

WOMEN LEADERSHIP EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN

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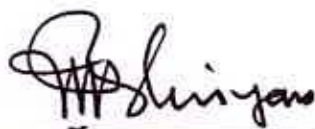
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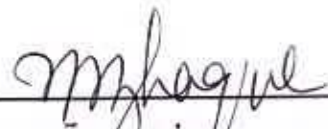
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CERTIFICATE

This to certify that the thesis entitled, "WOMEN LEADERSHIP EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN" submitted to the faculty of Agriculture, Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University, Dhaka-1207, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE (MS) in AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION & INFORMATION SYSTEM embodies the result of a piece of bona fide research work carried out by EISRAT JAHAN, REG. NO. 07-2629 under my supervision and guidance. No part of the thesis has been submitted for any other degree of diploma.

I further certify that such help or source of information, as has been availed of during the course of this investigation has been duly acknowledged by her.

Dated.....

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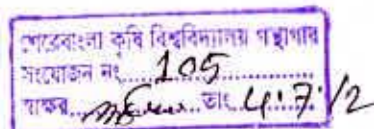
WOMEN LEADERSHIP EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of the study was to determine and describe the extent of activities of women leaders empowering rural women. The field work for the study was conducted in Dumuria Upazilla under Khulna district. The entire process of collection of data required 20 days from 8th July to 27th July 2009. More than one half of the women leaders (51.7%) had very high leadership activities followed by 31.6% belonged to high leadership activities and 16.7% medium leadership activities. It was also revealed that overwhelming majority (83.3%) of the women leaders had leadership activities empowering rural women ranged from very high to high. Age, leadership experience, awareness of women rights, motivation, attitude toward women empowerment, time spent for social work, extent of contact with rural women, cosmopolitaness and personality showed significant positive relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. Education showed significant negative relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.



INTRODUCTION



1.1 General background

Women in Bangladesh are disadvantaged in comparison to men even though they constitute almost half of our population. It is evident that no society in the world provides women equal status with men (Giriappa, 1988). By social customs, Bangladeshi women are dominated by men in all spheres of their lives. Poor women in rural areas have the least power. Traditionally women in Bangladeshi villages have few rights, little choice about the courses of their lives and almost no suitable opportunities to change their situations. Most of them have little or no access to positions of influence as most of them are illiterate.

Women are neglected after their birth and unfortunately it continues till death. In our society when a female baby born it will not be a good news compared to male baby. In some families the female babies can not get proper education, food, health and other facilities compare to male baby. And after her marriage she is also neglected by her husband, mother in law and at last by her son also. But she works for her family for day and night during her whole life. She is engaged in household activities from dawn to dusk for about 12-14 hours. Still these she has no economic and decision making power. Moreover most of the women are physically and psychologically tortured by husband and other members of her in-law's house.

All rural families are in economic hardship. They cannot provide two square meals and education to their children. That is cash income by men is insufficient to run a family properly. In this situation the domestic activities performed by women are seldom being considered as generating income for the household. Due to the lack of independent income or employment, women cannot acquire assets themselves. The inherited land property and other

valuable assets, in which women have legal share is owned by men and by virtue of this ownership they lord over the women and dominate in the society and community (Islam, 2000). But women play significant and crucial role in the development of family and society (Samanta, 2005). Women play an important role in agricultural production, food processing, animal husbandry and other activities like storage and marketing etc. Besides, they spend 10 to 12 hours per day doing household activities (Devi, 1998).

In rural economies throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, research findings indicate that women are most active in the small-farm sector and on high-technology export-oriented farms. Women also comprise a larger proportion than men of the labor employed in non-traditional agricultural exports (Kleynen and Truitt, 1996). In Central America, women comprise at least 25 percent of the workforce in the agriculture sector and spend an average of four hours a day on agricultural activities (Chiriboga, 1995).

From 1970 to 1990 women's activity rates in rural areas grew from 12.3 to 19.2 percent all over the world (FLACSO, 1995). Even so, official statistics on women's participation in agriculture severely underestimate the actual number of women farmers. Estimation of women's employment, based on extensive surveys undertaken as part of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA)/Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Rural Women Food Producers' study, indicate that the percentage of women working force in agriculture is underrepresented by anything from 50 percent in Ecuador to 60 percent in Guatemala (Kleynen and Truitt, 1996).

While half of the world's food is grown by women, FAO (1989) reports that 95 percent of agricultural extension services worldwide are directed by men (Dunn, 1995). Specifically in Latin America and the Caribbean, the survey found an average of only 5 percent of extension services directed to programmers for women farmers (FAO, 1993). So the use of female extension workers needs to be increased. The World Bank (1992) pointed out that the

consequence of assumptions about women's role in agriculture was "an extension system which focuses narrowly on women's traditional role as food growers, care givers and maintainers of basic family living standards, in marked contrast to the more complex, productive reality of rural women's lives". When women do receive extension training, it is mostly in "home economics matters only, since local traditions regard women as primarily home-makers and child rearers" (Eboh, 1993).

The main difficulty for empowerment of women is the hostile attitude of the conservative society for women in developing countries. There is an urgent need to empower women to act upon total development and the development of the society. Here women leader can make aware about their empowerment in rural women.

Women leaders are more assertive and persuasive, have a stronger need to get things done and are more willing to take risks than male leaders. Women leaders were also found to be more empathetic and flexible, as well as stronger in interpersonal skills than their male counterparts. Women leaders are enable to read situations accurately and take information from all sides. These women leaders are able to bring others around to their point of view, because they genuinely understand and care about where others are coming from. So that the people they are leading, feel more understood, supported and valued.

Nowadays women got an opportunity to be partners of rural power structure by participating in UP (Union Parisad) election and women development program of NGO. In every Union Parisad, one women member to be elected and these elected women members and NGO workers work for the empowerment of their same kind.

To ensure a balance, socio-economic development of the country, empowerment of women is a precondition. This may be achieved only when

women become aware about their empowerment and this empowerment may come up by the help of women leadership. In these circumstances an empirical study entitled “**Women leadership empowering rural women**” has been undertaken.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Government and different non-government organizations can develop the overall sphere at grass root level by empowering women and mainstreaming them in development program. A large number of GOs and NGOs are working in rural areas and emphasizing rural women to involve in different development programs. A large number of women leaders protest women any kind of teasing, dowry system, early marriage etc. They also work for women in mitigating family conflict in conjugal life and encourage them for education, family planning, different vaccination program and different income generating activities. Different GOs and NGOs women leaders reported that they success in their field for developing rural women`s socio economic condition. But no organizations investigate and report about the activities of women leaders for women empowerment. So, it is necessary to conduct a study on women`s empowerment. In this regard the study aims to answer the following research questions:

- i) What is the extent of leadership activities of women leaders empowering rural women?
- ii) What are the characteristics of women leaders?
- iii) What relationships exist between selected characteristics of women leaders and their leadership activities empowering rural women?

1.3 Justification

It is estimated that women are almost half of the total population of the world. In Bangladesh 48.78% of the population are women of which 79% live in the

rural area (BBS, 2007). So, in economic development of Bangladesh the role of women cannot be overlooked. But rural women are still neglected. In order to improve their position or rescue them from the negligence it is necessary to empower them. Nowadays various government and non-government organizations are taking programs for empowering rural women. In both cases women leadership play a vital role for empowering rural women. They work at grass root level for human rights and to ensure the rural women's empowerment. Ninety-four percent of agricultural extension agents worldwide are male (FAO, 1993), but some studies report that male extensionists deliver their services to men only..... (Fleck, 1994; Colverson, 1995; World Bank, 1992; Eboh, 1993; Jiggins in FAO, 1993).

So, finally we can say that only women leadership can empower rural women in our country. There was very little previous research work that attempted to find out the role of women leadership empowering rural women. Therefore the study "Women leadership empowering rural women" has been taken.

1.4 Objectives

1. To determine and describe activities of women leadership empowering rural women
2. To identify and describe some selected characteristics of women leaders

The selected characteristics are:

- Age
- Education
- leadership experience
- Awareness of women right
- Motivation
- Attitude toward women empowerment
- Time spent for social work
- Extent of contact with rural women
- Cosmo politeness
- Personality

3. To explore the relationship between the selected characteristics of women leaders and their leadership activities empowering rural women.

1.5 Scope of the study

The present study was designed to have an understanding of women leaders empowering activities to rural women and explore its relationship with the selected characteristics of women leader.

Findings of the study will be particularly applicable to the Dumuria Upazilla in Khulna district. However the findings may also have applications for other areas of Bangladesh having conditions similar to the study area. In Bangladesh few researchers have so far conducted studies on the women leadership empowering rural women. The findings may also be helpful to the policy makers to improve strategies of action for empowerment of rural women. Lastly it is assumed that recommendation of this study will be helpful for researchers, NGO, Government planners and policy makers to increase the level of empowerment of rural women by improving the activities of women leaders.

1.6 Limitations of the study

In order to conduct the research in a meaningful manner considering the time, money and other resources available to the researcher the following limitations were made and strictly followed throughout the investigation:

- i) The study was confined in Dumuria Upazilla under Khulna district.
- ii) The study was kept limited among those women who were professionally involved in leadership.
- iii) Characteristics of the women leaders are many and varied, but time, money and other resources did not permit the researcher to include all of them in the study. Hence, only 10 characteristics of the women leaders were selected for investigation in this study.
- iv) Empowerment is a relative concept, so it is very difficult to measure.

1.7 Assumption of the study

An assumption is the supposition that an apparent fact or principle is true in the light of the available evidence (Goode and Hatt, 1952). The researcher had the following assumptions in mind while undertaking this study.

- i) The respondents included in the sample were capable of furnishing proper responses to the questions included in the interview schedule.
- ii) The researcher who acted as the interviewer was well adjusted to the social and cultural environment of the study area. Hence the respondent furnished their correct opinions without hesitation.
- iii) Views and opinions furnished by the respondents included in the sample were the representative views and opinions of the whole population of the study area.
- iv) The respondents furnished by the respondents were reliable.
- v) The researcher distributed data considering the present situation for different variables.

Definition of terms

The terms which have been frequently used throughout the thesis are defined and interpreted below:

Age

Age of a respondent defined as the span of her life and is operationally measured by the number of years from her birth to the time of interviewing.

Attitude

Attitude is a hypothetical construct that represents an individual's like or dislike for an item. Attitudes are positive, negative or neutral views of an 'attitude object' i.e. a person, behavior or event. People can also be "ambivalent" towards a target, meaning that they simultaneously possess a positive and a negative bias towards the attitude in questions. In this study attitude means attitude of women leadership toward rural women.

Awareness

Awareness comprises a human's or an animal's perception and cognitive reaction to condition or event. Awareness does not necessarily imply understanding, just an ability to be conscious of, feel or perceive. In this study awareness referred to the consciousness about women rights.

Cosmopolitaness

The orientation of an individual external to her own social environment. That is how frequent a women leader visits, travels to the places outside of her own social system for the purpose of achieving new experience and new knowledge related to her leadership experience.

Education

Education referred to the development of desirable knowledge, skill, attitude etc. of an individual through the experiences of reading, writing, observation and related matters. In this study education was meant for women education.

Empowerment

The concept of empowerment is very complex and as its meaning various depending upon the socio-cultural and political context of a society. Social scientist and different organizations defined empowerment in different ways. Hadi (1997) defined empowerment as a process that requires transformation of structures of sub ordinance, control over resources, gaining decisions, making

authority and education of gender inequality. Similarly Batliwala (1994) stated that, the concept of empowerment imply transformation of structures of subordination through racial in laws, property rights and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate male domination.

Family co-operation

Family co-operation meant support and help both physically and mentally by other family members in the implementation of development activities.

