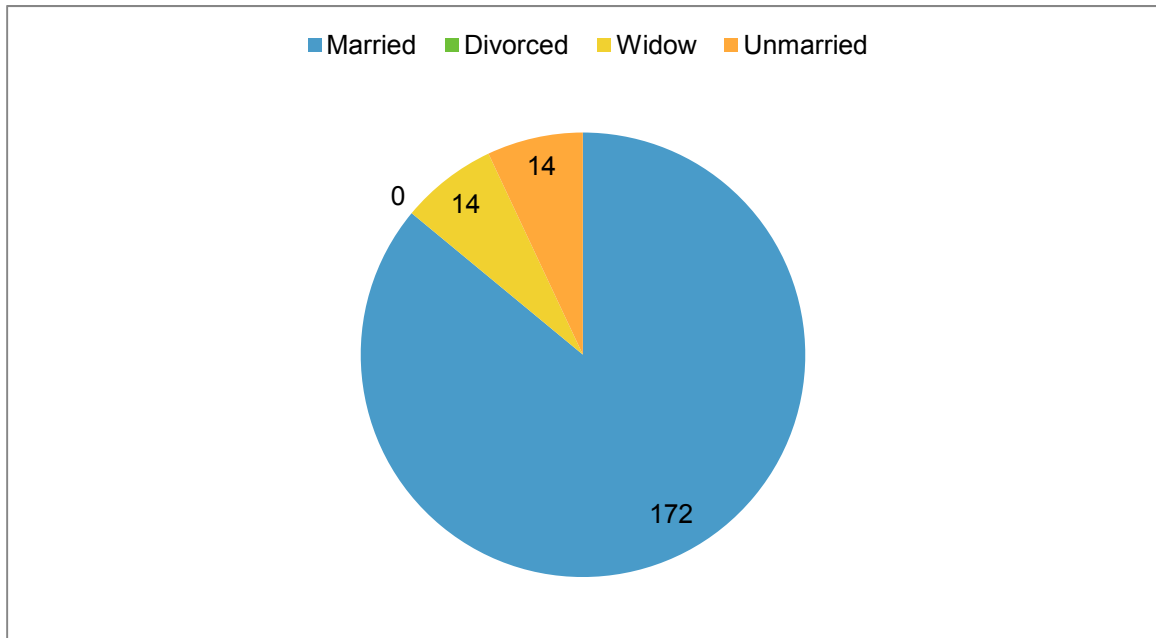
District	No. of Respondents	Community			Age		
		Lepcha	Bhutia /Sherpa	Nepali	<20	20-40	40<
East (3*)	50 (100.00)	19 (38.00)	28 (56.00)	3 (6.00)	19 (38.00)	31 (62.00)	0 (0.00)
West (3*)	50 (100.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	50 (100.00)	4 (8.00)	30 (60.00)	16 (32.00)
North (3*)	50 (100.00)	16 (32.00)	33 (66.00)	1 (2.00)	2 (4.00)	24 (48.00)	24 (48.00)
South (3*)	50 (100.00)	10 (20.00)	5 (10.00)	35 (70.00)	2 (4.00)	21 (42.00)	27 (54.00)
Sikkim	200 (100.00)	45 (22.00)	66 (33.00)	89 (44.00)	27 (13.5)	106 (53.00)	67 (33.5)

Note: \* denotes names of villages i) East (Assam Linzey, Ranka, Rumtek); ii) West (Darap, Namboo, Zoom); iii) North (Dzongu, Lachung, Lachen); iv) South (Kewzing, Perbing, Namthang). Source: Field Work<sup>1</sup> (December 2014 – June 2015), Sikkim.

<sup>1</sup> In order to collect the data, field work has been conducted during December 2014-June 2015 to complete the study. Hereafter it is referred as 'Field Work'.

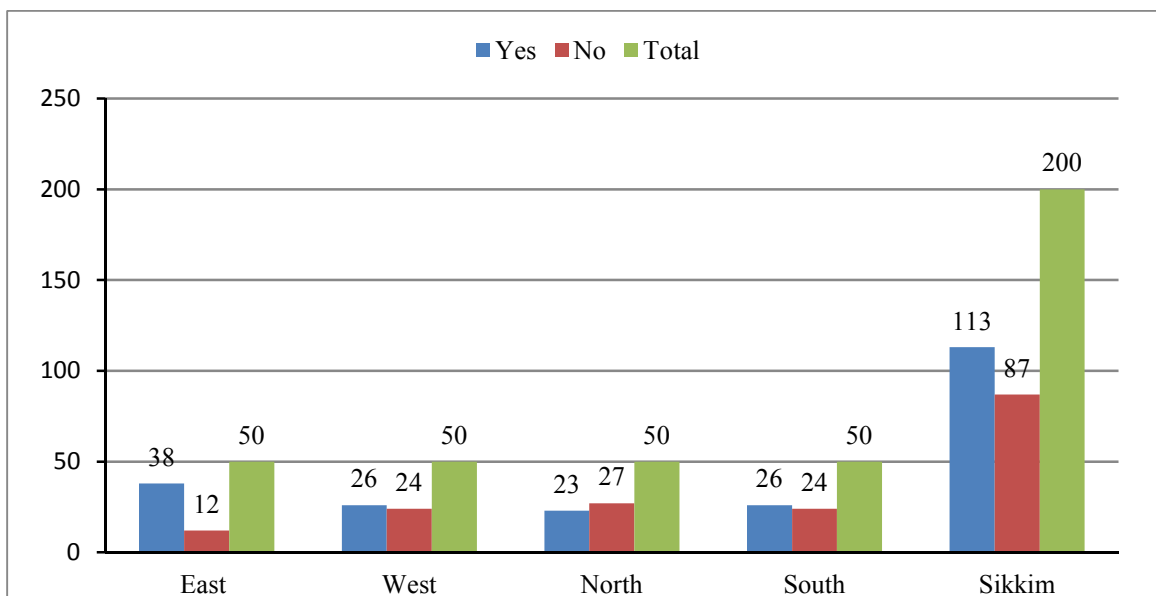
Regarding the marital status of the respondents 86% are married women, 7% widow, and 7% are unmarried women (see Figure 5.1).

**Figure 5.1: Martial Status of the Respondents**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

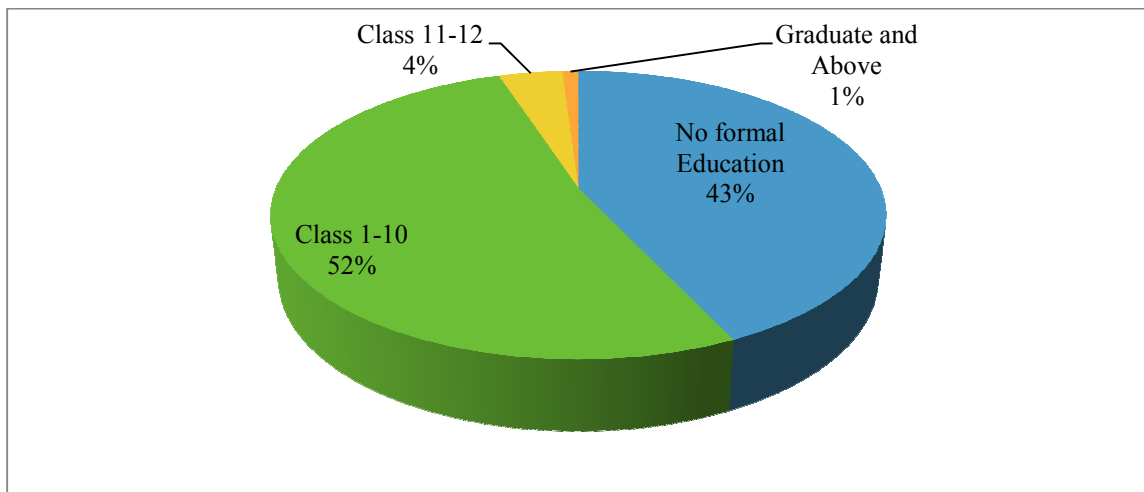
**Figure 5.2  
Entry to formal Qualifications of Respondents**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

Education level of population has been described in the Figure 5.2. The data provides that out of 200 respondents 113 went to school and 87 of them did not receive any formal education. The highest number of literate respondents was found in east district i.e. 38 out of 50, and lowest in north district, with 23 out of 50 respondents; and 26 each in South and West district.

**Figure 5.3**  
**Educational Qualification of Respondents**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

Education is an important criterion, as it plays an important role in empowering women and for socio economic development. As per the field study out of 200 respondents, 43% of women have no formal education; 52% of women have education following under the class bracket of 1-10; 4% of women had completed 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> standard and only 1% has completed her graduation (see Figure 5.3). There is various reason of denial of discontinuation of further education in case of Sikkim such as school being located far away; for some family education of girl child not considered necessary; discontinuation because of failure in examination; required in household chores, farm & family business, outside work for payment in cash or kind to sustain family, care of siblings; financial constraints in the family, death of either of their parents; some are not interested in studies; objection from the family to take study further; health condition, and one of the reason is also of getting married at early age.



Table 5.2 represents the district wise reason for the discontinuation or non attending of school. The survey found 19% of the women leaving or discontinuing school as they were required to lend hand in the farm or family business. 15% were required for household work in the family, 11% left school after marriage and 10.5% were forced to discontinue school as their education was not considered important by their family members.

**Table 5.2**  
**Reason for the Discontinuation or Not Attending School**

Reason	District					Percent (%)
	East	West	North	South	Total	
School to far away	1	2	3	0	6	3.00
Education not considered necessary	2	3	12	4	21	10.5
Failed	7	4	0	4	15	7.5
Required for household work	10	7	5	8	30	15.00
Required for work on farm/family business	17	6	7	8	38	19.00
Financial Constraints	2	2	5	4	13	6.5
Death of father/mother	1	1	2	2	6	3.00
Not interested in studies	5	1	5	4	15	7.5
Married off	5	4	6	7	22	11.00
Required for outside work for payment in cash or kind	0	2	1	0	3	1.5
Family objected	0	7	1	2	10	5.00
Required for care of siblings	0	3	1	5	9	4.5
Health Condition	0	8	2	2	12	6.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100.00</b>

Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

Again, the major reason for discontinuation of studies of 34% women in the east district is to provide required help for work on family farm/family business, followed by 30% women to provide help for household work. In the West district 8% leave school mainly due to health issues and problems to study further and 14% are forced to leave in order to provide help in household work or due to objection from the family to study further. In North district education of 24% of the women member is not considered necessary by the family members as they are 14% women are required for work on farm

and family business. In South district the major reason for discontinuation for 16% women is requirement for work on family farm/family business and requirement for household work and 14% of them discontinue after marriage.

The table 5.2 also indicates that whenever the crises takes place in the family to look after the farm and to function household work it is the girl child or the female member in the family who are told to leave school and support the family by engaging themselves in the activities, required by the family.

Apart from formal education, informal education has also proven to improve the position of women by providing skills which further helps in generating income for self sustainability and self empowerment and also to support their families'. In case of Sikkim, Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom (DHH), under the Government of Sikkim provide training to the local youths between the age group of 14 to 24 years in carpet weaving for two years (Directorate of Handlooms and Handicrafts, 2012). The training is an informal form of imparting education for survival to those people who lack education and employment.

