

## PROBLEMS OF FORMALLY EMPLOYED WOMEN: A CASE STUDY OF BAHAWALNAGAR, PAKISTAN

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### ABSTRACT

*The focus of the study is to highlight the problems of working women in formal sector in Bahawalnagar. Sample of 100 formally employed women are selected from four public sector departments as 20 police women, 40 nurses, 20 school teachers and 20 college lecturers using stratified random sampling. Descriptive analysis is used for highlighting the problems faced by working women in said departments. Results reveal that police women are facing low social status and non-recognition of their jobs. Nurses face unscheduled working hours and low wages and school teachers want higher wages for their work. Unavailability of transport is also a major problem to all formally employed women in our sample.*

**Keywords:** Working women, Public sector, Pakistan

### INTRODUCTION

Women are the pillar of society and play an important role in society, in all fields of life, without their participation no society can nurture properly. As stated by Muhammad Ali Jinnah in 1944 that “No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you”. From the ancient time, women have been equally participating with their men, but their participation in labor force has not been given the same consideration as men collect from their work.

Due to some forces like spiritual customs and social traditions, women cannot freely participate in employment. These limitations are decreasing gradually to the normal position and this is becoming helpful in empowering women.

Women labor force does not receive the value of their work as compared to their male counterparts. In spite of the fact that economy requires a lot of women to impel into the labor force, their work is not acknowledged. Their value is ignored in case of pay, fringe benefits and access to attractive jobs. Furthermore, women are still expected to perform the duties of household in spite of their working status. Consequently, the women work is never complete.

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The women are playing an essential role in every phase of life. Due to financial crises in the less developed countries, the women's contribution with their other family members in economic activities is increasing.

### **Problems of working women in Pakistan**

In most of the Asian countries, due to the male dominated societies women are facing problems in various fields of life. There is no importance of their decision making and their innovative and creative ideas, because they are considered weak. They are not allowed to work by their conservative mindset families. Society also looks working women negatively. They do not get the respect, they deserve. Gender discrimination is the major reason for all the problems which women are facing. In urban areas, when a women travels to work, she has to face stares and rude remarks from strangers. Several employers choose women for definite jobs, due to women are estimated to be obedient, passive but many men have wrong concept about women.

In this age of rising prices and inflation, resulting poverty pressure, the middle class working women of Pakistan feel that it is necessary for them to contribute in the well-being of their families. They are facing the battle of their life for providing the relaxed and flourishing life to their families. They have to maintain the balance and stability between their career and home. In Pakistan, women are found as housewives who take care of their families especially their children. From centuries, women had not been permitted to pay her duties as an equal part of the society around the globe. Women have good morale as the men and had the similar emotions and abilities.

In Pakistan, the ability of female labor force has not been brought into work properly because of ill organizing participation, lack of guidance, desire of job opportunities, social background and insufficient economic incentives. Working women have to do extra work physically and psychologically. Her work for her family is more valuable as compared to her work outside. It is main thinking that working outside of women affects her duties in the home and she is considered an abnormal part of the society. In spite of all restrictions, Pakistani women are aware of their demand of work and they are aggravated to work for themselves, their families and their country.

### **Objectives of the study**

The major focus of this research study is to investigate the problems of formally employed women in Police Department, Education Department and Nursing Department in Bahawalnagar, a district of Pakistan.

Sub-objectives include:

- To examine social problems of formally employed women in above stated departments in focus area i.e. Bahawalnagar.
- To find out domestic problems of formally employed women in specified and above stated departments in focus area.
- To ascertain behavior of family members and social circle of formally employed women towards their job in focus area.

### **Significance of the study**

The research in this area extends the knowledge base that currently exists in this field. This topic has relative importance in research field as very little work is done on problems of working women in Pakistan and no research study is carried out to examine the working problems of formally employed women in Bahawalnagar, the focus area. This research is extremely

significant as women are as important in the society as men, so study like this highlights the problems of working women in different sectors in Bahawalnagar in particular and the country and the world in general which in turn help to reduce those problems.