Freedom in decision making

Freedom in decision making refers the value of decision of women in different family related activities such as children education, marriage, participation in cultural and development activities etc.

Husband's cooperation in household activities

Husband's cooperation refers the extent of cooperation that women receive from their husbands in different household activities.

Its represents how much time a leader spent for social work in a day.

Leadership

Leadership may be defined as the activity of influencing people toward some desirable goal. In the broadest sense leadership refers to that process whereby an individual directs, guides or controls the thoughts, feelings or behavior of other human beings.

Personality

The term personality is used to mean the sum totality of an individual's characteristics and way of behaving which determine his unique adjustment to his environment. Personality is the organization of biological, psychological and sociological factors which underlies the individual behavior.

Rural woman

A rural woman refers to the woman who lives in rural areas and receives all rural amenities. In Bangladesh 48.78% of the population are women of which 79% live in the rural area (BBS, 2007).

Women empowerment

Women empowerment is a process of awareness and capacity building of women that leading to greater decision making power and control and to transformative action (Karl, 1995).

Women leader

Leader is a person who is considered or chosen as being influential in a specific situation. Women leader is a person who works for women to establish their rights in a society. In the study the population was constituted of women UP chairman, UP members, women organization leaders and women NGO workers

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this Chapter is to review the past studies conducted by different researchers related to the present study. The researcher as far as possible tried to review the available literature from the studies conducted at home and abroad related to empowerment of women and other related matters. This chapter comprises of four sections.

- i. In the first section literature relating to concept of empowerment have been presented.
- ii. The second and third sections deal with reviews related to concept of leadership activities toward women empowerment and past studies in connection with the relationship of independent variables with empowerment of rural women and
- iii. The fourth section of this chapter deals with the conceptual framework of the study.

2.1 Review Related to Concept of Empowerment

Empowerment can be conceived as a process that people undergo, which eventually leads to change. Empowerment as a process to change the distribution of power both in interpersonal relations and in institutions throughout the society or a process of acquiring providing, bestowing the resources and the means enabling the accesses to a control over such means and resources. Empowerment is a process in which women gain control over their own lives by knowing and claiming their rights at all levels of society at local and household level (Mathew, 2005).

Empowerment is a way of defining, challenging and overcoming barriers of one's life through which people increase their ability to shape their own

lives and environment. Empowerment is a multidimensional process which enables individual or a group of individuals to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. It consists of greater access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making to enable them to have greater ability to plan their lives and free from shocks imposed on them by custom, belief and practices (Kulandaivel, 2005).

Empowerment is the enhancement of assets and capabilities of diverse individual and groups to engage, influence and hold accountable the institutions which affect them (Bennett, 2002).

Empowerment is the process-and the result of the process-whereby the powerless or less powerful members of the society gain greater access and control over material and knowledge resources, challenge the ideologies of discrimination and subordination, and transform the institutions and structures through which unequal access and control over resources is sustained and perpetuated (Annonuevo, 1997).

Women's empowerment has been viewed by several people at several points of times in several ways, which have been described and categorized as traditional, conservative and radical views. But the alternate view for all these puts emphasis on women collectively coming together to recognize and address the gender issues which stand in the way of their advancement. Empowerment in this context involves the transformation through a process of enlightenment, conscientisation and collective organization and therefore necessitates collective action by women to discard the patriarchal beliefs and attitudes they have learned in their system (Longwe, 1997).

Empowerment is a process to change distribution of power, both in interpersonal relationships and in institutions throughout society (Stromquist, 1996).

Empowerment is a process of awareness and capacity building, leading to greater decision-making power and control and to transformative action (Karl, 1995).

Empowerment is the process of challenging existing power relations and of gaining greater control over the sources of power. The goals of women's empowerment are to challenge patriarchal ideology to transform the structures and institutions that reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and social inequality and to enable poor women to gain access to, and control over, both material and informational resources (Batliwala, 1994).

Empowerment is an altering relations of power which constrains women's options and autonomy and adversely affects health and well being (Sen, 1993).

Women's empowerment framework

According to UNICEF (1994) the Women's Empowerment Framework model has the five levels of equality, where empowerment is seen as a necessary part of the development process at each level, for women to advance towards equal status. The five levels of equality are:

1. Welfare: This addresses only the basic needs of women.
2. Access: Equality of access to **resources**.
3. Awareness-raising or conscientisation: An understanding of the fact that women as a group are subordinate and rejection of this subordination.
4. Participation: This is the point where women take decisions equally alongside men. Mobilization is necessary in order to reach this level.

5. Control: The ultimate level of equality and empowerment, where there is a balance or power between women and men and neither has dominance (UNICEF, 1994).

2.2 Reviews Related to Studies on Women Empowerment

Pankajam *et al.* (2005) observed that the women farmers had been associated with KVK (Krishi Vigyan Kendra) for about 12 years through various schemes like frontline demonstration program, demonstration of improved technologies, improved seeds, INM, IPM etc. in groundnut, castor, red gram and green gram the women farmers could get more income.

Chandramani (2005) observed that involvement of women was essential in all stages of economic and social activities. Therefore, organizing women in self-help group will enhance the status of women as participants, decision maker and beneficiaries in democratic, economic, social and cultural spheres of life. Self Help Groups (SHGs) have included a great confidence in the minds of rural women to succeed in their day to day life. So SHGs is a viable pathway for empowerment women.

Sulaiman *et al.* (2005) stated that special program for farm women enable/help women to access to improved information and resources which increase agricultural production significantly. They also stated that to make sustainable improvement in women's livelihoods, women's access to employment and income generating opportunities sources of credit, skill for establishing enterprises etc. should have to be improved.

Samanta (2005) stated that the contribution of rural women in agriculture and in homestead was huge both quantitatively and qualitatively. Without this on average rural women spend 40.4 percent and 15.4 percent time in home and farm related activities respectively. Although day to day life of rural women had been full of hardship, deprivation and struggle to survive.

Parkajam *et al.* (2005) found that the rural women was disadvantaged compared to her urban counterpart. The profile of rural women was that of illiterate, ignorant, superstitions, suppressed and oppressed because of their limited skills. The rural women need to be trained, educated and organized so that she is empowered to be equal to her counterpart in urban area.

Parveen (2004) conducted a study at three village in Mymensingh district. She collected data from 156 respondents and found that the majority of rural women had a very low to moderate (82%) level of empowerment.

Mahmud (2002) found, "the women who spent greater number of year in school have more empower, women who are engaged in income earning work have more empower compared to women who are not, women who are able to visit the public domain have more empower than women who are unable to do so".

Fisher and Sriram (2002) reported that Indian micro-finance to explore how, it can be design in practice, to contribute in a wide range of development objectives. They also reported that including providing social and economic security, promoting livelihoods; building democratic people's organizations; empowering women and changing wider system within society.

Chao *et al.* (2001) noted that most women in the technical professions Taiwan have low self-esteem and this probably could apply to women elsewhere. Although a substantial number of women is involved in the technical professions, the number of women holding managerial posts with decision-making powers is insignificant. Again, Primavera and Bueno (2001) suggested that this perception could reflect social values that hold men superior. In some countries, women do not enjoy basic rights (right to

vote, Choice of career and even dressing), which many from the developed countries take for granted. Merely involving women in development programs without delving into issues of culture and the state will not contribute to sustainable development and correct the disparities between the sexes, hence the need to consider gender.

Swati *et al.* (2001) observed that self help group (SHG) in India has emerged as a very successful concept of empowering rural women by providing not only easy credit and thrift facilities but also many other opportunities for their self development.

Sudha and Jothimani (1999) conducted a study on "Profile of self help groups (SHGs) in Karanmandai block" and found that SHGs organized women into group for group cohesion and dynamic and introduce women in all spheres and phases of development.

Sangeetha and Thangamani (1999) studied on "Initiating self help group (SHGs) in Combatore Corporation" and reported/pointed that the SHGs had successfully mobilized saving and extended credit out of its own funds with a good repayment record and the group was linked to bank for availing credit facilities.

Kaveri and Leelavathy (1999) conducted a study on "Initiating Income generating activities for women in rural areas" and found that the women who were resort to self employment, they wanted to improve their economic status.

Puhazhendh and Jayaraman (1999) observed that the group approach play an important role in empowering women in rural areas. The informal groups of rural poor with active intervention of NGOs adequately supported by training and financial systems, ensured and also significantly improved women's participation both from economic and social aspects.

Kaheer (1999) stated that empowerment is seen to occur at a number of different levels, to cover a range of different dimensions and to materialize through a variety of different processes. Empowerment rests upon the notion power as determining choice ability to choose, and how the lack of power and choice is disempowering.

Murshed *et al.* (1999) conducted a research on the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) to see how far it has been able to implement poverty alleviation and empowerment of the poor, particularly the rural women. They observed that through its multifaceted programs, enterprise development, health care, non-formal education for girl child and human rights and legal education, BRAC has been able to bring girl-child and human improvement to the lives of the poor and disadvantaged women of rural Bangladesh.

Sharmiladevi and Sithalakshmi (1998) conducted a study on "Initiating self help groups (SHGs) among urban and rural women". Where 462 women are in urban and 164 women are in rural areas. The researchers pointed out that the SHGs were facilitating income-generating activities for socio-economic upliftment of members and streamlining the procedures of repayment.

Kasthuri (1997) stated, "Empowerment is a challenge to society because it breaks the long established pattern of family life. Women need support counseling and training in order to become empowered. Her desires and her goal finally enable her to break the barriers to reach her goal"

Banu (1996) in her research work "The Impact of Training on Rural Women's Empowerment in Bangladesh" examined the relationship between women's access to training and women's empowerment with special reference to Bangladesh situation. Banu examined two issues to find out the relationship between training and women's empowerment in her study. Empowerment of women in Bangladesh is measured in terms of

raising awareness, self-confidence, economic independence and decision-making process in the household. It was revealed that training had an impact on the behavioral predisposition. Skills of women also developed through skill development training.

Pitt and Khandkar (1995), Zaman (1998) found, "Empowerment is influenced by participation in any development program because participation women were more likely to accesses to self employment and ability to visit in the NGO office or the health center."

Chen and Mahmud (1995) found, "Empowerment may be triggered by specific events in women's lives like schooling, labor force participation and participation in Micro-credit and other development programs. Women's empowerment also influence by secular life cycle events like marriage, birth of children, setting up of separate household, marriage of children and divorce or widowhood." They also presented a framework of women's empowerment as a process of positive change in women's lives that improves their fallback position and bargaining power within a patriarchal structure, and which evolves in response to events and experiences over the life cycle.

Amin and Pebley (1994) found that while programs after about two years had a statistically significant impact on gender inequity within the household in terms of women's participation in decision making and control over resources, women's attitudes and aspiration in decision regarding marriage and education for their daughters is slower to change.

Pitt and Khandker (1995) stated that access to credit was seen as a mean of empowering on the assumption that the increased labor time of women spent in income earning work as a result of credit led to greater influence of women III household decision making.

Khan (1994) carried out a study on the concepts of participation and empowerment in the development process and discussed how these issues were considered within the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC). This organization works to empower the most disadvantage people, particularly the poor rural women through participation in development activities. For positive impact of BRAC activities, the study suggested for intensification of BRAC efforts for devising programs aiming at empowerment of women in economic activities and in the household decision making affairs.

Airun (1992) in her study identified women's contribution in homestead farming and household activities. She also showed women status in decision-making process of family affairs. It was observed that the average women spent 30 percent of their daytime in household activities and another 30 percent on agricultural activities. Women contributed 58 to 235 labor days per hectare for production of homestead vegetables compared to 50 to 212 by men. It further revealed that women earned on an average Taka 4339 per year from different income earning activities. In the case of decision making men enjoyed overwhelming right to make major decisions.