**Table 5.3**  
**Number of Women Attended Informal Education**

District			
East	West	North	South
0	0	6	0

Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

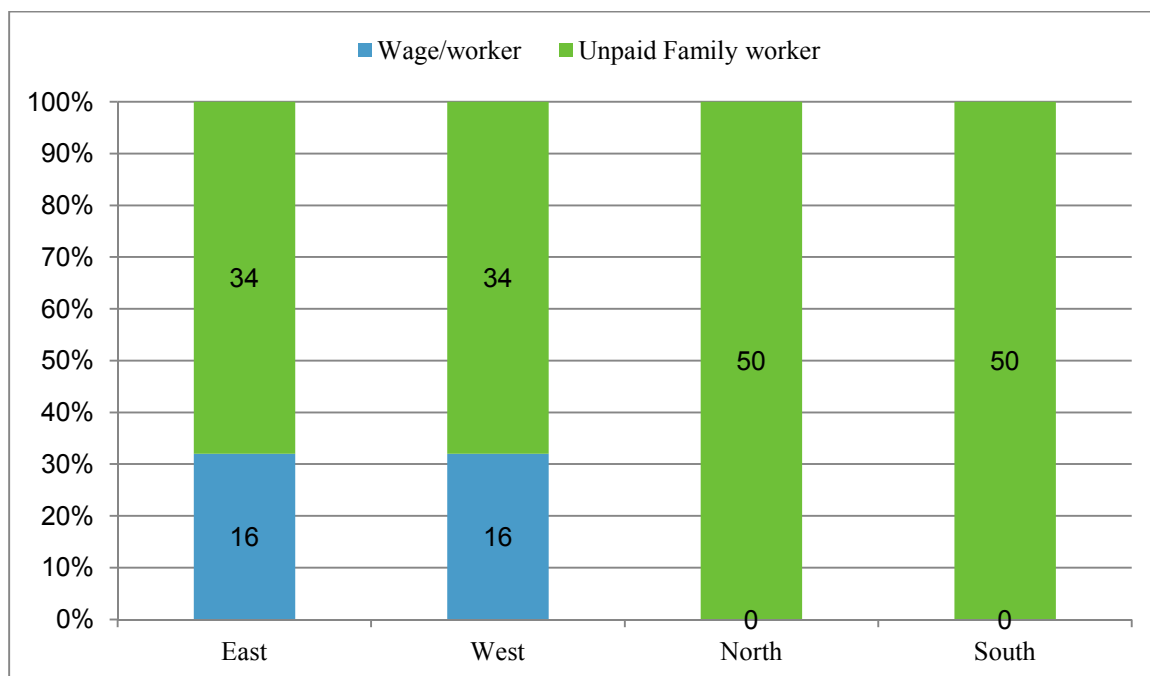
None of the respondents from East, West and South districts have received any kind of informal education whereas 6 from the North district received training through informal education (see Table 5.3) , in carpet weaving, and 2 out of them earn their living from weaving and selling of the traditional carpets.

All the respondents are engaged in agriculture sector mostly as unpaid family workers, and few of them are engaged as wage workers in addition to working in the family farmland.

Figure 5.4 represents the occupations of respondents, among the 50 respondents in each district, 16 of them each in East and West districts are wage workers or employee

and 34 of them are unpaid family workers, whereas in North and South district all the 50 respondents are unpaid family workers. Here wage worker or employees are those who are engaged in agricultural activities in addition they are engaged in other activities (daily wage workers, small businesses, etc) to earn for the living.

**Figure 5.4**  
**Occupation of the Respondents**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

### 5.3 ACCESS TO MEDIA

Along with education exposure and access to media also provides an opportunity to avail information about the world around. Media makes people aware of various policies and programmes framed; amendments and formulation of rules and regulations, and laws framed and formed for the betterment of all. There are various forms of media, like newspaper, television, radio, and internet. But keeping in view the rural setting of the respondents only three forms of media are given importance or are available i.e. newspaper, television and radio.

Access to media by the respondents has been presented in the Table 5.4. Analysis of the data revealed that, watching television is the most common medium of receiving

information. 72.5% respondents watch Television, 3.5% read newspaper and none of them listen to radio. As per the data presented in the table 5.7, television is the most available mode of media access in the rural Sikkim by the women population. Few have access to newspaper and none preferred listening to radio. 98% of respondents in the east district watched television and 8% of them read newspaper; in west district 66% of the respondents watched television and 4% of them read newspaper; in north district 72% of the respondents watched television and 2% of them read newspaper; and in south district 60% of the respondents watched television and none of them read newspaper.

**Table 5.4**

**Access to Media by the Respondents**

District	Read newspaper	Regularity			Watch TV	Regularity			Listen Radio
		Regularly	Some times	Rarely		Regularly	Some times	Rarely	
<b>East</b>	4 (8.00)	0	4	0	49 (98.00)	26	5	18	0
<b>West</b>	2 (4.00)	0	0	2	33 (66.00)	15	10	8	0
<b>North</b>	1 (2.00)	0	0	1	36 (72.00)	15	15	6	0
<b>South</b>	0	0	0	0	30 (60.00)	11	7	12	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b> <b>(3.5)</b>	0	4	3	<b>145</b> <b>(72.5)</b>	67	37	44	<b>0</b>

Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

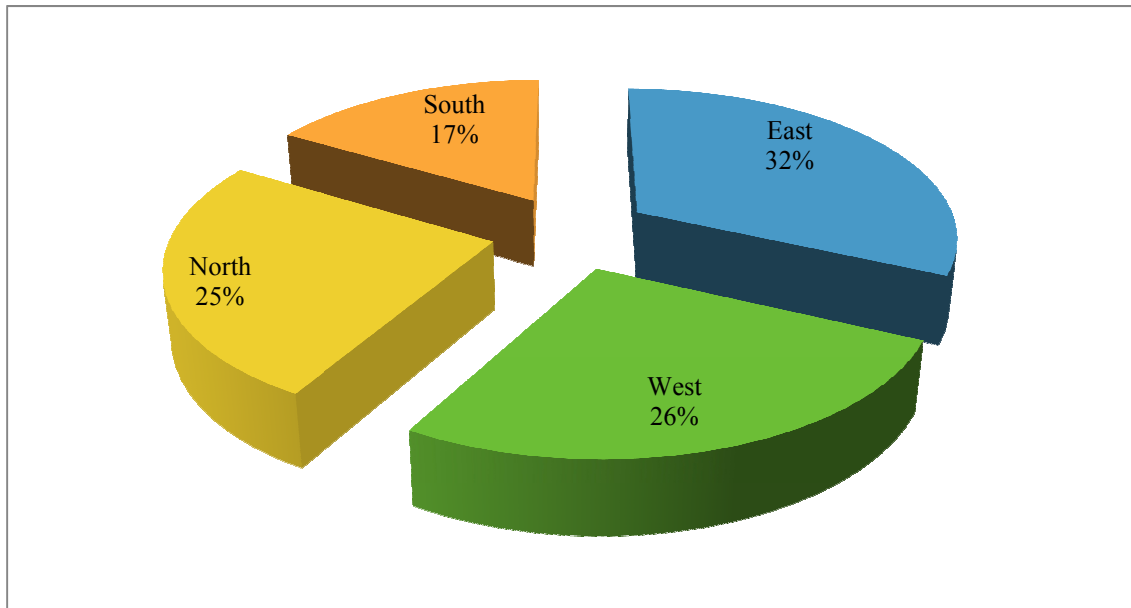
Through media access women in all parts of the world can view problems faced by women all over the world and they also become aware of policies and programmes related to women and message received from such programmes.

Out of the 200 respondents, 91 watch programme or advertisement related to women. The figure 5.5 explains that 32% in East district, 26% in West district, 25% in North district, and 17% in South district watch programme or advertisement related to women. Among the four district of Sikkim, respondents from East district have easy access of media as compared to other district of Sikkim and least being the South district. Media has been easy mode to reach out to people. It is sources that expose viewers to

new information about the outside world and other ways of life, that further helps in shaping the behavior of the viewer.

**Figure 5.5**

**Programme or Advertisement Related to Women Watched by the Respondents**

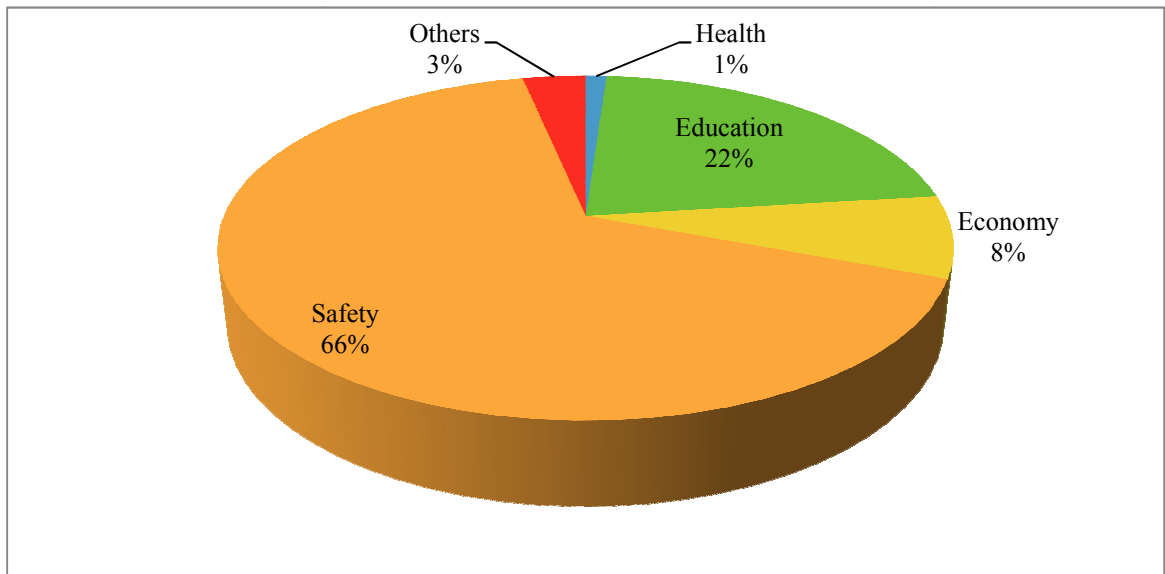


Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

Figure 5.6 represents the message received by the respondents from television received from programmes, it includes health, education, economy, safety, and other (empowerment) issues. Among the message received, issues of safety is followed at the highest with 66% (which is the trending issues of concern in India), followed by education with 22%, issues of economy such as dowry deaths, necessity to work and earn with 8%, other issues with 3% and issues of health with 1%. The respondents know the major problems faced by women in the 21<sup>st</sup> century but none are following programmes related to policies, programmes and ways to empower women in agriculture sector, this clearly indicates that either agriculture programmes are male centric or women are less targeted upon or means of access of information by women is not easily accessible.

**Figure 5.6**

**Message Received from the Programmes by the Respondents**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

#### **5.4 WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE SECTOR IN SIKKIM**

Majority of women in India as well as in Sikkim are involved in agriculture sector, as explained in the previous chapter. Women in rural areas are directly or indirectly involved in agriculture and allied activities; it has always been part and partial of their daily life. Most of the women involved in agricultural activities get very little or no return as compared to their involvement and hard work. The rural women in Sikkim manages their household affairs, look after the crops and agriculture fields, manage their cattle and poultry, and also get themselves engaged in other activities in order to earn extra in cash or in kind. So, this study highlights the women involvement in agriculture sector, their inputs in the field and the output which they received, the amount of time they spend in managing everything from house to field to work.

Table 5.5 states that 48% of respondents have been involved in working for cash or kind in the past, and out of which 36.5% are engaged in agriculture work and 20% are involved in non-agriculture work such as helpers in household work, running small business (road side canteen, etc.); carpet weaving and working as employee under the scheme of MG-NREGA. Out of these 1.5% has been full time employees and 46.5% are

part time employees. The remaining 52% of the respondents are fully involved in family agriculture farms.

