

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN ORGANIC WASTE DISPOSAL

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Women continue to be among the most disadvantaged sections of society, despite constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on grounds of sex. Women continue to suffer because of strong social resistance to giving women their due share. Women shoulders all the responsibilities providing for the needs and comforts of the male members of the family and the children, running the household, managing within the limited budget. They provide services round the clock without any payment and yet they are considered economically dependant on their husband and any other male members of the family. In the rural areas, besides all the household responsibilities, women also work in the fields side-by-side with their menfolk. (Saxena, 2001). In fact, there has been a division of labour in household and allied sectors based on sex and age which prevented women from effective participation in economic activities (Dube, 1990). In respect of role allocation, distinction is made between "men's work" and "women's work". The management of household is invariably in the women's sphere handling all the domestic chores like drawing water, cooking, house cleaning, child care, collection of firewood, weaving, cow dung making, disposal and re-utilization of waste material. Men are usually ridiculed if found undertaking any of these jobs. However, they do so only when the wife is away or ill or there is no other woman to take charge. Hence, considering all these aspects it was felt that the survey pertaining to responsibility pattern of organic waste disposal be conducted.

METHODOLOGY

The study was undertaken in Devan village of Hisar District in Haryana State in 1999 on a sample of 100 women respondents selected randomly from rural households. The data were collected personally with the help of structured interview schedule. The schedule contained information related to gender differentials in organic waste disposal pattern.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kitchen Waste—The findings given in a table revealed that homemaker mainly indulged in throwing away the kitchen waste or feeding it to animals (100%). Other adult family members were either throwing away the kitchen waste (female-85% and male-14%) or feeding it to animals (female-60% and male-20%).

Adult female members (64%) other than the respondents were reusing leftover cooked rice and/or *dal*, whereas the respondents (42%) were also responsible for reusing kitchen waste.

Paper Waste—Paper wastage in the form of paper bags, posts, leaflets was observed to be burnt in the '*chulha*' by homemaker (100%) and female adult members (78%). However, male adult family members shouldered the responsibility for selling the waste paper in the form of old newspapers, magazines, books and note-books in cent per cent families. In all the families, minor children and female adult members were involved in reusing the waste paper for making paper mache items.

Responsibility for Disposal and Re-utilization of Organic Waste

S.No.	Nature of waste	n	Personal responsible for waste disposal*			
			Self	Other adult family members		Minor
				Male	Female	Children
I	Kitchen waste					
	(i) Throw (fruit and vegetable peels, cooked chapatis and vegetables)	100	100(100.0)	14(14.0)	85(85.0)	—
	(ii) Feed to animals	100	100(100.0)	20(20.00)	60(60.0)	20(20.0)
	(iii) Reuse (cooked dal and rice)	100	42(42.0)	—	64(64.0)	—
II	Paper waste					
	(i) Burn in 'chulha'	100	100(100.0)	—	78(78.0)	—
	(ii) Sell	62	—	62(62.0)	—	—
	(iii) Reuse (old newspaper)	20	—	—	20(100.0)	20(100.0)
III	Animal waste					
	(i) Preparation of dung cakes	75	—	—	—	—
	(a) Inside home	27	27(100.0)	—	27(100.0)	10(37.0)
	(b) Outside home	48	24(50.0)	—	24(50.0)	36(75.0)
	(ii) Throw in manure pit or on heap	75	69(92.0)	27(36.0)	63(84.0)	—

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

*Multiple response

Animal Waste—In all the families, homemakers and female adult members of the families were observed preparing dung cakes inside the home. The task of preparing cow dung cakes outside the home was also performed by homemaker and female adult members of the family (50% each). However, there was no involvement of male adult member in the making of dung cakes. Minor

children were too involved in this activity (outside the home-75% and inside the home 37%).

Practice of throwing cow dung in manure pits or on heaps was also observed in homemakers and female adults members in 92% and 84% families respectively, whereas male adult members were involved in this activity only in 36% families.

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