Sen et al. (1987) stated, "Access to extension services and training will empower women. Technology will equip them to acquire new skill and to learn their drudgery. Educated women have greater multiple effect than educated men".

Sen (1989) concluded that women had limited command and control over resource and assets which prevent them from getting equal opportunities and fair share of the returns in the society as well as in the family. In primary sector women contribute more than men but enjoy no control over their earnings.

Ahmed (1987) mentioned impact of various programs on women and stated that significant changes in income and employment of the participants took place due to involvement in Rural Development Program activities. He found that real income per-capita of the participants increased by 116% between 1981 and 1987.

Hussain (1985) showed that women were involved in most of the pre and post harvest operations of vegetables production. He also advocated some measures to be taken by the government, policy makers, planners, development workers and researchers for the effective integration of participation in different homestead production and management activities like vegetable growing, livestock raising, fish cultivation, postharvest operation and household decision making.

Mojumder (1983) conducted a study on women participation in agricultural and non-agricultural activities in Bangladesh villages. It portrayed the pattern and nature of activities of the rural women along with their socio economic conditions in the study area. The study revealed that no housewife was a sole decision maker in the family affairs.

Ali and Rahman (1978) found that women were engaged in both productive and household activities. The production and income generating activities improved their socioeconomic conditions. The women contributed about 13 percent to the total family income of the sample houses. They also found that the women were still facing the problems of poverty, lack of education facility, social and religious binding and lack of scope for women to work.

2.3 Reviews on relationship between selected characteristics of women leaders and their activities empowering rural women

Very few studies have been found to be specifically conducted in a scientific way in the direction of the recent study. An effort has been made in subsequent subsection to review some interlinked literature in this aspect.

2.3.1 Age and leadership activities

Ahmed (1974) conducted a research on leadership among rural area at Dhaljura union of Dhaka district. He found that 37 percent of the farmers fell in the old category (50-70), compared to 34 percent in the middle aged (36-50) category and 29 percent in the young category (26-35). He opined that decision making relating to farming affairs in the rural area depends mostly on the old and middle aged farmers.

Ulla (1974) investigated that most of the farmers fell in the young (33 percent) and middle aged (44 percent) groups.

Shah and patel (1970) investigated that most the leaders (77%) belonged to the 31-50 years age group. More importantly, 11 out of 12 "very effective leaders came from this age group.

Reddy and sahy (1971) observed leaders in two Andhra Pradesh villages belonged mostly to the middle age groups.

Singh et al (1965) found "communications" or opinion leaders relatively older in age; younger farmers generally depended on older farmers for guidance and advice.

Supre and Kulkarni (1975) reported leaders were found to be slightly younger in age, belonging mostly to the 21-40 years age group.

Dube et al. (1978) observed no significant relationship between age and leadership.

Farrell (P)⁴ studied influential persons awareness of community problems in a rural Wisconsin country. The findings of the study indicated that influential were more likely to be over fifty years of age.

Mannan (1972) conducting a research on rural leadership at Comilla Kotwali thana in Bangladesh found that the age of the leaders varied from 21 to 55 years. Seventy six percent of the leaders fell within the age group of (26-45) years as compared to 9 and 15 percent of leaders who fall within the age groups of (21-25) and (46-55) years. From these findings he concluded that rural leaders were neither too young nor too old.

Islam (1971) undertook a study in Comilla Kotwali thana on the characteristics of the leaders (Managers) of the primary cooperative societies. He found that almost half of the managers were within the age group (35-49) years and about one fifth of them were above 49 years. Only 33 percent of the managers belonged to the comparatively younger age group (20-34 years). He opined that leadership would be more effective if managers were selected from among people of comparatively older age group.

Based on a review of literature in the area of human development, Carter (1961) emphasized that the most effective 4-H leaders would be those who belonged to the middle age group.

Zainuddin (1972) studied the factors associated with leadership in a rural village in Malaysia and found no association between leadership and age.

2.3.2 Level of education and leadership activities

Dube et al. (1978) studied the mean education score of the leaders of two Uttar Pradesh villages was more than twice as large as that of average farmers.

Raju (1969) reported more than half of the opinion leaders in Andhra Pradesh villages were found to have up to secondary or higher education while only of six percent of the average farmers had a similar level of education.

Bose and Saxena (1966) observed seventy five percent of the leaders in a Rajasthan village were literate while the literacy rate among the average farmers was only 29 percent.

Rahudkar (1962) studied leaders can very easily call on the block development officer and Agricultural Extension officer. Their information contacts are also wide. Even their Kinship relations are spread over a wide area They are able to purchase agricultural books or subscribe to agricultural magazines and news papers. Thus these farmers have a number of contacts which they utilize for new information large farmers can afford to take the risk of implementing the contents of the information they obtain from various sources.

Farrell (1964) in conducting a study on influential persons' awareness of community problems in a rural Wisconsin county found that influential had a higher level of education. This was supported by Steele (1971) who studied leadership in family living among low income home makers in the expanded food and nutrition programme in Ohio. He found that majority of leaders had an education level of 10 to 12 years.

Mannan (1972) found that the leaders were educated up to the levels of primary, secondary, matriculate, and above matriculate and the corresponding percentages were 28, 3, 0, and 3. Upon analysis of data Ire

concluded that some educational background was needed to exhibit leadership role effectively.

Islam (1971) found that all the cooperative societies' leaders were educated, the educational levels varying from primary to the realization of the people that some education is necessary for performing the functions as leaders.

Zaidi (1970) reported in his study that educated people were going to replace the traditional leaders in the rural community of Bangladesh.

Skeleton and Clark (1968) recommended graduates of twelve grade or more of formal schooling as the educational level for lay leaders in 4-H club activities.

Douglah (1965) found that youth leadership status was significantly related to formal education.

Wilson (1963) studied the characteristics of adults associated with leadership participation and interest in youth organization. The findings of the study Implied that the efforts of professional workers would be more effective if local leaders were recruited from adults who had higher formal education. This was contradicted by 7ainuddin (1972) who conducted a research in a rural village of Malaysia. He found no association between leadership and education.



2.3.4 Time spent for social work and Leadership activities

Shah and Patel (1970) found leaders have a higher level of social and organizational participation than average farmers. The "very effective" leaders in two Gujrat villages participated in 46 formal and informal organizations while the "less effective" leaders participated only in 15 of such organizations.

Bose and Saxena (1966) reported the leaders in a Rajasthan village participated in 15 organizations on an average compared with only nine for the average farmers.

Singh (1965) found in a comparative study between an agriculturally developed and a less developed village, the leaders have a much higher level of participation in formal organizations than average farmers in the villages of both types. The leaders tended to had important offices in the formal organizations in which they participated.

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After reviewing the related literature on leadership Rogers (1967) generalized: "Opinion leaders have more social participation than their followers" This generalization has also been supported by Merton (1957), Stewarl (1947), Berelson et al. (1954) and Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955).

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Lionberger (1953) and Vanden Ban (in press) found that farm leaders had greater participation in normal organizations than had the participation by the farmers with less influence. But Rogers observed that leaders had a greater degree of both formal and informal social participation.

Rahim (1963) reported that leaders in a Pakistani village were members of more organization than their followers.

Mannan (1972) observed that 50 percent of the cooperative leaders were associated with different organizations other than the cooperative societies.

Zaintiddin (1972) in his study found that leadership was associated positively with participation in local organizations.

2.3.5 Extent of contact and leadership activities

Dubey and Dwivedi (1978) observed opinion leaders use institutional sources of information more frequently than average farmers. The exposure to the mass media of both print and non print types is higher among leaders than average farmers. Leaders also have a greater contact with extension agents.

Triveddi (1972) studied the Village Level Workers, agricultural Extension Officer, and Block Development Officer were the most used sources by the leaders.

Dev and Sharma (1968) found in Panjab villages 70 percent of the most sought after leaders had high and 30 percent had medium contact with extension agents.

Raju and Neeladri (1966) conducted a study in Andhr Pradesh and it was found that institutional personal sources were used more frequently than the mass media by leaders although "the mass media may play an important supporting role," Among the Extension agents, the Block Development Officer, rather than the lesser officials, was most frequently used by leaders for information.

Reddy and Kivlin (1968) conducted a study on the adoption of high yielding varieties in three Indian villages. They found that the adopters of HYV were more likely to listen to radio farm forums and to news broadcast. Contact with agricultural extension agents was also positively

related to adoption of 14YV Adopters had substantially more contact with extension personnel.

Wilson and Gallup (1955) on the basis of a study concluded that the extent to which farmers and home makers made contacts with members of the extension staff largely determined the adoption of recommended practices. The study revealed that 87 percent of the contact group reported the adoption of agricultural practices in contrast with 38 percent of the non-contact group.

Karim (1973) in his study on the adoption of fertilizers by the transplanted Aman rice Growers found that extension exposure of the growers had a strong positive relationship with their adoption of fertilizers.

Ahmed (1974) conducted a study on the agricultural knowledge of the farmers. He found a positive relationship between extension contact of the farmers and their agricultural knowledge. Findings of research as presented above indicate that extension contact has favorable influence on the adoption of improved farm practices and agricultural knowledge. Leaders in the rural areas are the persons who generally have higher adoption of improved practices and more agricultural knowledge. These facts suggest a positive relationship between extension contact and leadership.

2.3.6 Cosmopolitanism and leadership activities

Bose and Saxena (1966) found leaders have a significantly higher level of contact with the world outside village than average farmers. The "cosmopolitanism score," based on respondents' frequency of visits to the nearest city, fairs, and exhibitions, was found to be significantly higher for the leaders than the average farmers in a Rajasthan village.

Shah and Patel (1970) observed leaders to visit fairs and exhibitions, the research station and the agricultural college and participate in group meetings

and crop competitions outside the village more frequently than the average farmers in Gujarat village.

Duhey and Dwivedi (1978) examined leaders had higher level of tit-hall contact than average farmers in two Uttar Pradesh villages.

Rahudkar (1960) noticed leaders had more frequent formal and informal outside contacts in a Maharashtra village. In other words, leaders not only use the mass media and institutional sources more frequently than average farmers but are also more exposed to ideas originating from outside their frequent external contact.

After reviewing the related literature in leadership, Rogers (1967) advanced a generalization, "Leaders are more cosmopolite than their followers".

Lionberger (1953) found that the farm leaders tended to belong to formal organization located outside (rather than inside) the rural Missouri community where they lived in.

Rahudkar (1962) observed that the leaders had more informal and formal contacts outside the village than they had with their followers inside the village.

Katz (1957) reported that among his sample of medical doctors, leaders were more likely to participate in out-of-town medical meetings.

Rogers (1967) found in his study that the more influential IOWA farmers were more cosmopolite in their friendships, attended in formal organization and possessed reading behavior.

Vanden Ban (in press) found that farm leaders in the Netherlands had many more contacts with urban centre during the preceding year than did their followers. The relationship between leadership and cosmopolitanism held good for each of the three communities he studied. He also observed that leadership was more closely related to cosmopolitanism in the modern communities than in the community with traditional norms.

Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) reported that their fashion leaders and public affairs leaders (but not their movie and marketing opinion leaders) were more cosmopolitan in their reading of books and magazines than were the less influential.

Stewart (1947) found little relationship between the degree of influence an individual possessed and his cosmopolitanism.

No remarkable review was found in the fields of leadership experience, awareness of women rights, motivation of women rights, attitude toward women rights, time spent for social work and personality with their leadership activities empowering rural women.