### **Research gap and contribution of this study**

After reviewing available literature, it is found that very little emphasis is given to the problems of formally employed women. There is no study that is carried out on formal sector women employment in Bahawalnagar. This study is unique in the sense that it deals in primary data. It focuses on the problems of employed women in various fields in Bahawalnagar.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Literature review is the basis of research. Quality research cannot be possible without reviewing literature comprehensively because it helps us to find out research gap in existing body of knowledge.

Qureshi (2000) explored different problems faced by working women residing in working women hostels in Faisalabad. Using interview schedule she gathered required data and found that due to absence of working women from their homes, the health of their family member especially their children suffered as they can not give proper time to the families.

Naqvi and Shahnaz (2002) discussed the decision of women to work in Pakistan. They used two regression models, a Probit model and multinomial Logit model and found that everything remaining constant, the chances of women to be paid and useful society members increase with education and improves extensively the more educated the women is.

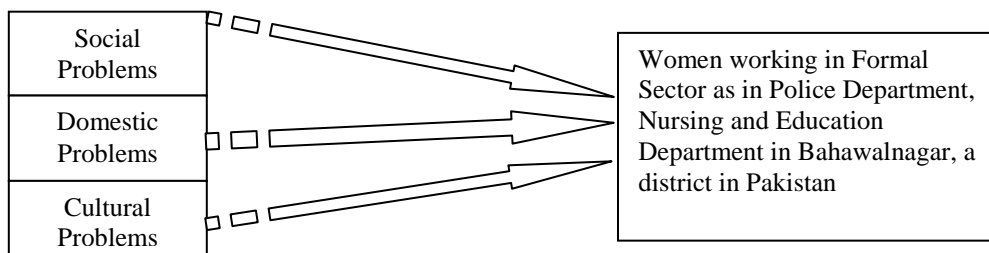
Rakhshanda *et al.* (2005) discussed the socio-economic problems faced by women employed in different sectors in urban areas of District Faisalabad. Data was collected using well-designed interview schedule. They found that most of the employed women connected their services to contribute the financial duty of the family for improving their standard of living.

Khan and Khan (2006) examined the contribution of working women in informal sector in household budget. They applied the OLS model on 937 observations and found that women as head of household, education of women, and ownership of assets by women have positive impact on their contribution in household budget. The burden of the large family size, household poverty and loan availed by the household is shared by the informally employed women, as are positively affecting their contribution in household budget. Age of the woman has a non-linear effect on their contribution in household budget. Women living in nuclear families and married women contribute more to household budget. The household per capita income and number of children between 5-15 years in the household have shown negative effect on contribution of informally employed women in household budget. The household's economic susceptibility due to unemployment of husband and lower productivity due to lower education of husband is also largely shared by the urban informally employed women. However, number of adult males in the household decreases the volume of contribution of woman and burden on woman is relaxed. Kotwal *et al.* (2008) examined the impact of work and environment on the women living in slums areas of Jammu city. A sample of 100 respondents was collected using a well-structured interview schedule. The results showed that lack of education compelled women to join low paid sectors. The dual task (paid and unpaid jobs) and the poor environment became more demanding on the health of the women and the women experienced weakness, fatigue, breathlessness, poor appetite, and frequent illnesses.

Kaur *et al.* (1997) explored the social and psychological problems of female teachers working in different colleges and schools of Punjab. Using simple random sampling and a well-designed interview schedule they found that there is no considerable difference existed in psycho-social problems of women working in school and colleges in urban and rural areas of Punjab.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Conceptual framework of the study gives a schematic representation of the study in order to give a better level of understanding of the problem.



Working women in Bahawalnagar in different formal sectors are facing problems in their respective domains. Problems include social problems as non-encouraging attitude of social circle and problems of transportation, Domestic problems include non-cooperative behavior of husbands or any other family member of formally employed women. Cultural strings sometimes work as hindrances in working life of employed women in Pakistan in general and in focus area Bahawalnagar in specific.

### Methodology

Methodology involves problem statement, research questions, target population, study design and method of analysis involved.