**Table 5.5**

**Work Pattern and Hours of Daily Work of the Respondents**

		East	West	North	South	Sikkim
Have you worked for earning cash or kind in the past?	Yes	26 (52.00)	33 (66.00)	2 (4.00)	35 (70.00)	96 (48.00)
	No	24 (48.00)	17 (34.00)	48 (96.00)	15 (30.00)	104 (52.00)
Was it related to agriculture work?	Yes	18 (36.00)	30 (60.00)	1 (2.00)	21 (42.00)	73 (36.5)
	No	8 (16.00)	3 (6.00)	1 (2.00)	14 (28.00)	40 (20.00)
Was it full time or Part-time?	Full Time	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	3 (6.00)	3 (1.5)
	Part Time	26 (52.00)	33 (66.00)	2 (4.00)	32 (64.00)	93 (46.5)
Are you paid in cash or kind or not paid at all?	Cash only	11 (22.00)	31 (62.00)	1 (2.00)	24 (48.00)	67 (33.5)
	Kind only	2 (4.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (2.00)	4 (8.00)	7 (3.5)
	Cash and Kind	13 (26.00)	2 (4.00)	0 (0.00)	7 (14.00)	22 (11.00)
How many hours do you work?*	(5-8)	2 (4.00)	2 (4.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (4.00)	6 (3.00)
	more than 8	48 (96.00)	48 (96.00)	50 (100.00)	48 (96.00)	194 (97.00)

\* Work includes both paid and unpaid work (including household activities, feeding cattle and poultry, looking after families). Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015, Sikkim).

Out of the 48% working respondents, 33.5% respondents are paid in cash for their work, 3.5% in kind and 11% in both kind and cash (Table 5.5). Here kind refers to food grains, vegetables or meal in return, and assurance for future work in their fields. It has also been found that system of “*paicho*” is very common. It is a local word which means, “This is a system where one member from a household volunteers to work in the field of another which needs to be repaid in voluntary field work itself”. “*Keythala*” are those people who work in the field of others in the form of “paicho” or to earn cash or kind.

Working hours of the respondents also varies, 3% of the respondents are found to work for 5-8 hours a day and, 97% said that they work for more than 8 hours a day. Apart

from household works (see Table 5.5). It may be concluded that majority of the respondents work for more than 8 hours in a day, either in the field, or taking care of cattle, or in work outside their home or field. It also shows that they are highly burdened when it comes to work they perform in daily basis.

Regarding working hours of the respondents, 97% of them have been working more than 8 hours a day and only 3% of them works in between 5-8 hours. Looking at district wise analysis in East district 4% of the respondents work for 5-8 hours a day and 96% works more than 8 hours a day; in West district 4% of the respondents works around 5-8 hours a day and 96% works more than 8 hours a day; in North district 100% of the respondents works more than 8 hours a day; and in South district 4% of the respondents works around 5-8 hours a day and 96% works more than 8 hours a day (see Table 5.5). The hours of work included both the paid and unpaid labour. According to the respondents, whatever it may be if they go for work in agricultural field, they have to cook food, look after the cattle, poultry and the piggery, look after the children, clean the house and the utensils, grocery shopping, etc. The burden of work is more for the women in rural areas, as they have to manage everything from household chores to cattle rearing to farm duties.

As per the district wise analysis, the highest number of respondents engaged in earning cash or kind in the past are in South district with 70%, followed by West district with 66% and east and north with 52% and 4% respectively (See Table 5.5).

Percentage of respondents engaged in agricultural work in order to earn in cash or kind is 36% in East district, 66% in West district, 2% in North district and 42% in South district. Out of these only 6% in South district are full time workers, and the remaining 52% in East, 66% in West, 4% in North and 64% in South district are part time workers (see Table 5.5).

As per the respondents, the modes of payment which they receive are in cash, kind, and both cash and kind. In East district 22% of respondents received their payment in cash, 4% in kind and 26% in both cash and kind; in West district 62% of respondents received cash payment, and 4% in cash and kind; in North district 2% of the respondents



received cash payment and 2% receives payment in kind; and in South district 48% received payment in cash, 8% in kind and 14% in both cash and kind (See Table 5.5).

The data presented in Table 5.5 shows that, apart from looking after their families, household chores, rearing cattle and poultry, and their agricultural land, only few women work outside their homes, as part time workers and are paid either in cash or kind or both. It marks the indication that there is lack of economic empowerment among the female members of the villages of Sikkim.

**Table 5.6**  
**Women engaged in Non-Agricultural Activities**

District	Jobs engaged in			Total
	Small Business	MGNREGA	Carpet Making	
East (50)	2 (4.00)	0 (0.00)	0 (0.00)	2 (4.00)
West (50)	3 (6.00)	22 (44.00)	0 (0.00)	25 (50.00)
North (50)	5 (10.00)	0 (0.00)	1 (2.00)	6 (12.00)
South (50)	5 (10.00)	9 (18.00)	0 (0.00)	14 (28.00)
Sikkim (200)	15 (7.5)	31 (15.5)	1 (0.5)	47 (23.5)

Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

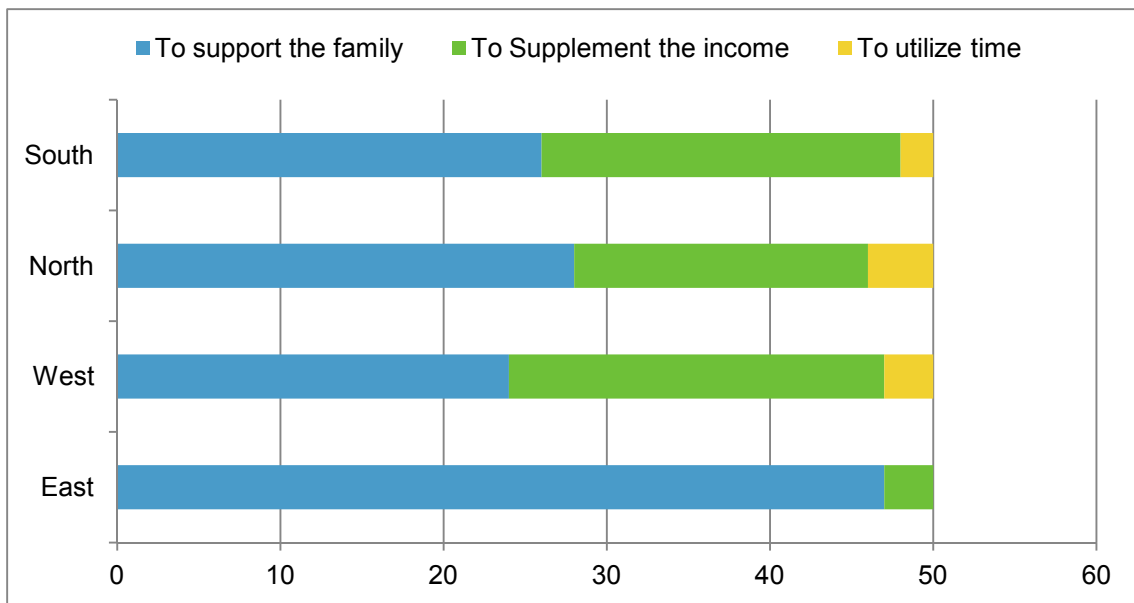
Most of the respondents are fully dependent on agriculture sector, and out of 200 respondents, 153 are fully engaged in agriculture sector and other allied activities, and 47 are engaged in other non-agriculture works for income generation along with agriculture activities. Out of the 47 respondents, 23.5%, 7.5% of them are engaged in small businesses, 15.5% of them are engaged in MGNREGA, and 1 of them earn through carpet making.

Looking at district wise data analysis 4% in East district (4%: small business); 50% in West district (6%: small business, 44%: employed through MGNREGA); 12% in North district (10%: small business, 2%: carpet making); and 28% in South district (10%: small business, 18%: employed through MGNREGA) are engaged in other activities to

earn income for the living. In almost all the district even in small portion women are engaged in small business and most of the respondents in the West district are engaged in employment generated by the scheme MGNREGA (see Table 5.6).

When it comes to work, there are various reasons that people choose to work, whether to support the family, some work for pleasure and some works just to earn an income. To study has also been made to understand respondents various reasons to work early age, and for some even without completing their basic level of education.

**Figure 5.7**  
**Reason to Work by the Respondents**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015), Sikkim.

There were several reasons that promoted or led respondents to work but out of 200 respondents, 125 works to support the family, 66 of them work to supplement the income, and 9 of them are working to use their time productively. Figure 5.7 gives the district wise details regarding reason behind taking up work by the respondents. 47 of the respondents in the East district work to support the family and 3 of them works to supplement the income; 24 out of 50 in the West district work to support the family, 23 of them to supplement the income and 3 of them to utilize their time; in North district 28 of the respondents work to support the family, 18 of them to supplement the income and 4 of them to utilize their time; and in South district 26 of the respondents work to support the family, 22 of them to supplement the income, and 2 of them to utilize time.

As per the respondents, majority of the women in rural areas in Sikkim works to support their family by helping in the agricultural fields and other allied activities to minimize the burden on other family members and to have some monetary savings.

## **5.5 DECISION MAKING PROCESS IN AGRICULTURAL RELATED ACTIVITIES**

Decision making still remains with the patriarch of the family. The male member of the family remains at the forefront whether it is in household activities or in agricultural production process. One of the reasons for this being, the agriculture land belongs to father of the household or to other male members of the family. Though, women can make sensible and practical decisions yet their decision is not taken into consideration in most of the households. Any decision taken by the female members had to be processed from the male member of the family on the other hand the decision by male members in most of the cases are final and binding. Inaccessibility of land holding by female members further result in low esteem and are unable to take decision in agriculture related activities. This chapter also tries to find out what sort of decision are taken by female members in rural Sikkim in the matter of agriculture activities.

Figure 5.8 represents the decisions made by the respondents in inputs and outputs in the agricultural field in East district. As per the data, 16% of the respondents decide themselves; 68% of the respondents answered that the decision is taken by their husband; 6% decide jointly; 10% of the respondents said that the decision is made by father in law. Regarding sell of crops, 17% make self decision; 74% respondent's husband decides; and 9% replied that it is being decided by the father/father in law (see Figure 5.8). If we see the male and female representation in the decision making process in inputs and outputs in the field, the male member represents 78% and female member represents 16% and 6% is a joint decision. Similarly in case of decision in selling of crops male member represents 83% and female member represents 17%. The figure also shows that the percentage of women who decides inputs and outputs in the field are higher than decision taken to sell of crops.