2.4 The Conceptual Framework of the Study

In scientific research, selection and measurement of variables constitute an important task. The hypothesis of a research when constructed properly contains at least two important elements i.e "a dependent variable" and "an independent variable". A dependent variable is that factor which appears, disappears or varies as the researcher introduces, removes or varies the independent variables (Townsend, 1953). An independent variable is that factor which is manipulated by the researcher in his attempt to ascertain its relationship to an observed phenomenon. In view of the findings of the review of literature, the researcher constructed a conceptual framework of the study which is self explanatory and is presented in Fig. 2.1.

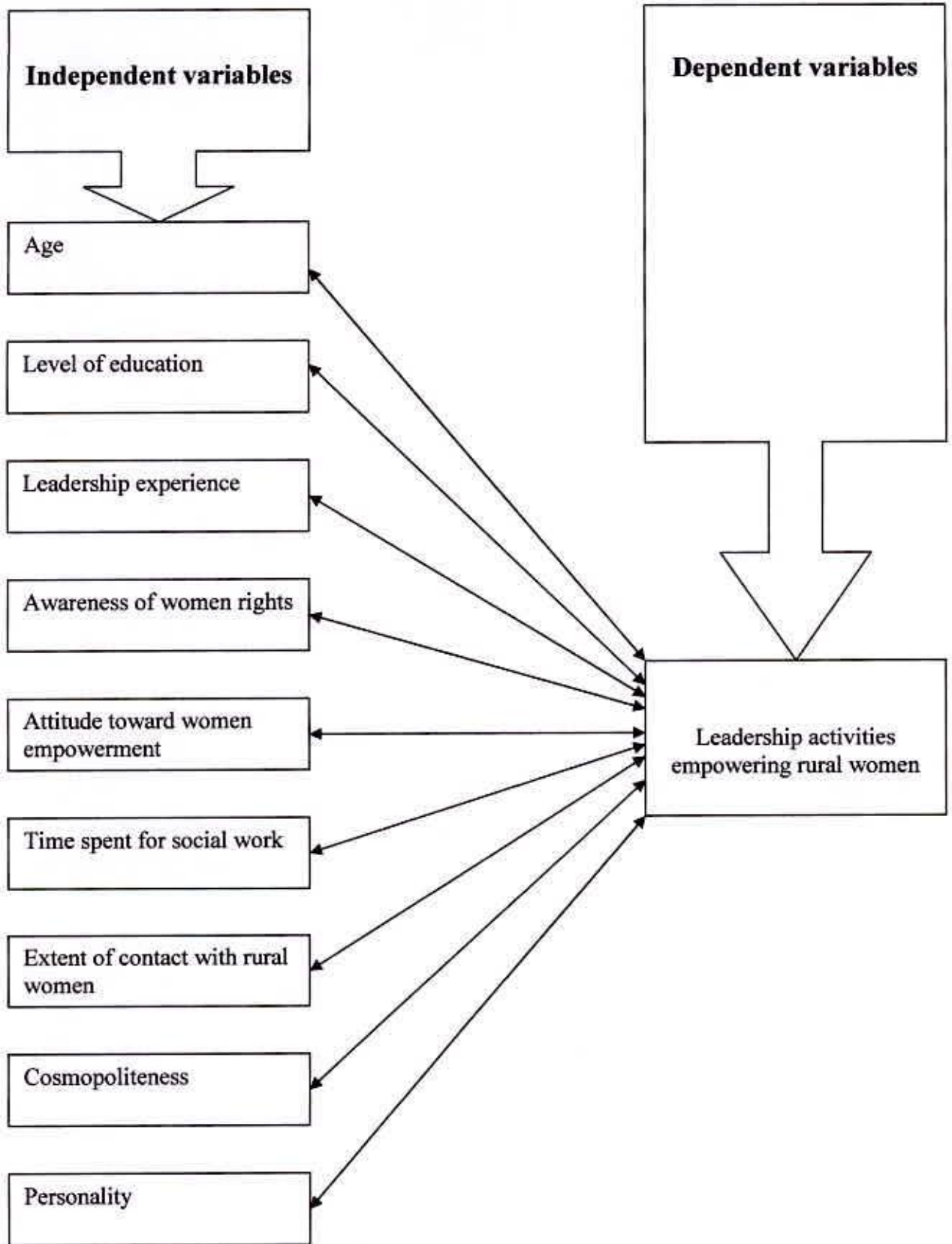


Fig. 2.1 Conceptual framework of the study

METHODOLOGY

Methods and procedures used in conducting research need very careful consideration. Methodology should be such that enables the researcher to collect valid information and to analyze the same properly to arrive at correct decisions. The methods and procedures followed in conducting this research are being described below.

3.1 The locale of the study

The study was conducted in Dumuria upazilla under Khulna District. This upazilla is situated in 8 km south from Khulna District head quarters. Dumuria upozilla has 14 union, these are Rangpur, Rodaghara, Kharnia, Raghunathpur, Ghonia, Atlia, Sarappur, Magurkhali, Bhandarpara, Dumuria, Gutudia, Dhamalia, Maguraghona and Sahas. A map of the study area was presented in figure 2.2 and 2.3.

3.2 Population

All the women leaders of Dumuria upazilla constituted the population of the study. The population was constituted of women UP chairman, UP members, women organization leaders and women NGO workers. There were 60 women leaders in this Upazilla and all of them were selected as sample for the study. The distribution of women leaders has been presented below in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Distribution of women leaders in Dumuria Upazilla under Khulna district

Name of the leaders	No of the leaders
UP Chairman	1
UP Member	42
Women organization	5
NGO worker	12
Total	60

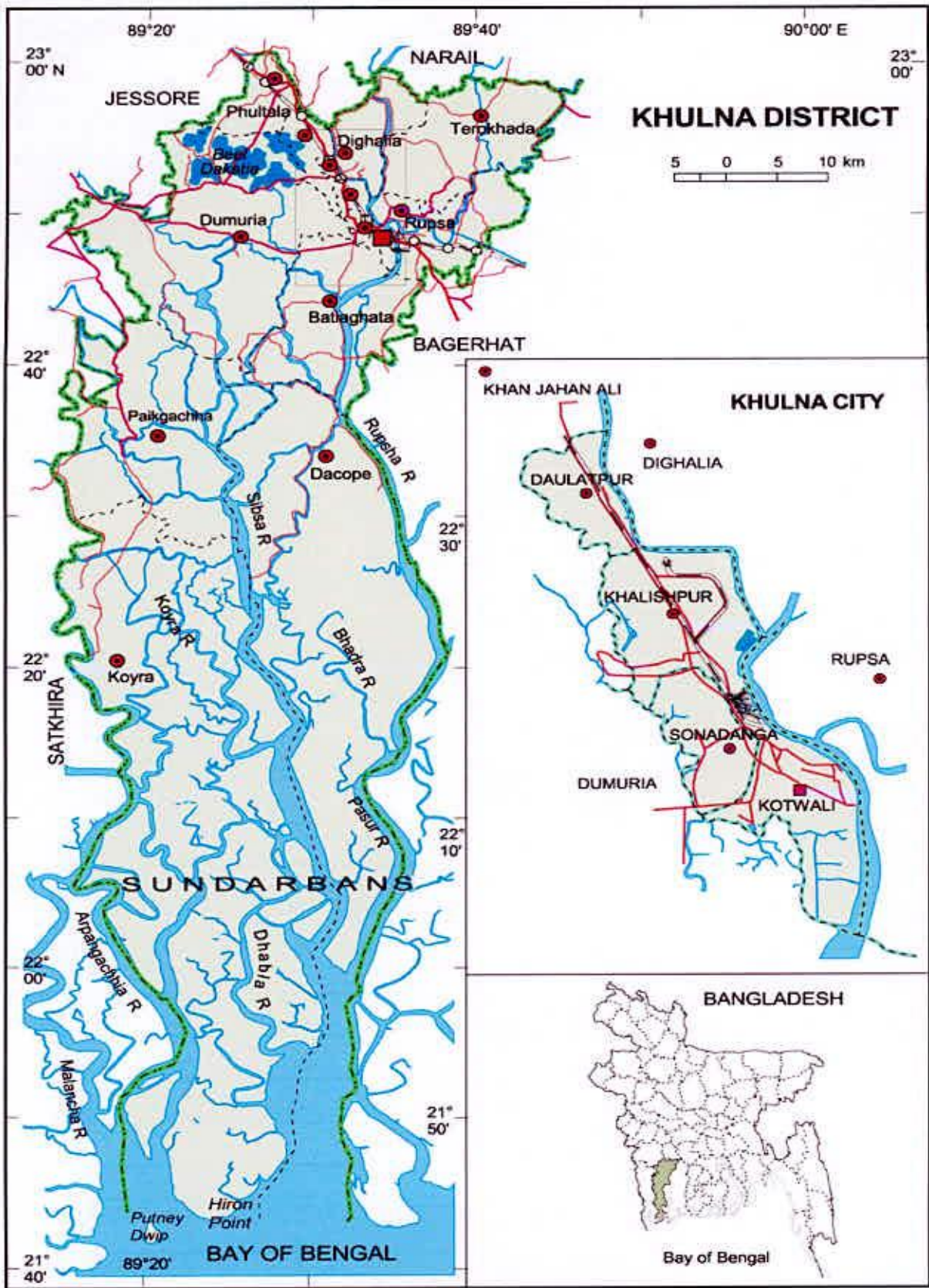


Fig: 2.2 A Map of Khulna District

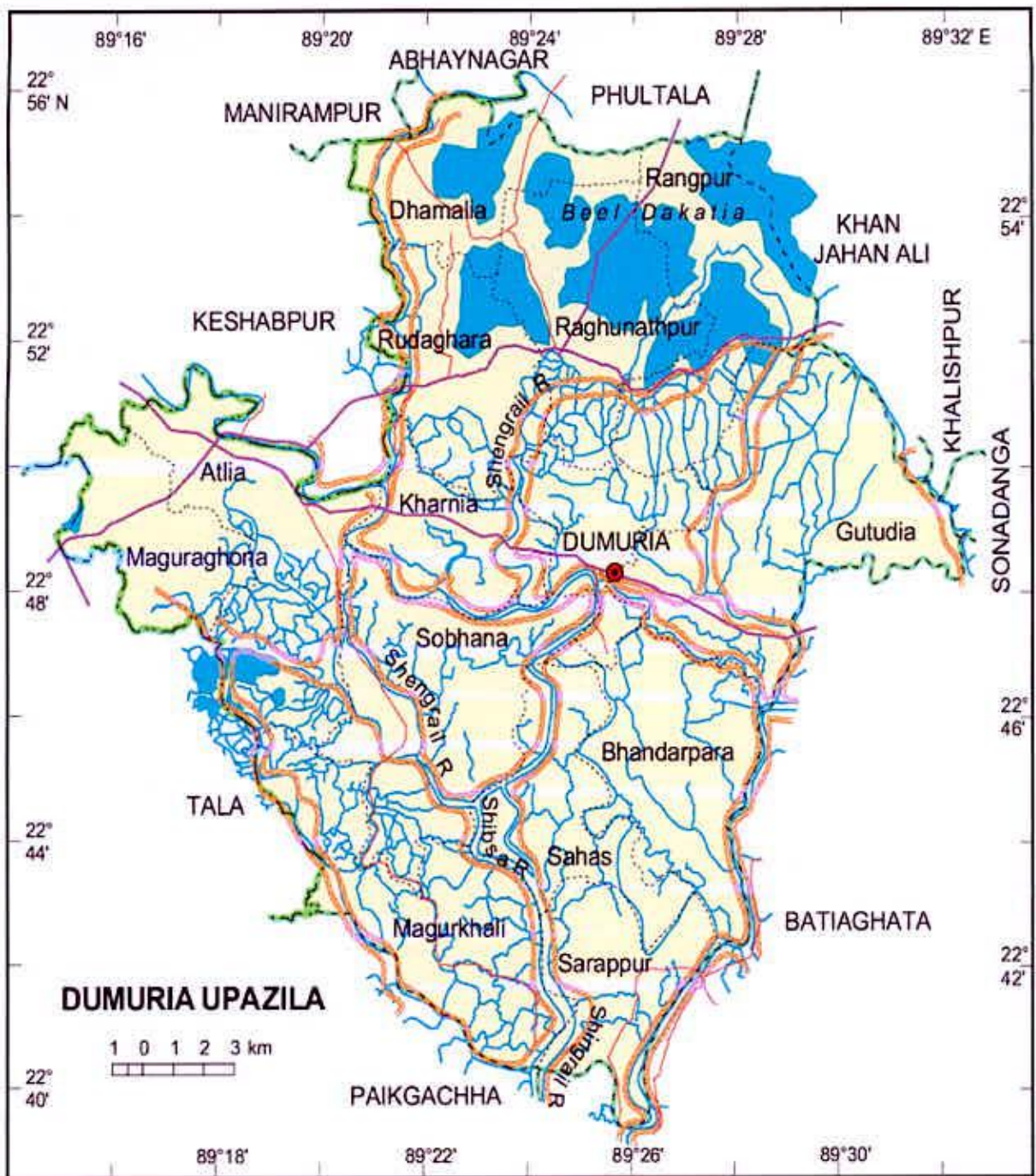


Fig: 2.3 A Map of Dumuria Upazila

3.3 Instrument for data collection

In order to collect relevant data from the respondents an interview schedule was prepared keeping the object of the study in mind. So, a structured interview schedule was used for collection of relevant data for the study. Closed form questions were included in the schedule. Simple and direct questions were also included to ascertain the opinion of the women leaders regarding a number of aspects. Scales were developed to measure the activities of women leaders empowering rural women. The draft interview schedule was prepared in accordance with the objectives of the study. The interview schedule was pre-tested with 10 women leaders from the study area. Necessary correction, addition, and modification were made in the interview schedule based on the pre-test results. The modified and corrected interview schedule was then printed in final form in English (Appendix A).

3.4 Collection of data

Data were collected personally by the researcher herself from 60 women leaders of Dumuria Upazilla under Khulna district through face to face interview. Interview schedule prepared earlier, was used for collecting the data. Interviews were usually conducted with the respondents during the leisure time. Before going to the respondents for interview, they were informed earlier so that they might be available at their respective residences at the schedule time. While starting interview the researcher took all possible care to establish rapport with the respondents so that she did not hesitate to furnish proper responses to the questions and statement in the schedule. However, if any respondent failed to understand any questions the researcher took care to explain the issue. She received excellent cooperation from the respondents and other concerned during the time of interview. The entire process of data collection required 20 days from 8th July to 27th July 2009.

3.5 Selection of variables of the study

Selection of inappropriate and inconsistent type of variables may lead to misleading and unfruitful results. The researcher keeping all these in mind took adequate measure in selecting the dependent and independent variables of the study. Before setting the variable of the study, the researcher herself visited the study area and talked to the women leaders and she was able to observe the selected characteristics of women leaders which might have influence the empowering activities of rural women. Based on this experience, review of literature, discussion with the relevant experts and academicians also with the research supervisor, the researcher selected the independent and dependent variables. An independent variable is that factor which is manipulated by the researcher in his attempt to ascertain its relationship to an observed phenomenon. A dependent variable is that factor which appears, disappears or varies as the researcher introduces, removes or varies the independent variables (Townsend, 1953).

The dependent variable is often called 'creation or predicted variable' whereas independent variable is called 'treatment, experimental or antecedent variable'. Fzekiel and Fox (1959) stated variable as any measurable characteristics, which can assume varying or different values in successive individual cases.

3.5.1 Independent variables

The selected characteristics of the rural women leaders were considered as independent variables. These were Age, education, leadership experience, awareness of women right, motivation, attitude toward women empowerment, time spent for social work, extent of contact with rural women, cosmopolitaness and personality.

3.5.2 Dependent variables

Women leadership empowering rural women was the dependent variable of the study.

3.6 Measurement of variables

In order to conduct the study in accordance with the objectives, it was necessary to measure the selected variables. This section contains procedures of measurement of both independent as well as dependent variables of the study. The procedures followed in measuring the variables are presented below:

3.6.1 Measurement of dependent variable

Women leadership activities empowering rural women was the dependent variable in this study. It was measured by computing leadership activities based on 25 statements. The extent of activities were considered as 'high', 'moderate', 'low' and 'very low' and they were scored as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The score of leadership activities could range from 25 to 100. Twenty-five (25) indicating very low leadership activities and 100 indicating very high leadership activities empowering rural women.

3.6.2 Measurement of independent variables

The selected characteristics of the women leaders constituted the independent variables of the study. To keep the research within the manageable sphere, ten (10) independent variables were selected for the study. The procedures of measurement of the selected variables were as follows:

3.6.2.1 Age

The age of individual is one of the important factors pertaining to his personality make up (Smith and Zope, 1970) which can play an important role in leadership. The age of the respondents was measured by counting the actual years from her birth to the time of interview on the basis of her statement. It was measured in terms of actual years. No fraction of years was considered. A score of one (1) was assigned for each years of age. Age was placed in item no 1 of the interview schedule.

3.6.2.2 Level of education

Education was measured in terms of grades of formal education (school/college) completed by an individual. It was expressed in terms of years of schooling. A score of one (1) was assigned for each year of schooling completed. For example, if the respondent passed the SSC examination, her education score was given as 10, if passed the final examination of class seven (VII), her education score was given as 7. If the respondents did not know how to read and write, her education score was given as zero (0).

3.6.2.3 Leadership experience

The women leaders of the study area designated as UP chairman, UP member, women group leader and NGO leader. The following formula was used to calculate the leadership experience:

$$\text{Leadership experience} = \text{Times/years of leadership} \times \text{Leadership capacity}$$

The scores were assigned in the following manner:

Capacity	Weights
UP Chairman	5
UP Member	5
Irrespective of capacity involvement in other organizations	One (1) for one year but not exceeding 5

The leadership experience score of a women leader could range from 10 to 32, where 10 indicating low leadership experienced and 32 indicating high leadership experienced.

3.6.2.4 Awareness of women rights

For measuring awareness of women rights, the researcher asked 12 questions to the each respondent. The questions were arranged according to the degree of awareness as: 'highly aware', 'more aware', 'moderate aware' and 'less aware' and scores were assigned against those as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The

score of awareness of women rights could range from 12 to 48, where 12 indicate less aware and 48 indicate highly aware.

3.6.2.5 Motivation

Motivation refers to capacity to motivate rural women about their empowerment. Motivation indicates to what extent the women leader motivate rural women for empowerment. A respondent was asked 10 questions to indicate the extent of motivation against each of the statement along with a 4-point rating scale: 'high', 'medium', 'low' and 'very low' motivation. Scores were assigned against each of the degree of motivation as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The score of motivation could range from 10 to 40. Ten (10) indicating very low motivation and 40 indicating very high motivation.

3.6.2.6 Attitude toward women empowerment

For measuring attitude of women leaders toward women empowerment 13 statements were inserted in the interview schedule. Out of which, 6 were positives and 7 were negatives. The positive and negative statements were arranged alternately. The positive statements indicated favorable attitude toward women empowerment where as negative statements indicated unfavourable attitude toward women empowerment. Likert-type scale was used to determine attitudes toward women empowerment. The respondents were asked to express their extent of opinion in the manner of 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' with assigned score 3, 2, 1 and 0 respectively. Reverse scoring method was followed for calculating negative statement. The possible score of attitude of women leadership toward women empowering could range from 0 to 39, whereas, '0' (zero) indicating unfavourable attitude and '39' indicated very favourable attitude toward women empowerment.

3.6.2.7 Time spent for social work

Time spent for social work was measured by asking question 'how much time she spent for social work per day?' The per day time span for social work ranged from 1 to above 6 hours and categorized as 'low time spent', 'medium time spent' and 'high time spent' with assigned score 1, 2 and 3 respectively. The time spent use for social work by a respondent could range from 0 to 3.

3.6.2.8 Extent of contact with rural women

Extent of contact with rural women was measured by the frequency of meeting with rural women. The extent of contact was categorized into four categories: 'regularly', 'frequently', 'occasionally' and 'rarely'. Each category was assigned score as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Here 1 indicating very low extent of contact and 4 indicating very high extent of contact.

3.6.2.9 Cosmopolitaness

Cosmopolitaness of a respondents was measured in terms of her nature of visits to the twelve (12) different places external to her own social system and as shown in item number 9 in the interview schedule (Appendix A). The respondents indicated whether they visited those places regularly, occasionally, rarely and not at all. Weights assigned to these visits were 3, 2, 1 and 0 respectively. Each of the women leaders obtained her cosmopolitaness score by adding the weights for his visits to all the places listed in the instrument. The cosmopolitaness score of a women leader could range from 0 to 36, where 0 indicating no cosmopolitaness and 36 indicating high cosmopolitaness.

3.6.2.10 Personality

Personality of a women leader was measured by asking opinion against 10 personality statements. Extent of personality were categorized into 'excellent', 'good', 'fair' and 'not bad' assigning score as 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. By summing up the obtained score of each statement a women leader's level of personality was ascertained. Thus the score of women leader could range from

10 to 40, whereas 10 indicated low personality and 40 indicated excellent personality.

3.7 Hypothesis

A hypothesis simply means a mere assumption or some supposition to be proved or not proved. In broad sense, hypothesis may be divided into two categories: (a) Research hypothesis (H_i) and Null hypothesis (H_o). The following broad hypothesis is formulated to explore the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The broad research hypothesis for this study was: There is a relationship of age, education, leadership experience, awareness of women right, motivation, attitude toward women empowerment, time spent for social work, extent of contact with rural women, cosmopolitaness, personality of women leaders and their empowering activities.

For testing the hypothesis statistically, they were transformed into null form as follows:

“ There is no relationship of age, education, leadership experience, awareness of women right, motivation, attitude toward women empowerment, time spent for social work, extent of contact with rural women, cosmopolitaness, personality of women leaders and their empowering

3.8 Collection of data

The investigator himself collected data on the basis of objectives to test the hypothesis

3.9 Data processing

For data processing and analysis the following steps followed:

3.9.1 Compilation of data

After completion of field survey all the interview schedule were compiled, tabulated analyzed according to the objectives of the study. In this process all

the responses in the interview schedule were given numerical coded values. The responses to the question in the interview schedule were transferred to a master sheet to facilitate tabulation. Tabulation was done on the basis of categories developed by the investigator himself.

3.9.2 Categorization of the respondents

For describing the various independent and dependent variables, the respondents were classified into various categories. In developing categories the researcher was guided by the nature of data and general consideration prevailing on the social system. The procedure have been discussed while while describing the variable in the sub-subsequent sections of next chapter.

3.9.3 Data analysis

Data collected from the respondents were compiled, coded, tabulated and analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study. Various statistical measures such as frequency counts, percentage distribution, mean, standard deviation were used in describing data. SPSS (version 11.5) computer program were used for analyzing the data. The categories and tables were used in describing data. The categories and tables were also used in presenting data for better understanding. For determining the association of the selected characteristics of the women leaders with empowering activities Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used. Five percent (0.05) and one percent (0.01) level of probability was used as the basis for rejecting any null hypothesis. In order to find out the relationship between the selected dependent and independent variables correlation co-efficient was done.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results and discussion are the focal point of the entire study, which is prepared in accordance with the objectives. Data obtained from the women leaders were compiled, analyzed, tabulated, statistically tested and interpreted keeping in view the objectives. The chapter contains three sections: the first section deals with the characteristics of women leaders, the second section deals with the women leadership activities empowering rural women and the third section deals with the relationship women.