### East District of Sikkim

Figure 5.8: Decision in Inputs & Outputs in the field

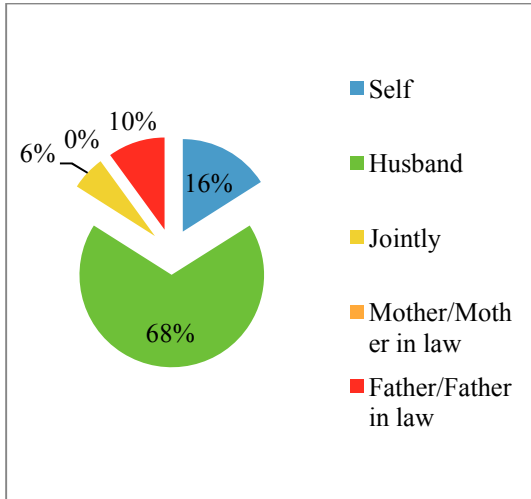
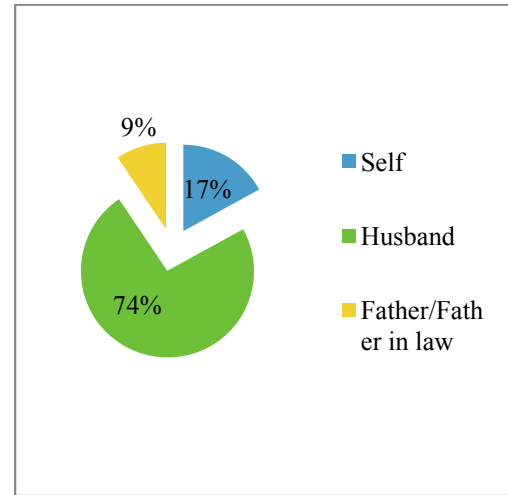


Figure 5.9: Sells of Crops



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

### West District of Sikkim

Figure 5.10: Decision in Inputs & Outputs in the field

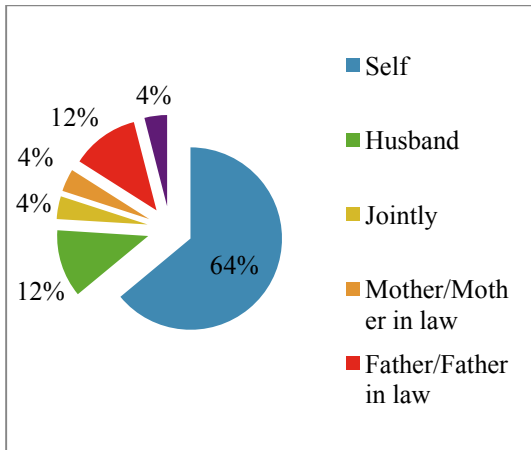
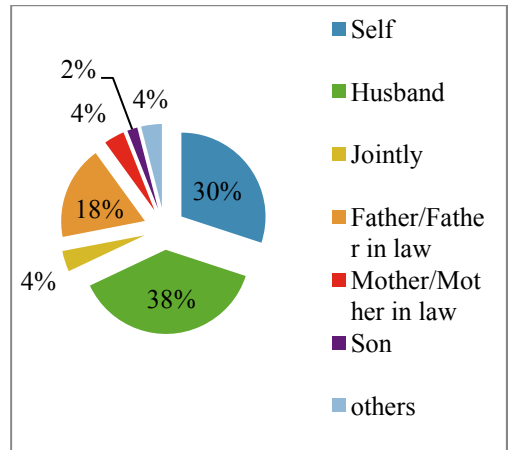


Figure 5.11: Sells of Crops



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

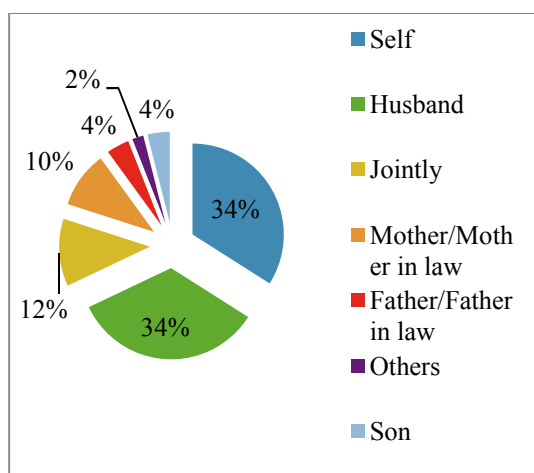
Figure 5.10 represents the decision by the respondents in inputs and the outputs in the agricultural field in West district. As per the data, 64% of the respondents decide themselves; 12% of the respondents decision is taken by the husband; 4% decide jointly; 4% of the respondents said that the decision is taken by mother in law; 12% of the respondents said that the decision is made by father in law; and 4% of the decision is

taken by other male member of the family. In case crop sell 30% make self decision; 38% respondent's husband decide; 5% of them decides jointly; 18% replied that it is being decide by father/father in law; 4% said it is being decided by mother/mother in law; 2% said that their sons decide; and 4% replied that it is being decided by the other male members of the family (see Figure 5.11).

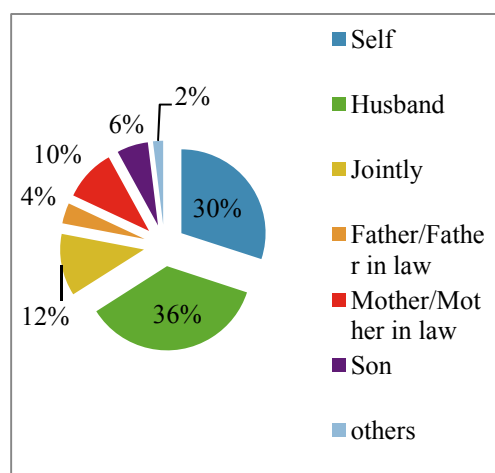
If we see the male and female representation in the decision making process in inputs and outputs in the field, the male member represents 28% and female member represents 68% and 4% joint decision. Similarly in case of decision in selling of crop male members represents 62% and female members represents 34%. In case of West district the decision in providing inputs and outputs in the field is mostly decided by the female members of the family, but in case of selling of crops the figure is reversed, as it is mostly decided by the male member of the family.

### North District of Sikkim

**Figure 5.12: Decision in Inputs & Outputs in the field**



**Figure 5.13: Sells of Crops**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

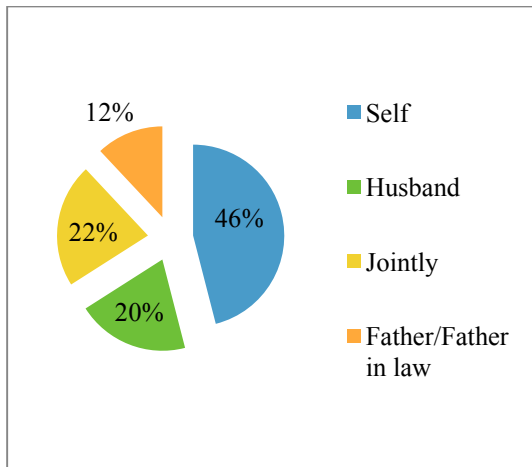
Figure 5.12 represents the decision by the respondents in inputs and the outputs in the agricultural field in North district. As per the data, 34% of the respondents decide themselves; 34% of the respondents answered that the decision is taken by their husband; 12% decide jointly; 10% of the respondents said that the decision is taken by their mother in law; 4% of the respondents said that the decision is made by their father in law; 4% of

the decision is taken by their son; and 2% of the decision is taken by other male member of the family. In case of crop sell 30% makes self decision; 36% respondent's husband decides it; 12% of them decides jointly; 4% replied that it is being decide by the father/father in law; 10% said it is being decided by mother/mother in law; 6% said that their son decides; and 2% replied that it is being decided by the other member of the family (see Figure 5.13).

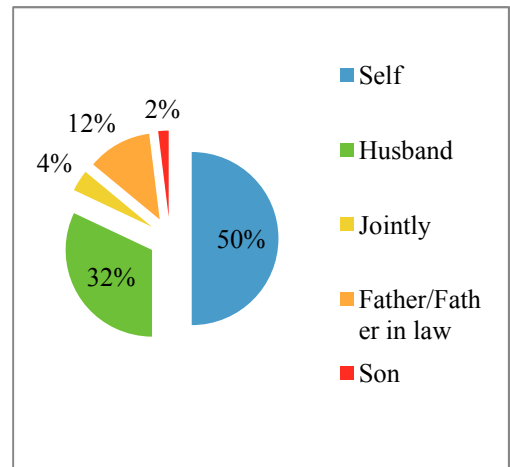
If we see the male and female representation in the decision making process in inputs and outputs in the field, the male member represents 44% and female member also represents 44% and 12% is joint decision. In case of decision in selling of crops male member represents 48% and female member represents 40%. In case of North district the decision in providing inputs and outputs in the field is decided equally by the male and female members of the family, in case of selling of crops the decision is taken by the patriarch of the family.

### South District of Sikkim

**Figure 5.14: Decision in Inputs & Outputs in the field**



**Figure 5.15: Sells of Crops**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim

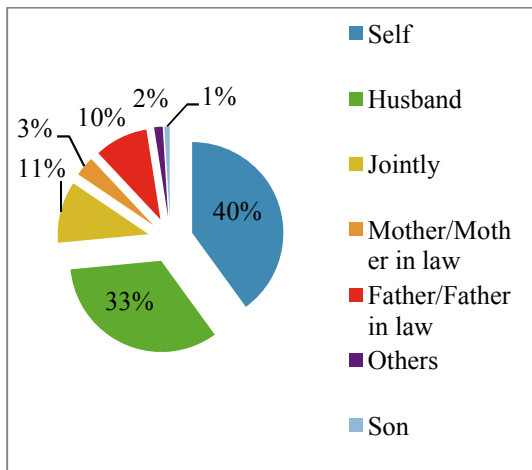
Figure 5.14 represents the decision by the respondents in inputs and the outputs in the agricultural field in South district. As per the data, 46% of the respondents decide themselves; 20% of the respondents answered that the decision is taken by their husband; 22% decides jointly; and 12% of the respondents said that the decision is made by their

father in law. In case of crops sell, 50% makes self decision; 32% respondent's husband decide; 4% of them decide jointly; 12% replied that it is being decide by the father/father in law; and 2% said that their sons decide (see Figure 5.15).

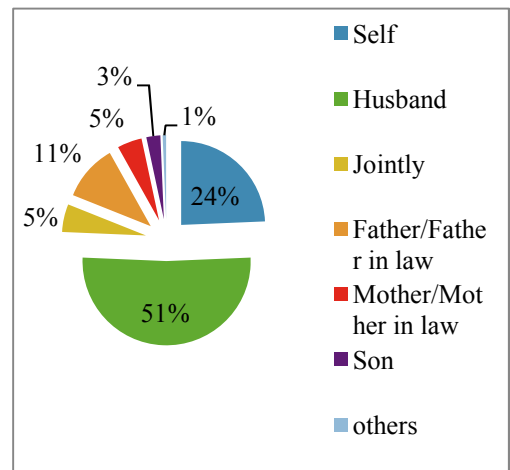
If we see the male and female representation in the decision making process in inputs and outputs in the field, the male member represents 32% and female member represents 46% and 22% is joint decision. In case of decision in selling of crops male member represents 46% and female member represents 50% and 4% is joint decision. In case of South district the gender equity is seen, as the decision regarding inputs and outputs in the field or in case of selling of crops the decision is taken by a slightly higher female member of the family.

### Sikkim

**Figure 5.16: Decision in Inputs & Outputs in the field**



**Figure 5.17: Sells of Crops**



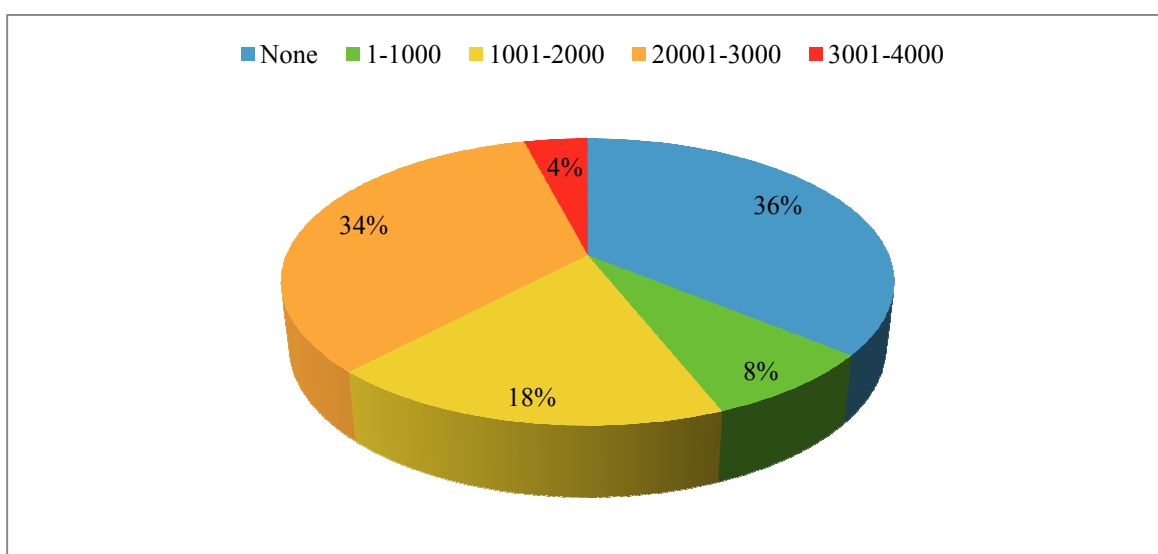
Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

Figure 5.16 represents the decision by the respondents in inputs and the outputs in the agricultural field in Sikkim. As per the data, 40% of the respondents decide themselves; 33% of the respondents answered that the decision is taken by their husband; 11% decides jointly; 3% of the respondents said that the decision is taken by mother in law; 10% of the respondents said that the decision is made by father in law; 2% of the decision is taken by their sons; and 1% of the decision is taken by other male member of the family. In case of sell of crops 24% makes self decision; 51% respondent's husband

decide; 5% of them decide jointly; 11% replied that it is being decide by the father/father in law; 5% said it is being decided by mother/mother in law; 3% said that their sons decide; and 1% replied that it is being decided by other member of the family (see Figure 5.17).

If we see the male and female representation in the decision making process in inputs and outputs in the field, the male member represents 47% and female member represents 44% and 11% is joint decision. In case of decision in selling of crops male member represents 66% and female member represents 29%. In case of Sikkim the decision in providing inputs and outputs in the field the representation of male member is slight higher than the female members of the family, in case of selling of crops the decision by male members of the family exceeds female members.

**Figure 5.18**  
**Average Monthly Income of Respondents in East District**



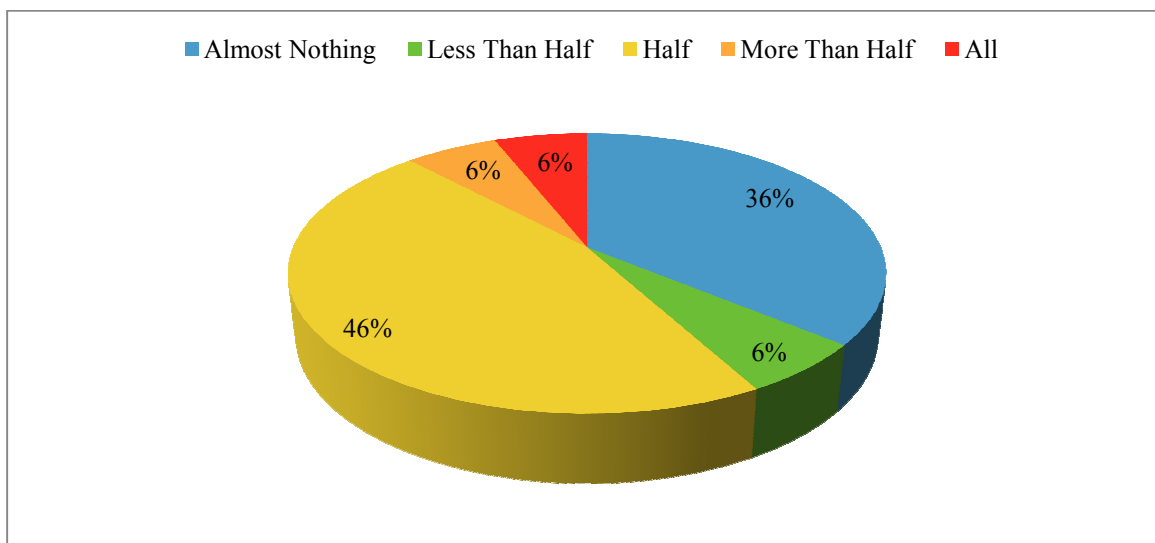
Source: Field Work East District (May 2015- June 2015) Sikkim.

In total decision regarding sells of crops by female member is much lower than decision in inputs and outputs in the field and reverse in case of male members, which proves that female member are mostly engaged in agriculture sectors which are mostly unpaid. They work, prepare fields, take active part in sowing, weeding, watering and when it comes to sell of crops it is mostly handled by male members of the household.



The economic holding determines the position of individual in the society. Economic empowerment is one of the important aspects in development process of the individual or society at large. This chapter tries to deal with the economic holding of the women members in agriculture setting and contribution of their income in their family.

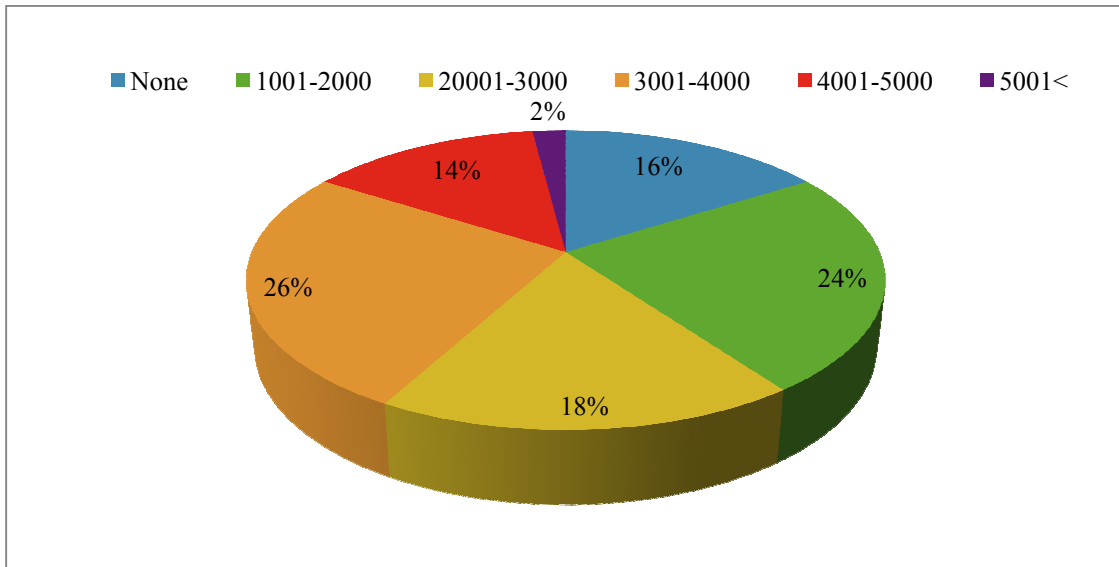
**Figure 5.19**  
**Contribution to the Total Family Income of Respondents in East District**



Source: Field Work East District (May 2015- June 2015) Sikkim.

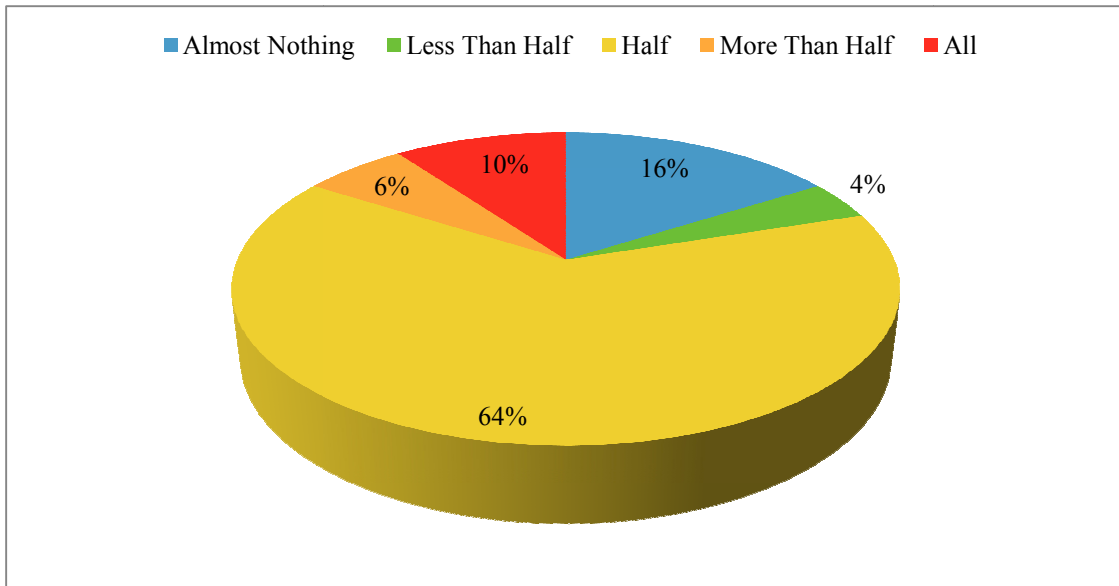
All of the 200 respondents are engaged in agricultural activities, either full time or part time. When it comes to income and their contribution to the total family income, 40% of the respondents from North and South district, 36% in East district, 16% in West district has to depend upon their family for their livelihood as their monthly income is none or nil. The respondents monthly income under the slab 1-1000 are 8% in East district; 1001-2000 are 24% in West district and 18% in East district; 2001-3000 are 34% in East district, 20% in North district, 18% each in West and South district; 3001-4000 are 26% in West district, 20% in North district, 18% in South district and 4% in East district.; 4001-5000 are 14% in West district, 10% in North district and 8% in South district; Above 5000 are 10% in North and South district and 2% in West district (see Figure 5.18, 5.20, 5.22, and 5.24).

**Figure 5.20**  
**Average Monthly Income of the Respondents**



Source: Field Work West District (February 2015- March 2015) Sikkim.

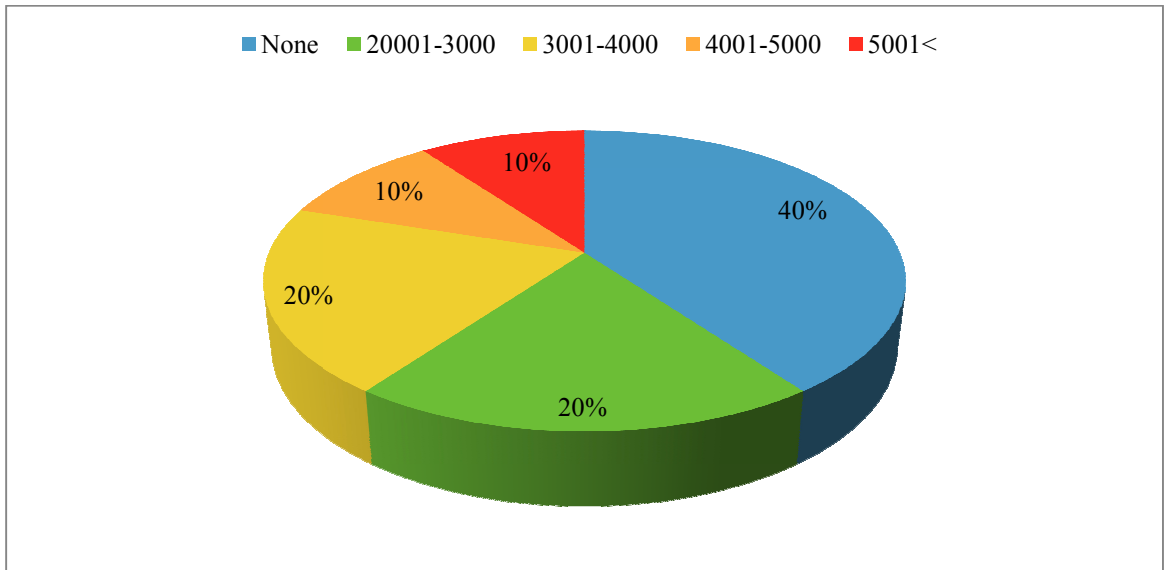
**Figure 5.21**  
**Contribution to the Total Family Income by the Respondents**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