4.1 Women leadership activities empowering rural women

Anyone can be a leader, depending on the moment in time and the issue at hand. Leaders can be as small scale as family members or as grand as celebrities. Rogers (1962) points out that all persons do not exert equal amount of influence on the adoption decisions of others. These individuals who have greater share of influence are called leaders. According to Rogers, leaders are these individuals from whom others seek advice and information. Merton (1957) defined leaders as men who exert personal influence upon a certain number of other people in certain situations. Hays (1961) definition is significant in the sense that it defines leadership as a series of behaviors, not something inherent by the individual himself. Women leader is a person who works for women to establish their rights in a society.

Total empowering activities of a women leader was obtained by summing up her obtained scores. A women leader's total possible empowerment score could range from 25 to 100. However, the obtained score range from 37 to 88. On the basis of their empowering activities score, the respondents were classified into three categories: 'medium leadership activities' (up to 50), 'high leadership activities' (51-75) and 'very high leadership activities' (above 75) with a mean and standard deviation of 70.93 and 14.04 respectively, as shown in the Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Distribution of the women leaders according to their empowering activities

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Medium leadership activities (up to 50)	10	16.7	70.93	14.04
High leadership activities (51-75)	19	31.6		
Very high leadership activities (above 75)	31	51.7		
Total	60	100		

Data from the Table 4.1 it was observed that majority (51.7%) of the respondents belonged to the very high leadership group followed by 31.6% belonging in high leadership group and 16.7% medium leadership group.

Among the women leaders of the study area a total of 83.3% had leadership activities empowering rural women to the extent of high to very high. It could be concluded from the findings that the women leaders had done more leadership activities such as - protested against teasing women, protested against dowry system, conducted meeting for women rights, organized women as a group, protested against early marriage, mitigated about family conflict in conjugal life, helped widow to get their allocation, worked for equal rights in family, encouraged women education, encouraged women about income generating activities, protested against physical torturing of women, helped women in family planning, encouraged women about self sufficient in economically, given various training/knowledge about homestead agriculture, helped women to get VGD and VGF card, helped women about adult learning, encouraged women about different vaccine, created scope for women to participate for food for work, given different suggestions and services to pregnant women, created awareness of women about their decision making ability, helped women about their property right, helped women about their

divorce, helped single mother about their rights in society, encouraged women about their income generating activities and Worked against polygamy for rural women empowerment.

4.2 Characteristics of women leaders

In this section ten (10) selected characteristics of the women leaders such as age, level of education, awareness of women right, motivation, attitude toward women empowerment, time spent for social work, extent of contact with rural women, cosmopolitaness and personality have been discussed below.

4.2.1 Age

The age of the women leaders ranged from 28 to 45 years with a mean and standard deviation of 38.68 and 4.767, respectively. Considering the observed age of women leaders, they were classified into two categories namely 'young aged ' (up to 35 years) and 'middle aged' (36 to 46 years) as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Distribution of the women leaders according to their age

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Young aged (up to 35 years)	14	23.3	38.68	4.767
Middle aged (36 to 46 years)	46	76.7		
Total	60	100		

Data in the Table 4.2 reveal that more than three fourths of the women leaders belonged to middle aged category compared to 23.3 percent belong to young age category. That means, naturally there is an age limit to be a leader. People of young aged category cannot assume leadership properly. Young aged people are generally desperate, improvident and whimsical. So reasonably people

honour comparatively middle aged people as a leader. Women of above 35 years age group develop positive acceptable personality, courage to protest evil deeds and understanding of just and unjust who ultimately recognized as leader.

4.2.2 Level of education

The educational scores of women leaders ranged from 10 to 14 with a mean and standard deviation of 10.20 and .708 respectively. Based on their level of education, the women leaders were classified into two categories such as 'secondary education (10)' and 'above secondary (above10)'. The distribution of women leaders according to their level of education has been presented in Table 4.3

Data in the Table 4.3 show that a large proportion (93.6%) of respondents had secondary level of education compared to 6.4% of them having above secondary level of education. It is expected that leaders in general and women leaders in particular should be educated and literate persons. A leader exerts power and influence over other persons by his or her education, knowledge, commitment, motivation and unique personality. In fact, only the educated persons possess these qualities. A women leader with these qualities can work for other women and can bring about changes. So people elected or selected those women leaders, who have education. In the patriarchal society women are suppressed or oppressed in many ways by many people. Only the educated women leaders can work for them and rescue them from the heinous condition.

Table 4.3 Distribution of the women leaders according to their level of education

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Secondary education (10)	55	93.6	10.20	.708
Above secondary (above10)	5	6.4		
Total	60	100		

4.2.3 Leadership experience

The leadership experience of the women leaders ranged from 10 to 32 with a mean and standard deviation of 22.22 and 5.99 respectively. Considering the observed score of women leaders, they were classified into three categories namely 'low experienced' (10-16), 'medium experienced' (17-24) and 'highly experienced' (above 24) as shown in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Distribution of the women leaders according to their leadership experience

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Low experienced (10-16)	14	23.3	22.22	5.99
Medium experienced (17-24)	17	28.3		
Highly experienced (above 24)	29	48.4		
Total	60	100		

Data from the above Table 4.4, it was observed that the highest portion (48.4%) of the respondents were highly experienced in leadership, while 28.3% were medium experienced and 23.3% were low experienced. Most of the women leaders of the study area were elected leaders or professional leaders and they were involved in different organizations and women groups also. It was also revealed that all the women leaders of the study area were found to be experienced. Only the experienced women leaders can help other women to establish their rights in the families and societies.

4.2.4 Awareness of women rights

The scores of awareness of women rights of women leaders ranged from 23 to 45 with a mean and standard deviation of 40.40 and 5.19 respectively against the possible score could range from 12 to 48. Based on their awareness of

women rights, the women leaders were classified into three categories such as ‘low awareness’ (23-30), ‘medium awareness’ (31- 38) and ‘highly awareness’ (above 38). The distribution of women leaders according to their awareness of women rights has been presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Distribution of the women leaders according to their awareness

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Low awareness(23-30)	5	8.3	40.40	5.19
Medium awareness (31-38)	8	13.3		
Highly awareness (above 38)	47	78.4		
Total	60	100		

Data in the Table 4.5 show that an overwhelming majority (78.4%) of the women leaders had highly awareness compared to 13.3% and 8.3% had medium awareness and low awareness respectively. Thus, in general the awareness level of women leaders of the study area was quite satisfactory. This might be due to the fact that the literacy rates of the respondents were much higher than the national average.

4.2.5 Motivation

The score of motivation of the women leaders ranged from 20 to 38 against the possible score could range from 10 to 40 with a mean and standard deviation of 30.43 and 4.73, respectively. Considering the observed score of motivation of women leaders, they were classified into three categories namely ‘medium motivation’ (20-25) and ‘high motivation’ (26-31) and ‘very high motivation’ (above 31) as shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Distribution of the women leaders according to their motivation

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Medium motivation (20-25)	11	18.3	30.43	4.73
High motivation (26-31)	15	25		
Very high motivation (above 31)	34	56.7		
Total	60	100		

Data in the Table 4.6 show that more than half (56.7%) of the respondents had very high motivation compared to 25% of them having high motivation and 18.3% of medium motivation. Thus, in general the motivation level of women leaders of the study was quite satisfactory. Motivations of women leadership of the study area were found to be both extrinsic and intrinsic. Due to extrinsic motivation, they particularly response to the problematic circumstances of women in one hand. One the other hand women leaders from their self interest visit door to door to share happy and sorrow of their same kind. Motivation is the prerequisite condition to be women leaders.

4.2.6 Attitude toward women empowerment

The score of attitude toward women empowerment of women leaders ranged from 28 to 39 against the possible score could range from 0 to 39 with a mean and standard deviation of 32.53 and 2.44 respectively. Based on their attitude toward women empowerment of women leaders, the women leaders were classified into two categories such as 'medium favourable attitude' (28-33) and 'highly favourable attitude' (above 33). The distribution of women leaders according to their attitude toward women empowerment has been presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7 Distribution of the women leaders according to their attitude toward women empowerment

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Medium favourable attitude (28-33)	43	71.7	32.53	2.44
Highly favourable attitude (above 33)	17	28.3		
Total	60	100		

Data in the Table 4.7 show that near about three-fourth (71.7%) of the respondents had medium favourable attitude compared to 28.3% had highly favourable attitude. Thus, in general the attitude level of women leaders of the study was quite satisfactory. This might be due to the fact that the literacy rate of the respondents was much higher and the respondents were more aware about women rights. In Bangladesh in most of the cases one woman is oppressed by other women like mother-in-law, sister-in-law and others. Their attitude must be change. Who can change their attitude? In fact, women leaders with favourable attitude will be helpful to change unfavourable attitude of all levels of women.

4.2.7 Time spent for social work

The scores of time spent for social work of women leaders ranged from 1 to 4 with a mean and standard deviation of 3.35 and .709 respectively. Based on their time spent for social work, the women leaders were classified into three categories such as: 'low time spent' (1-2), 'medium time spent' (3) and 'high time spent' (4). The distribution of women leaders according to their time spent for social work has been presented in Table 4.8.

Data from the Table 4.8 reveal that near about half (46.7%) of the women leaders were spent high time for social work, while 43.3% of them had medium time spent and only 10% had low time spent. Most of the women leaders (90%)

of the study area spent their time for social work ranging from medium to high. Rural women of the study area had more opportunity to contact with their leaders and solve their any sorts of problem easily.

Table 4.8 Distribution of the women leaders according to time spent for social work

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Low time spent (1-2)	6	10	3.35	.709
Medium time spent (3)	26	43.3		
High time spent (4)	28	46.7		
Total	60	100		

4.2.8 Extent of contact with rural women

The score of extent of contact of women leaders with rural women of ranged from 2 to 4 with a mean and standard deviation of 3.67 and .62 respectively. Based on their extent of contact with rural women, the women leaders were classified into three categories such as 'low contact' (2), 'medium contact' (3) and 'high contact' (4). The distribution of women leaders according to their extent of contact with rural women has been presented in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Distribution of the women leaders according to extent of contact with rural women

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Low contact (2)	5	8.3	3.67	.62
Medium contact (3)	10	16.7		
High contact (4)	45	75		
Total	60	100		

Data from the Table 4.9 reveal that three-fourth (75%) of the respondents had high contact with rural women, while 16.7% of them had medium contact and only 8.3% had low contact. Most of the women leaders of the study area had extent of contact with rural women ranging from medium to high. Women leaders of the study area had more opportunity to contact with rural women. Moreover, as they are elected for the benefit of rural women, keeping contact with rural women is the main function of women leaders. It could be concluded that women leaders of the study area perform their duties properly.

4.2.9 Cosmopolitaness

Cosmopolitaness scores of the respondents ranged from 7 to 34 with a mean and standard deviation of 27.64 and 6.69 respectively against the possible score could range from 0 to 36. Based on their cosmopolitaness scores, the women leaders were classified into three categories such as 'low cosmopolite' (7-16), 'medium cosmopolite' (17-26) and 'high cosmopolite' (above 26). The distribution of women leaders according to their cosmopolitaness has been presented in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10 Distribution of the women leaders according to their cosmopolitaness

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Low cosmopolite (7-16)	7	11.7	27.68	6.69
Medium cosmopolite (17-26)	6	10		
Highly cosmopolite (above 26)	47	78.3		
Total	60	100		

Data from the Table 4.10 reveal that more than three-fourth (78.3%) of the respondents were highly cosmopolite compared to 11.7% of them low cosmopoliteness and 10% had medium cosmopoliteness. As the literacy rate was comparatively high and most of the women leaders were elected and engaged in services with different organizations, usually they need to go outside of their own villages. So there was appreciable cosmopoliteness among the leaders of the study area.