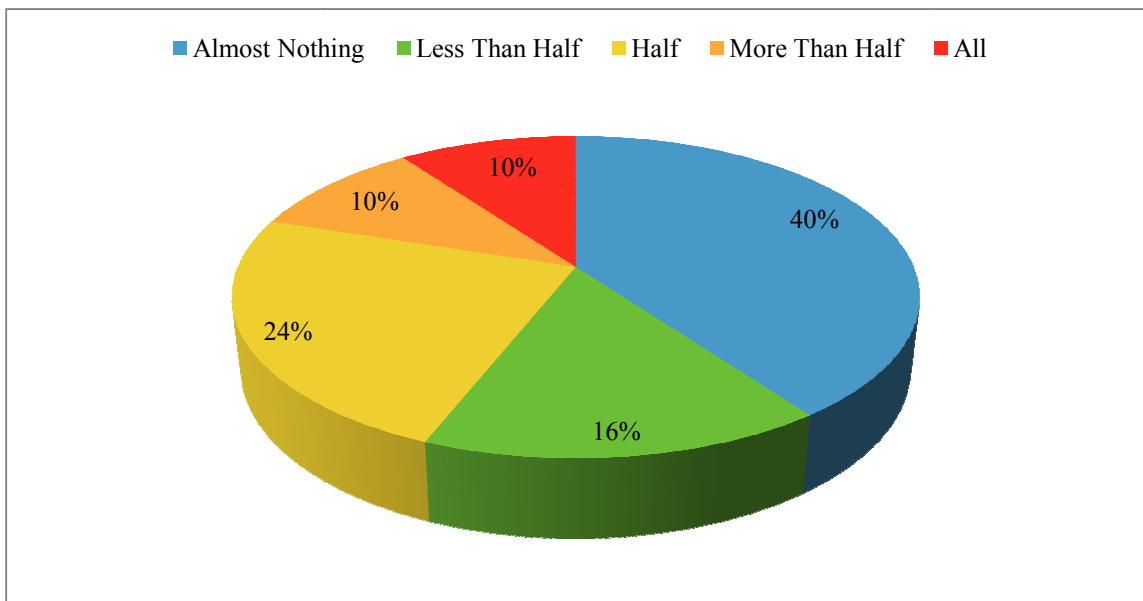
**North District of Sikkim**

**Figure 5.22**  
**Average Monthly Income of the Respondents**



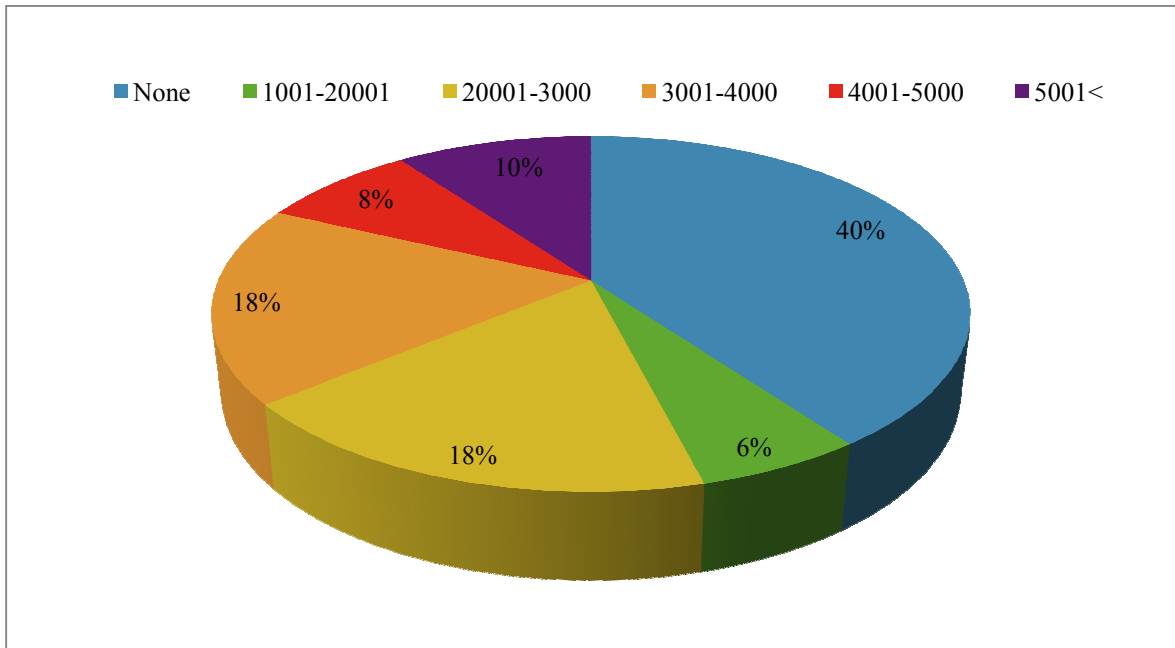
Source: Field Work North District (December 2014- January 2015) Sikkim.

**Figure 5.23**  
**Contribution to the Total Family Income of the Respondents**



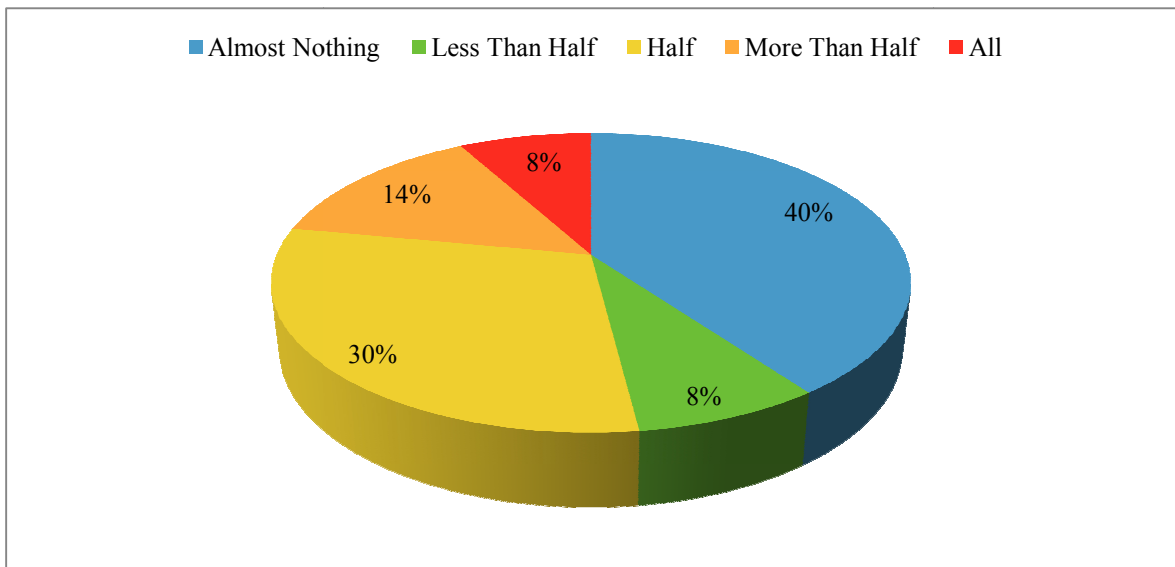
Source: Field Work North District (December 2014- January 2015) Sikkim.

**Figure 5.24**  
**Average Monthly Income of the Respondents**



Source: Field Work South District (April 2015- May 2015) Sikkim.

**Figure 5.25**  
**Contribution to the Total Family Income by the Respondentss**



Source: Field Work (April 2015- May 2015) Sikkim.

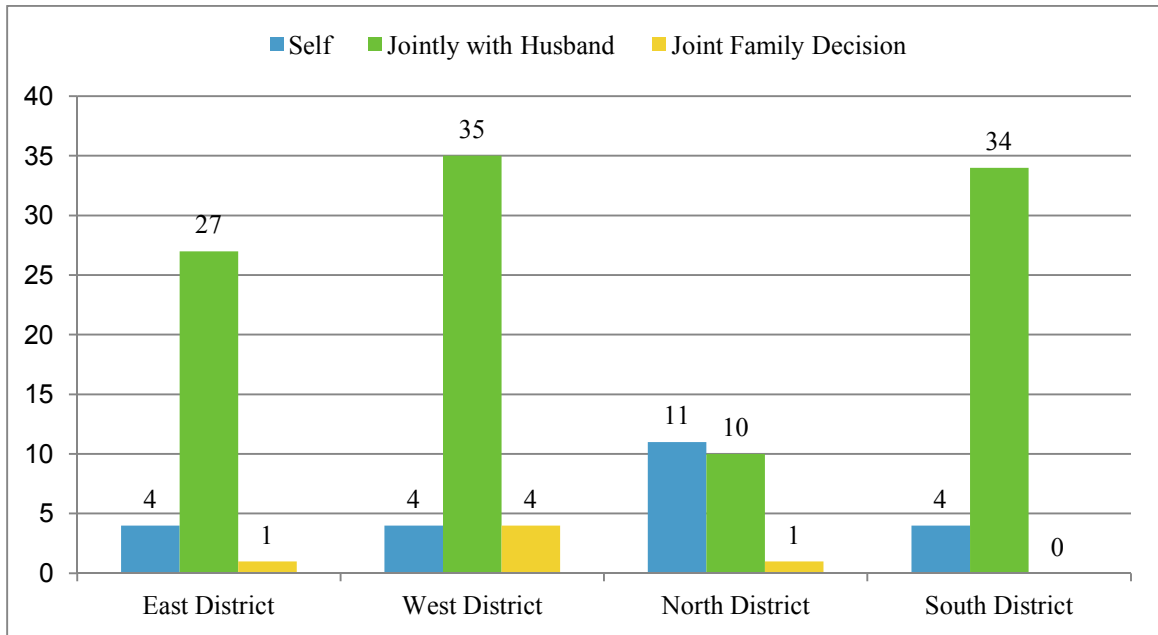
Regarding their contribution to the total family income 16% in North district, 8% in South district, 6% in East district and 4% in West district respondents contribute less than half; 64% in West district, 30% in South district, and 24% in North district contribute half of the family income; 14% in South district, 10% in North district, and 6% each in East and West district contribute more than half family income; 10% each in West and North district, 8% in South district, and 6% in East district run their household by the income of their own which means none contribute income and everything is managed by themselves (see Figure 5.19, 5.21, 5.23, and 5.25).

There are four pillars of empowerment i.e. social, political, education and economic empowerment. For economic empowerment, the employment of a person or the ways of generating income is important. Some do earn money but the decision regarding income earned by them, if handled by others than the economic empowerment of such person remains invalid. So to understand the economic empowerment of the women population, engaged in agricultural activities in Sikkim the field study was conducted and represented in Figure 5.26.

As per the data presented in Figure 5.26, 4 out of 32 respondents in East district, 4 out of 43 respondents in West district, 11 out of 22 in North district and 4 out of 38 in South district take self decision regarding the utilization of income earned by them. Whereas 27 in East district, 35 in West district, 10 in North district, and 34 in South district take decision jointly with husband regarding utilization of the money earned by them; and 1 in East and North district, 4 in West district, and none in South districts take joint family decision with regard to their income.

The data in Figure 5.26 proves how hard a woman in Sikkim works for to make earning but when it comes to spending or utilizing the income, the decision hardly lies in her hands; rather joint decision with husband seems to be highest. The inferior position of women in Sikkim as decision makers in the household seems to be inferior, as per the data generated in the Figure 5.26.

**Figure 5.26**  
**Decision Regarding Money Earned by the Respondents**

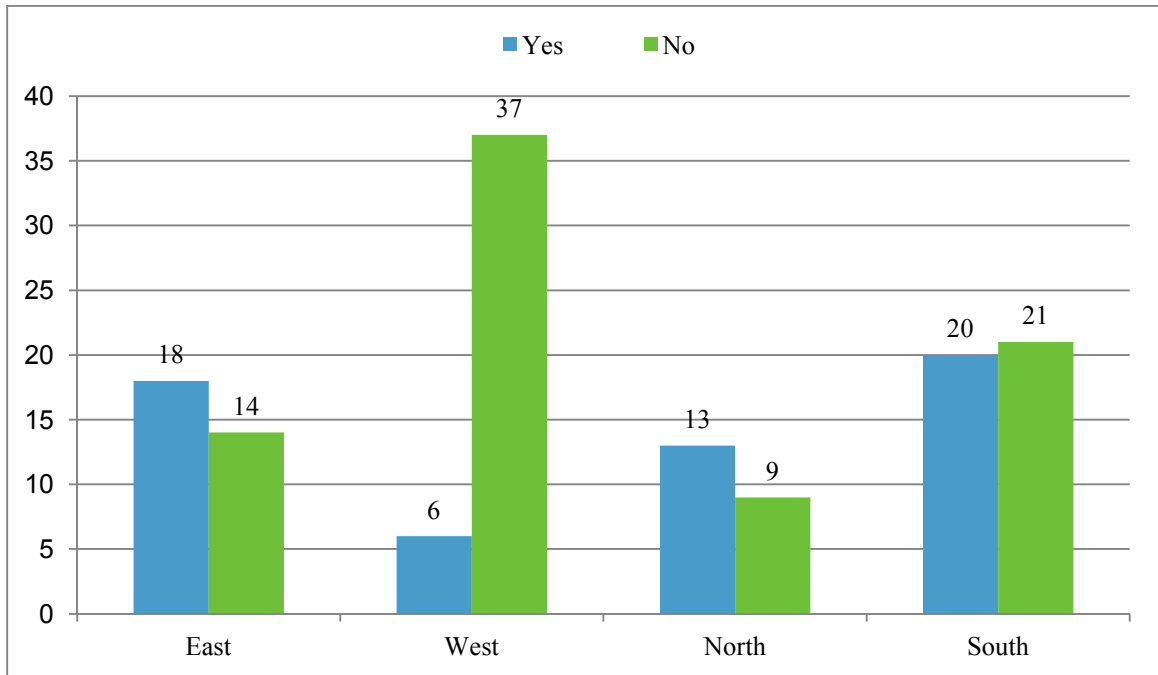


Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

Some respondents who generate income by working in agriculture or allied activities or engaging themselves in small businesses or engaging themselves in central scheme jobs such as MGNERGA along with involvement in agriculture sector manage to save money for themselves and their family’s security but there are others who are not able to save any, as their income is spent wholly in taking care of their families, or agricultural field or taking care of livestock (see Figure 5.27).

As per the data presented in Figure 5.27, 18 out of 32 in East district, 6 out of 43 in West district, 13 out of 22 in North district, and 20 out of 41 respondents in South district manage to save money out of their earnings. The Figure 5.27 clearly shows that the respondents in West district seems to save less or no money from their earnings, on the other hand respondents in the North district seem to be saving their income. In totality, 41% of the respondents who are women tend to save their income and on the other hand 59% of the women are unable to save their earnings, which mean 59% of the women tend to spend all of their income in running the household.

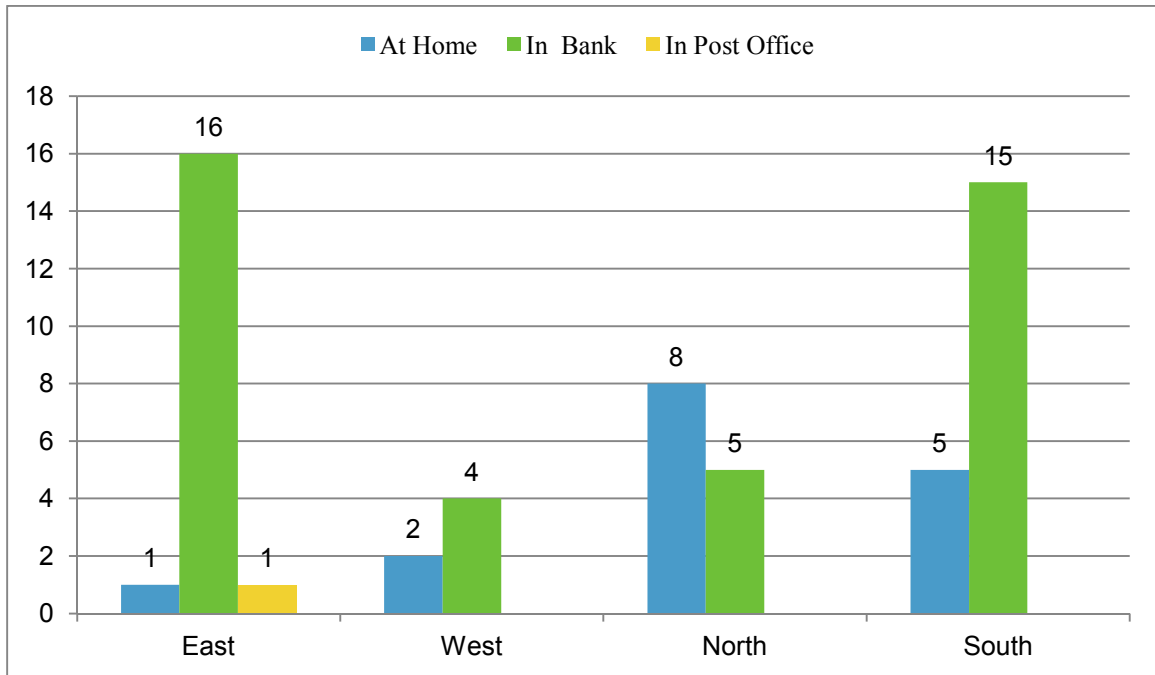
**Figure 5.27**  
**Number of Respondents Manage to Save Income Earned**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

Among the 200 respondents in Sikkim, 57 of them, which are 28.5% manage to save some amount of income earned. There are various ways and methods to save the money, so in case of Sikkim almost all the respondents know the ways of saving money, but only a few manage to do so. According to the respondents 16 out of 18 in East district, 4 out of 6 in West district, 5 out of 13 in North district, and 15 out of 20 in South district save their money in the bank; 1 in East district save her money in post office and 1 in East district, 2 in West district, 8 in North district, and 5 in South district keep money with themselves at home, according to them it is handy to keep money at home because of inaccessibility of banks and post office, close by and also it is handy in times of need (see Figure 5.28).

**Figure 5.28**  
**Methods Adopted to Save Money by the Respondents**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

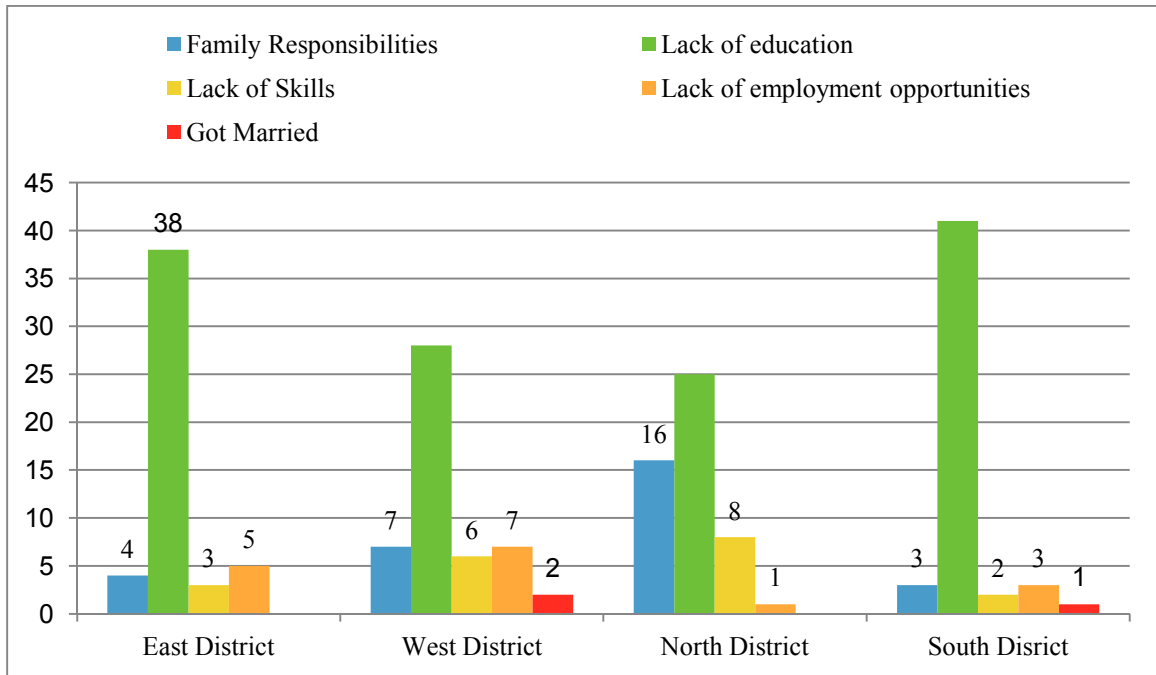
Among the 200 respondents in Sikkim, 65 of them are unpaid family workers and 135 of them are engaged in agricultural activities with little benefits in term of income. There were various reasons for not having permanent employment by the respondents; some of them have been mentioned in figure 5.29.

The respondents also shares the reasons for not having fully fledged work. The most common reasons of unemployment are due to lack of education. According to the respondents, education plays a vital role for procuring jobs, as they lack it; they are compelled to take up other works. Among the 200 respondents 132 believe that it is due to lack of education, this constitutes 66%, followed by 30 respondents cited family responsibilities for not taking up full time employment family. 19 respondents feel that lack of skill, 16 of them blamed lack of opportunities, and 3 of them said as they got married so they didn't opt to work.



**Figure 5.29**

**Various Reasons for Lacking Permanent Employment by the Respondents**



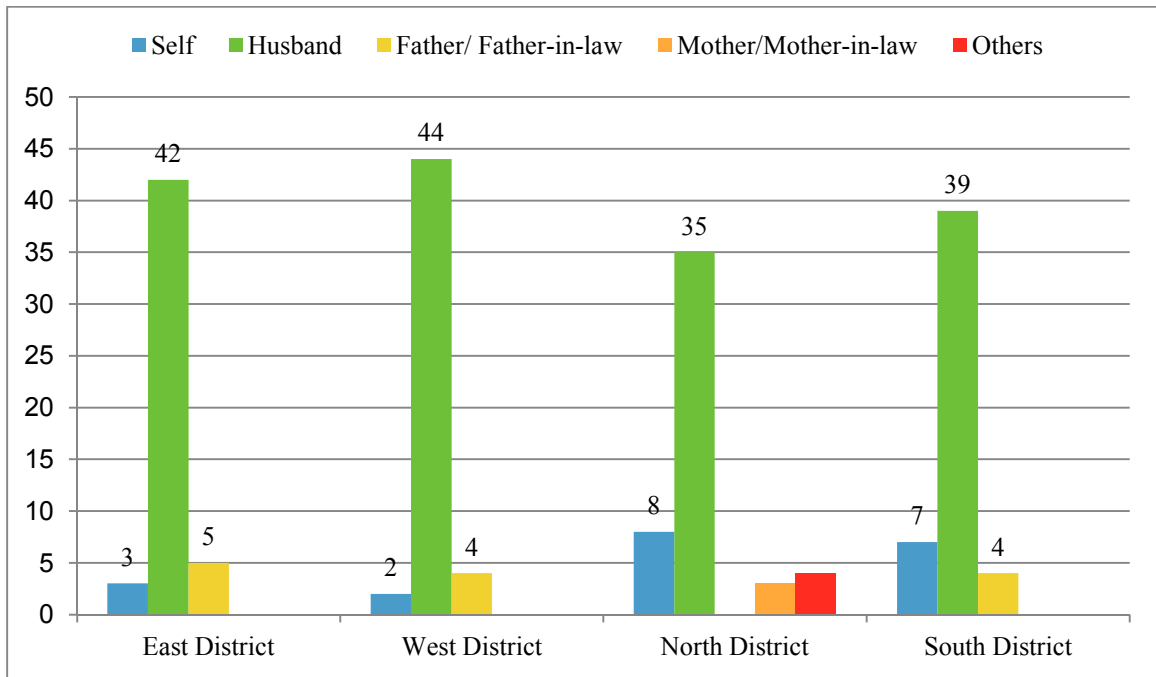
Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

As mentioned in Figure 5.29, there are various reasons for the respondents for not having a permanent employment, but to work outside itself is a major problems faced by the respondents. To understand the decision making power of the women in rural areas in Sikkim, the respondents were asked to answer the question, “Do the female members of the household require permission to work outside their home?” 90% of the respondents answered, “Yes”. 80% of the respondents seek permission from their husband, 6.5% respondents had to seek permission from their father or father in law, 1.5% had to seek permission from their mother or mother in law, and 2% of the respondents had to seek permission from the other members of the family. Only 10% of the respondents holds self decision in opting to work outside their homes.