4.2.10 Personality

Personality scores of the respondents ranged from 20 to 40 with a mean and standard deviation of 32.40 and 6.31 respectively. Based on their personality scores, the women leaders were classified into three categories such as 'medium personality' (up to 26) and 'high personality' (27-33) and 'very high personality' (above 33). The distribution of women leaders according to their personality has been presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 Distribution of the women leaders according to their personality

Categories	Number of respondents	Percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Medium personality (up to 26)	15	25	32.40	6.31
High personality (27-33)	7	11.7		
Very high personality (above 33)	38	63.3		
Total	60	100		

The findings in Table 4.11 indicate that near about two third (63.3%) of the respondents had very high personality compared to medium personality (25%) and high personality (11.7%). Data in the Table 4.11 show that women leaders in the study area had sufficient personality exposure because they were much more literate and aware about women rights.

4.3 Relationship of selected characteristics of women leaders with their empowering activities

Pearson Product moment correlation co-efficient was computed in order to independent variables. To reject a null hypothesis at 0.05 level of probability was used as the basis. The findings on the correlation tests are presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12. Correlation coefficient showing relationship between dependent (Women leadership activities empowering rural women) and independent variables

Dependent variable	Independent variable	Value of coefficient of correlation (calculated)	Value of coefficient of correlation (tabulated)
Women leadership activities empowering rural women	Age	0.774**	0.25
	Level of education	-0.261*	0.25
	Leadership experience	0.777**	0.25
	Awareness of women rights	0.827**	0.25
	Motivation	0.657**	0.25
	Attitude toward women empowerment	0.371**	0.25
	Time spent for social work	0.394**	0.25
	Extent of contact with rural women	0.704**	0.25
	Cosmopolitaness	0.847**	0.25
	Personality	0.941**	0.25

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

4.3.1 Relationship between age and leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between age and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found 0.774. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables “ r ” = 0.774 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.
- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically highly significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a positive trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that age had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represent that age of the women leaders was an important factor in leadership activities empowering rural women and with the increases of age of the respondent's their leadership activities increases. That is age of the women leaders is an influencing factor be influences leadership activities.

4.3.2 Relationship between level of education and women leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between level of education and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found -0.261. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables “r” = -0.261 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.
- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically significant at 0.05 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a negative trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that level of education had a negative significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represents those women leaders of rural area are volunteer leaders. Highly educated women do not stay at home. Most of them migrate to cities and capital. So, women leader stays at home are comparatively less educated. Specially the respondents included in this study majority (93.3%) had secondary level of education. So, it could be concluded that very high educated women possessing all leadership qualities leave the area giving leadership responsibility to comparatively less educated women.

4.3.3 Relationship between leadership experience and women leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between leadership experience and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found 0.777. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables “r” = 0.777 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.

- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically highly significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a positive trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that leadership experience had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represents that leadership experience of the women leaders was an important factor in leadership activities empowering rural women and with the increase of leadership experience of the respondent's their leadership activities also increases.

4.3.4 Relationship between awareness of women rights and women leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between awareness of women rights and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found 0.827. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables " r " = 0.827 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.
- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically highly significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a positive trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that awareness of women rights had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represents that awareness of women rights of the women leaders was an important factor in leadership activities empowering

rural women and with the increase of awareness of the respondents their leadership activities also increase. Women leaders were very much aware of equal rights of husband and wife, equal rights of boys and girls, equal rights of decision making and so forth. As they were found to be highly aware of women rights, their leadership also would like to reach at the level of self-actualization.

4.3.5 Relationship between motivation and women leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between motivation and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found 0.657. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables " r " = 0.657 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.
- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically highly significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a positive trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that motivation had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represent that motivation of the women leaders was an important factor in leadership activities empowering rural women and with the increases of motivation of the respondent's their leadership activities also increases. That is higher the level of motivation (intrinsic or extrinsic) higher the level of activities to be performed by the women leaders for women empowerment in the rural society. It could be concluded that women leaders were intrinsically

motivated and developed felt needs among themselves and among common women to be empowered.

4.3.6 Relationship between attitude toward women empowerment and women leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between attitude toward women empowerment and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found 0.371. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables “r” = 0.371 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.
- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically highly significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a positive trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that attitude toward women empowerment had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represents that attitude toward women empowerment of the women leaders was an important factor in empowering rural women and with the increase of attitude of the respondents their leadership activities also increase. Naturally women leaders would have favourable attitude toward common rural women. They work to bring about changes among them in all aspects of family and social life. That is higher the level of favourable attitude of women leaders higher the women empowerment is supposed to be in the rural society.

4.3.7 Relationship between time spent for social work and women leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between time spent for social work and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found 0.394. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables “ r ” = 0.394 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.
- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically highly significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a positive trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that time spent for social work had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represents that time spent for social work of the women leaders was an important factor in leadership activities empowering rural women and with the increase of time spent of the respondents their leadership activities also increase. That is more the time spent for social work more the activities are supposed to be performed by women leaders for women empowerment in the rural society.

4.3.8 Relationship between extent of contact with rural women and women leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between extent of contact with rural women and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found

0.704. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables “ r ” = 0.704 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.
- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically highly significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a positive trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that extent of contact with rural women had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represents that extent of contact with rural women of the women leaders was an important factor in leadership activities empowering rural women and with the increase of extent of contact of the women leaders their leadership activities also increase. That is more the contact with rural women by the women leadership more the women empowerment is supposed to be in the rural society.

4.3.9 Relationship between cosmopolitaness and women leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between cosmopolitaness and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found 0.847. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables “ r ” = 0.847 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.

- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically highly significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a positive trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that cosmopolitaness had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represent that cosmopolitaness of the women leaders was an important factor in leadership activities empowering rural women and with the increase of cosmopolitaness of the women leaders their leadership activities also increase. That is cosmopolitaness of women leaders capable them to perceiving truth, justice, door to door information and empathetic to a great extent. It could be concluded that women leaders of the study area were highly cosmopolite and ever friendly to fellow women. Further, more the cosmopolitaness of women leadership more the women empowerment is supposed to be in the rural society.

4.3.10 Relationship between personality and women leadership activities empowering rural women

The coefficient of correlation between personality and leadership activities empowering rural women were presented in Table 4.12. The coefficient of correlation between the concerned variables was found 0.941. The following observations were made on the basis of the value of correlation coefficient between the two variables of the study.

- The calculated value between concerned variables " r " = 0.941 was greater than the tabulated value (0.25) with 58 degrees of freedom at 0.01 level of probability.
- The null hypothesis was rejected.
- The relationship between concerned variables was statistically highly significant at 0.01 level of probability.
- The relationship showed a positive trend between concerned variables.

Based on the above findings it could be concluded that personality had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women. This represent that personality of the women leaders was an important factor in leadership activities empowering rural women and with the increase of personality of the women leaders their leadership activities also increase. That is more the high level of personality shown by women leaders more the women empowerment is supposed to be in the rural society.



SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1.1 General background

It is estimated that women are almost half of the total population of the world. In Bangladesh 48.78% of the population are women of which 79% live in the rural area (BBS, 2007). So, in economic development of Bangladesh the role of women cannot be overlooked. But rural women are still neglected. In order to improve their position or rescue them from the negligence it is necessary to empower them.

Women are neglected after their birth and unfortunately it will continue till death. In our society when a female baby born it will not be a good news compared to male baby. In some families the female babies can not get proper education, food, health and other facilities compare to male baby. And after her marriage she is also neglected by her husband, mother in law and at last by her son also. But she works for her family for day and night during her whole life. She is engaged in household activities from dawn to dusk for about 12-14 hours. Still these she has no economic and decision making power. Moreover most of the women are physically and psychologically tortured by husband and other members of her in-law's house.

All rural families are in economic hardship. They cannot provide two square meals and education to their children. That is cash income by men is insufficient to run a family properly. In this situation the domestic activities performed by women are seldom being considered as generating income for the household. Due to the lack of independent income or employment women cannot acquire assets themselves. Thus land which is the most coveted and valuable assets, is owned by men and by virtue of this ownership they lord over the women and dominate in the society and community (Islam, 2000). But women play significant and crucial role in the development of family and society (Samanta, 2005). Women play an important role in agricultural production, food processing, animal husbandry and other activities like storage

and marketing etc. Besides, they spend 10 to 12 hours per day doing household activities (Devi, 1998).

The main difficulty for empowerment of women is the hostile attitude of the conservative society for women in developing countries. There is an urgent need to empower women to act upon total development and the development of the society. Here women leader can make aware about their empowerment in rural women.

5.1.2 Objectives

1. To determine and describe activities of women leadership empowering rural women
2. To identify and describe some selected characteristics of women leaders

The selected characteristics are:

- Age
- Education
- leadership experience
- Awareness of women right
- Motivation
- Attitude toward women empowerment
- Time spent for social work
- Extent of contact with rural women
- Cosmo politeness
- Personality

3. To explore the relationship between the selected characteristics of women leaders and their leadership activities empowering rural women.

5.1.3 Methodology

The study was conducted in the Dumuria Upazilla under Khulna district. All of union of Dumuria Upazilla were selected for conducting the study. A well structured interview schedule was developed based on objectives of the study



for collecting information. The researcher herself was collect data from the sample respondents through personal contact using an interview schedule during 8th to 27th July 2009. The independent variables were: age, level of education, leadership experience, awareness of women rights, motivation, Attitude toward women empowerment, time spent for social work, extent of contact with rural women, cosmopolitaness and personality. The dependent variable of the study was women leadership activities empowering rural women. Data collected from the respondents were compiled, coded, tabulated and analyzed in accordance with the objectives of the study. Various statistical measures such as frequency counts, percentage distribution, average and standard deviation were used in describing data. Coefficient of correlation test was used to explore relationship between the concerned variables.

5.1.4 Results and discussion

The major findings of the study are summarized below:

5.1.4.1 Characteristics of the respondents

The average age of the women leaders was about 39 years and majority of them belonged middle age category of above 35 years.

There average education was 10.20 years of schooling and about 93.6 percent of them had secondary level of education. Women leaders under 'secondary level of education' category constitute the highest proportion (93%) compared to 6.7% above secondary level of education.

The highest portion (48.4%) of the women leaders were highly experienced in leadership, while 28.3% were medium experienced and 23.3% were low experienced in leadership.

Three-fourths (78.4%) of the women leaders had highly awareness of women rights compare to about 13.3% of them having medium awareness and only 8.3% low awareness.

Among the respondents more than one half (56.7%) of the respondents had very high motivation compare to about 25% of them having high motivation and 18.3% of them had medium motivation.

Near about three-fourth (71.7%) of the respondents had medium favorable attitude compare to about 28.3% of them having highly favorable attitude.

Among the respondents near about one half (46.7%) of the respondents were high time spent for social work, while 43.3% of them had medium time spent and only 10% had low time spent for social work.

Three-fourth (75%) of the women leaders were high contact with rural women, while 16.7% of them had medium contact and only 8.3% had low contact with rural women.

Among the respondents more than three-fourth (78.3%) of the respondents were highly cosmopolite compared to 11.7% of them being low cosmopolite and 10% medium cosmopolite.

The height, near about two third (63.3%) of the respondents had very high personality compared to medium personality (25%) and high personality (11.7%) of the respondents.

5.1.4.2 Women leadership activities empowering rural women

Among the respondents more than half (51.7%) of the respondents belongs to the very high leadership group followed by 31.6% belonging in high leadership group and 16.7% medium leadership group. Among the women leaders of the study area a total of 83.3% had done leadership activities empowering rural women to the extent of high to very high.

5.1.4.3. Relationship of the selected characteristics of women leaders with their empowering activities

- Age had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women
- Education level had a negative significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.
- Leadership experience had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.
- Awareness of women rights had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.
- Motivation had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.
- Attitude toward women empowerment had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.
- Time spent for social work had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.
- Extent of contact with rural women had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.
- Cosmopolitaness had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.

- Personality had a positive significant relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions have been drawn:

- Among the women leaders, middle aged constitutes the highest proportion (76.7%). It is concluded that there is a age limit to be a leader. Universally a man or women become a leader within the age limit of 30-40 years.
- The highest 93.7% of the women leaders had secondary level of education. It could be concluded that in village areas leadership emerges out of the situation. In most of the cases highly educated people do not come forward in time of need to serve the villagers. Man or woman having secondary or intermediate level of education lead people to meet the various aspects of their social demand.
- Among the women leaders, the highest proportion (48.4%) found to be highly experienced. It is concluded that most of the women leaders of the study area were involved in different organizations and women groups. Only the experienced women leaders can help other women to establish their rights in the families and societies.
- The height proportion (78.4%) of women leaders was highly aware about empowering women. It is concluded that women leaders of the study area had extra ordinary we-feeling and most of them were elected leader, thus makes them more aware.

- In considering motivation, the highest proportion (56.7%) of the women leaders had very high motivation. It is concluded that most of the women leaders of the study area were intrinsically and extrinsically motivated and reasonably they work to establish women rights. Moreover most of the women leaders (71.7%) had favourable attitude toward women empowerment.
- The highest proportion (75%) of the women leaders had high contact with rural women. It could be concluded women leaders of the study area are performed their duties properly.
- By nature leaders are cosmopolite. In the study area the highest proportion (78.3%) of the respondents had high cosmopolitaness. it could be concluded that most of the women leaders were elected and engaged in services with different organizations, usually they need to go outsides of their own villages.
- Age, leadership experience, awareness of women rights, motivation, Attitude toward women empowerment, time spent for social work, extent of contact with rural women, cosmopolitaness and personality showed significant positive relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.
- Level of education showed significant negative relationship with leadership activities empowering rural women.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Recommendation for policy implication

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study following recommendation are made for policy implication:

1. Women leadership is considered as an asset, which helps to uplift the condition of women folk of Bangladesh. But women leadership itself needs development. So, it is recommended that local government, NGOs and concerned organizations like BARD, RDA should undertake strategies to develop leadership qualities so that they can involve in the activities of empowering rural women.
2. Good leadership needs quality training and quality training can manifest his/her personality through development activities in general and women empowering in particular. So, it is strongly recommended that they should be trained under different training program for increasing their leadership activities by local government and different organizations.
3. Motivation is the powerful ingredient of involving oneself in volunteer or social activities. A person's intrinsic motivation could be increased by involving extrinsic motivation. So, it is recommended that Local Government and other concerned authorities to come forward to recognize women leaders so that they can dedicate themselves in women empowering activities. Women leaders should be provided with good honorarium/pay facilities, award, proper power for doing work etc.
4. Government organizations and non-government organizations work for rural development. Empowering rural women is a part of rural development. So, it is recommended that GOs and NGO's leaders should have the opportunity to undertake different income generation activities (IGA) for rural women i.e. livestock rearing, tailoring, handicraft etc.

5. Women leaders should remove their conservative attitude toward modernity. So, different GOs and NGOs should undertake different program such as seminar, symposium and workshop for increasing leadership qualities of women leaders.

5.3.2 Recommendation for further study

The following recommendations are put forwarded for further research studies:

1. The present study was conducted only in Dumuria Upazilla under Khulna district. Similar studies may be undertaken in other area of Bangladesh with same socio-economic conditions.
2. There are various dimensions by which leadership activities empowering rural women can measure. Further study may be conducted by considering the different dimension of leadership activities empowering rural women.
3. Relationship of ten characteristics of women leaders was investigated in this study. Further research should be conducted to explore relationship of other characteristics of the women leaders for measuring leadership activities empowering rural women.

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APPENDICES
Appendix A. Interview schedule

Department of Agricultural Extension & Information System
Sher-e-Bangla Agricultural University
Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka-1207

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR A RESEARCH STUDY ON

WOMEN LEADERSHIP EMPOWERING RURAL WOMEN

Serial no.....
Name of the respondent.....
Village.....
Union.....
Upazilla.....

(Please answer the following questions)

1. Age:
How old are you?.....years.

2. Level of education:
What is the level of your education?
I. Can not read and write.....
II. Can sign only.....
III. Read up to class.....

3. Leadership experience:

Types of leadership	Times	Score
UP Chairman		
UP Member		
Women group leader		
NGO leader		

4. Awareness of women right:

Please indicate your degree of awareness from the items listed in the following table:

SL. NO.	Items	Degree of awareness			
		Highly aware (4)	More aware (3)	Moderate aware (2)	Less aware (1)
1	Equal rights of husband and wife				
2	Both boys and girls should be sent to school with equal emphasis				
3	Family economic decisions should be made jointly by husband and wife				
4	Like men, women also have decision making ability				
5	Both men and women should start movement against dowry				
6	Women should have equal rights in family affairs				
7	Women must work for women				
8	Women should perform homestead farming as her own income source				
9	All in-laws in a family should respect each other				
10	Husbands must help their wives in household works				
11	Husband should not interfere in wife's income generating activities				
12	Women should participate in all the family functions tactfully				

5. Motivation:

To what extent did you motivate rural women for empowering them:

SL NO	Motivation items	Degree of motivation			
		High (4)	Medium (3)	Low (2)	Very low (1)
1	Built felt need of social security for women				
2	Built felt need for facilities for women education				
3	Established equal right				
4	Developed we - feeling for the women				
5	Recognized women contribution for rural development				
6	Created employment opportunity for women				
7	Established equal payment for women				
8	Created interest about women group				
9	Created awareness about family planning				
10	Created income generating activities				

6. Attitude toward women empowerment:

Please indicate your opinion regarding the following statements:

SL. NO.	Statements	Extent of opinion			
		Strongly agree (3)	Agree (2)	Disagree (1)	Strongly disagree (0)
1 (+)	A remarkable socio-economic change could be brought about through women empowerment				
2 (-)	Women and men should not have equal rights in all socio-economic aspects of their lives.				
3 (+)	Female education is the precondition for women empowerment				
4 (-)	Women should not have strong decision making ability that makes family life happy				
5 (+)	Women must have property rights according to law				
6 (-)	Women empowerment can not save women from the dowry system				
7 (+)	Women must have moral rights to decide upon family planning				
8 (-)	Empowering women may increase torture against women				
9 (+)	Women should be organized as a social entity to protest themselves				
10 (-)	Women can earn but can not spend independently				
11 (+)	Women become self-sufficient in economically that helps women empowerment				
12(-)	Higher education for women is not necessary				
13 (-)	Women can not make family planning independently				

7. Time spent for social work:

How much times you spent in a day for social work

Above 6 hours/day (3)	4-6 hours/day (2)	1-3 hours/day (1)



8. Extent of contact with rural women:

Please answer the duration you meet rural women:

Contact with rural women	Extent of contact			
	Regularly (5 or >5 times/ month) (4)	Frequently(3-4 times/ month) (3)	Occasionally(1-2 times/ month) (2)	Rarely (1)

9. Cosmopolitaness:

Please indicate the frequency of visit outside of your own village:

SL. NO.	Place of visit	Frequency of visit			
		Regular (3)	Occasional (2)	rarely (1)	Not at all (0)
1	Other villages	7-8 times/m ()	4-6 times/m ()	1-2times/m ()	0 time/m ()
2	Own Union Parisod	7-8 times/m ()	4-6 times/m ()	1-2 times/m ()	0 time/m ()
3	Other Union Parisod	7-8 times/m ()	4-6 times/m ()	1-2 times/m ()	0 times/m ()
4	Own Upazilla head quarter	7-8 times/m ()	4-6 times/m ()	1-2 times/m ()	0 time/m ()
5	Other Upazilla head quarter	7-8 times/m ()	4-6 times/m ()	1-2 times/m ()	0 time/m ()
6	Own District	7-8 times/m ()	4-6 times/m ()	1-2 times/m ()	0 time/m ()
7	Other District	3-4 times/m ()	2 times/m ()	1 time/m ()	0 time/m ()
8	Regional Agricultural Research Institute	3-4 times/m ()	2 times/m ()	1 time/m ()	0 time/m ()
9	Different fair	3-4 times/m ()	2 times/m ()	1 time/m ()	0 time/m ()
10	Women organizations	3-4 times/m ()	2 times/m ()	1 time/m ()	0 time/m ()
11	Different NGO program about women	3-4 times/m ()	2 times/m ()	1 time/m ()	0 time/m ()
12	Capital city	3 times/m ()	2 times/m ()	1 time/m ()	0 time/m ()

10. Personality:

Please mention your extent of personality on the following aspects as performed by you

SL. NO.	Items	Extent of personality			
		Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Not bad (1)
1	Leadership behavior				
2	Social interaction				
3	Communication behavior				
4	Accept any challenge				
5	Courage to protest against any anti-social activities				
6	Knowledge about women right				
7	Group participation				
8	Empathy				
9	Hard work and perseverance				
10	Handling capacity of any situation				

10. Women leadership activities empowering rural women:

During the last five years describe your extent of activities of women empowerment?

SL NO	Activities	Degree of empowerment			
		High (4)	Moderate (3)	Low (2)	Very low (1)
1	Protested against teasing women				
2	Protested against dowry system				
3	Conducted meeting for women right				
4	Organized women as a group				
5	Protested against early marriage				
6	Mitigated about family conflict in conjugal life				
7	Helped widow to get their allocation				
8	Worked for equal rights in family				

9	Encouraged women education				
10	Encouraged women about income generating activities				
11	Protested against physical torturing of women				
12	Helped women in family planning				
13	Encouraged women about self sufficient in economically				
14	Given various training/knowledge about homestead agriculture				
15	Helped women to get VGD and VGF card				
16	Helped women about adult learning				
17	Encouraged women about different vaccine				
18	Created scope for women to participate for food for work				
19	Given different suggestions and services to pregnant women				
20	Created awareness of women about their decision making ability				
21	Helped women about their property right				
22	Helped women about their divorce				
23	Helped single mother about their rights in society				
24	Encouraged women about their income generating activities				
25	Worked against polygamy				

Thank you

.....

Signature of the interviewer

Appendix B. Correlation Matrix

Characters	Age	Level of education	Leadership experience	Awareness of women rights	Motivation	Attitude toward women empowerment	Time spent for social work	Extent of contact with rural women	Cosmopolitaness	Personality	Women leadership activities empowering rural women
Age	1										
Level of education	-.453**	1									
Leadership experience	.693**	-.162	1								
Awareness of women rights	.612**	-.022	.714**	1							
Motivation	.673**	-.239	.548**	.533**	1						
Attitude toward women empowerment	.131	.309*	.220	.378**	.393**	1					
Time spent for social work	.199	-.074	.293*	.375**	.181	.184	1				
Extent of contact with rural women	.445**	.076	.613**	.788**	.3465**	.382**	.456**	1			
Cosmopolitaness	.615**	-.079	.769**	.858**	.473**	.330**	.470**	.872**	1		
Personality	.758**	-.261*	.784**	.826**	.583**	.307*	.464**	.717**	.898**	1	
Women leadership activities empowering rural women	.774**	-.261*	.777**	.827**	.657**	.371**	.394**	.704**	.847**	.941**	1

^{NS} = Non-significant

** = Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

* = Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)



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