Figure 5.30 provides district wise data about seeking permission for a female member to work outside of their house. Husband in the household especially in rural areas seems to be the main decision maker in the household, whether it is taking decision to utilize the money earned by their wife or letting their wife to work outside their house.

**Figure 5.30**

**Permission given to the Respondents to Work Outside of the Household (District-Wise)**

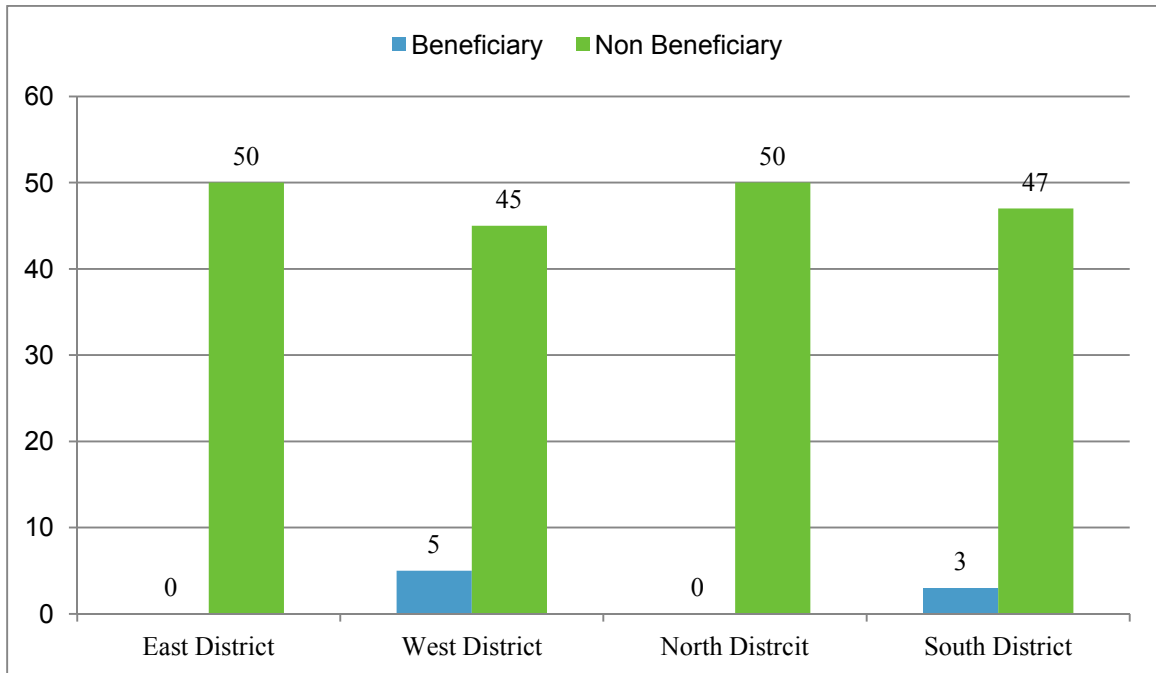


Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

There have been various policies and programmes for benefiting the farmers both at central and state level to provide training, techniques, equipments, HYV seeds, and financial support. With this view in mind the respondents were asked if they are aware about facilities provided by the centre and state governments and if they do, have they availed benefit from such schemes. Most of the respondents knew about such trainings and schemes and in most cases male member of the family take part in such training.

Among the 200 respondents only 5 from West district and 3 from East district have only received training related to agriculture and 192 of them have not been able to benefit any such government scheme. Few replied that their family (male) member has received such training and majority have no such skills provided by the government (see Figure, 5.31). Such training has benefitted trainees in many ways. According to the respondents, training is provided by Food Security and Agriculture Department (FS&AD), Government of Sikkim and Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), Government of India, situated at Tadong (Gangtok).

**Figure 5.31**  
**Number of the Respondents Beneficiary of Agricultural Training**

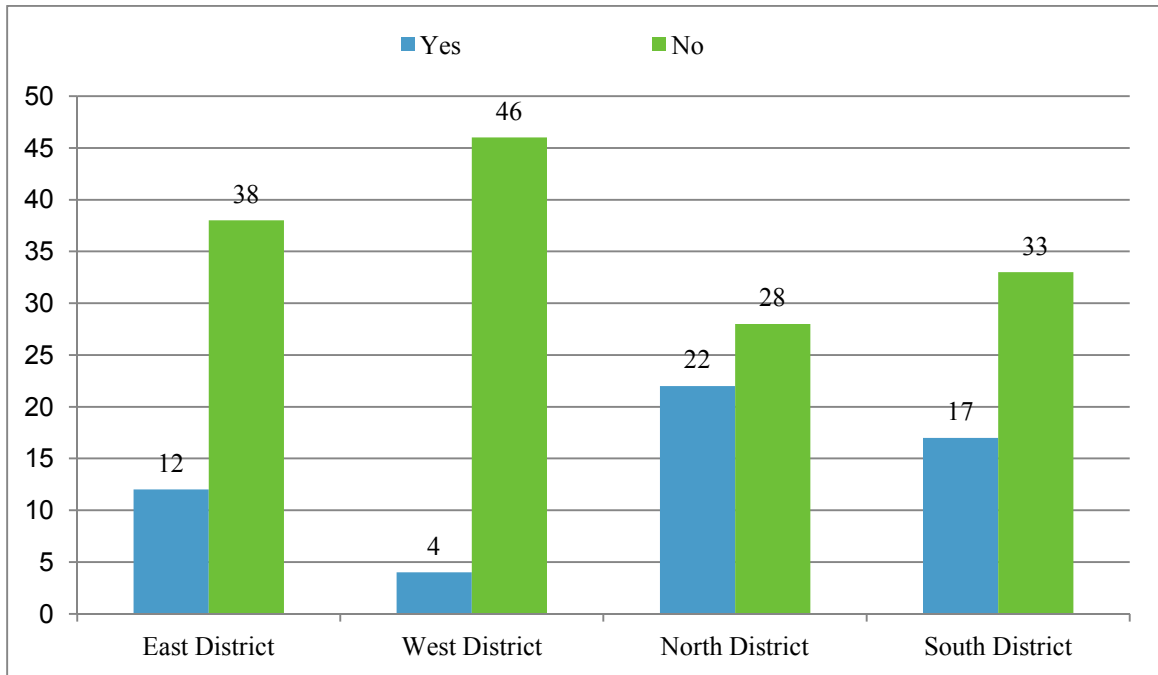


Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

Another important criterion for empowerment is holding property especially landed property. Holding property is a major concern in today's era. This issue has drawn concern and is a matter of discourse time and again. In this context, among the 200 respondents interviewed 55 of them have property in their name, 12 in East district, 4 in West district, 22 in North district, and 17 in South district. 145 of the respondents who are women don't hold any landed property (see Figure 5.32).

As per the figure 5.32, 27.5% of the respondents are holding landed property in their name, in most of the cases they were either gifted by their parents or acquired by themselves. Though the gifted property was not equivalent to that of their brothers but they were atleast given a piece of land of their own. The respondent in North district who has property in their name is a gifted one.

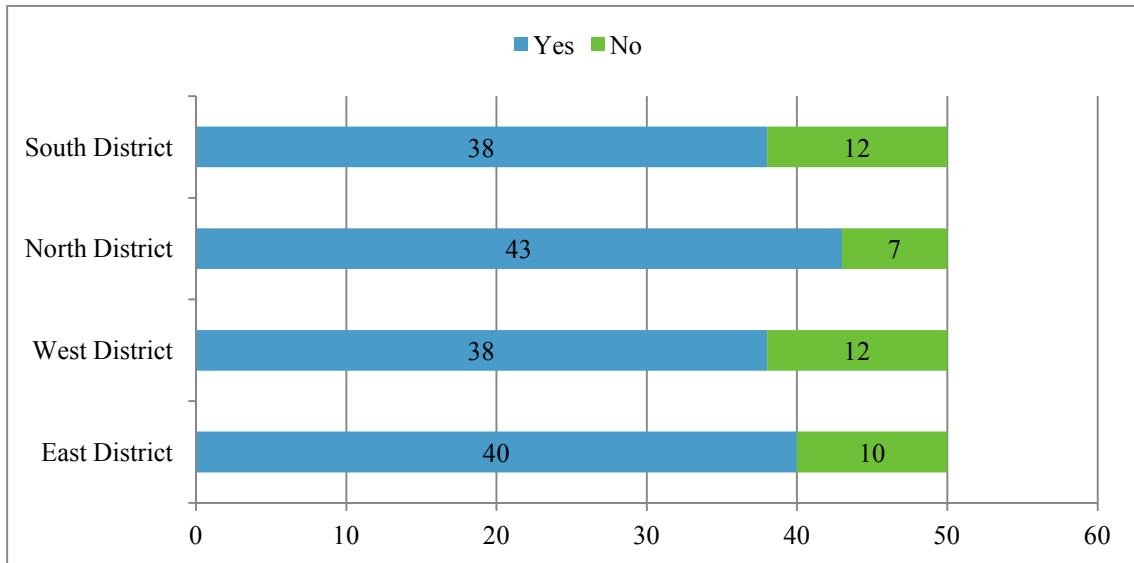
**Figure 5.32**  
**Number of Respondents Holding Landed Property**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

It is very important for a woman to be aware of rights and privileges provided to them in the form of policies by both central and state governments. So to understand the views of the respondents regarding the holding of property by female members, the question was raised that, “Do you think women should hold property?”. Out of 200 respondents, 159 of them replied that, Yes, women should hold property and 41 of them replied that it’s not necessary for women to have property of their own (see Figure 5.33).

**Figure 5.33**  
**View of the Respondents Regarding Holding of Property by Women**



Source: Field Work (December 2014- June 2015) Sikkim.

There have been various views regarding holding of property by women, those who were in favour of the view replied:

- a. Both man and women are equal by nature and law, so there should be equality when it comes to possession of property.
- b. Property is also a symbol of status and power, leading into self respect and confidence.
- c. If property is given to daughters too, they can lead their life with dignity, and even in case of death of their husband or situation of divorce, they can lead their life independently.
- d. In our society women have to get married, single women have less or no status in family or society, being a patriarchal society, property is transferred from father to son and daughters are usually left out. Daughters have to depend upon their father and later after marriage or their husband. If daughters own property then they can consider marriage a matter of choice and not compulsion. They can live their life with dignity even if they do not get married.

Those who replied that it's not necessary for women to hold property presented their view as follows:

- a. Land is less and it won't be enough to pass it on to daughters, so son must hold the property of their parents.
- b. Husbands usually have property of their own so to pass on to daughters is of no use.
- c. "Son is the real heir, so property should pass it on to son".