### Statement of problem

Women working in formal sector in Pakistan are facing different types of social, domestic and cultural problems as they are unable to take care of their households and children. As far as research studies are concerned, very little importance is given to the problems of formally employed women in Pakistan. There is no study carried out on the problems of formal sector women employment in Bahawalnagar that induced us to carry out this research endeavor.

### Research questions

Following are the questions that become the basis of the study:

1. What are the social problems of formally employed women in Police Department, Teaching in Schools and Colleges and Nursing Department in Bahawalnagar in particular?
2. What are the domestic problems of formally employed women in Police Department, Teaching in Schools and Colleges and Nursing Department in focus area?
3. What is the behavior of social circle and family members of formally employed women in above stated departments towards their job?

### Target population

Target population of this research study is employed women of formal sector in Bahawalnagar. Formal sector includes nursing women, school teachers, college lecturers and police women in

Bahawalnagar because women are rarely employed in any other formal sector in focus area except those mentioned above.

### Sampling technique & sample size

A stratified random sampling technique is adopted in order to identify a sample, where each employed women who is discovered and interviewed. Our sample size is 100 working women of formal sector in Bahawalnagar. Furthermore, 40 nurses, 20 police women, 20 school teachers and 20 college lecturers are selected in our sample. Reason for selecting a sample of only 100 respondents is the trend of women towards labour force is very low in focus area.

### Data collection – interview process

The relevant data for the study are collected from primary sources. The data has been collected through structured interview schedule. The interview schedule is used because through it maximum first hand information could be gathered. During the preparation of interview schedule, care was taken not to include ambiguous, vague, misleading and double-barreled questions, so that the question could be communicated accurately resulting in accurate responses. Both open ended and close ended question are used. To be sure about the practicability of the interview schedule and to ensure that all question being communicated accurately, a pre-testing was conducted on a sub-sample of 15 women. After pre-testing, some of the question which were not found appropriate were dropped and some of the questions were modified and some were added. After interviewing all the respondents, the data was edited.

### Data analysis

Collected data is summarized and analyzed using percentage tables and graphs and conclusions are drawn on the basis of the collected data.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In results and discussion, we summarized data in tables which was collected from respondents through interview schedule. We have summarized data by three tables; first one is about personal characteristics of respondents. Second is about the household information of respondents and third is related to the working information of respondents.

**Table 1:** Personal Characteristics of Respondents

Personal Characteristics	Age	Average Age (Years)	25
		Range (Years)	17-58
	Marital Status	Married (Percentage)	32
		Single (Percentage)	68
		Ever-Married (Percentage)	00
	Education	Average Education (Years)	12.92
		Range (Years)	10-17
	Income	Average Income (Rs.)	13031.78
		Range (Rs.)	1350-79000
	Experience	Average Experience (Years)	4.68
		Range (Years)	1-28
	Facing Disease	Yes (Percentage)	4
		No (Percentage)	96

Table 1 shows the personal characteristics of respondents. These characteristics are related to their age, marital status, education, income their job experience and diseases which they face.

The range of the age of respondent is 17-58 years and their average age is 25 years. In marital status of respondents are 32% married, 68% single and 00% ever married women. Education range of respondent is 10-17 Years and their average education is 12.92 years. Income range of respondents is 1350Rs-79000Rs while average income of respondents is 13031.78Rs. Experience range of respondents is 1-28 years and their average experience 4-8 years. In our study 4% of respondents face disease while 96% does not face any disease.

**Table 2:** Household Information of Respondents

<b>Household Information</b>	Locality	Rural (Percentage)	17
		Urban (Percentage)	83
	H.H Construction	Cemented (Percentage)	87
		Semi-Cemented (Percentage)	13
		Mud (Percentage)	0
	No. of Rooms &H.H Appliances	No. of Rooms	3
		Electricity (Percentage)	100
		Refrigerator (Percentage)	89
		Telephone (Percentage)	38
		Room Air Cooler (Percentage)	75
	Household Setup	T.V (Percentage)	97
		Nuclear (Percentage)	73
	Education and Income of Head of H.H	Joint (Percentage)	27
		Average Education (Years)	11
	Ownership and Value of Assets	Average Income (Rs.)	21585.859
		Ownership of Assets(Percentage)	26
	Average No. of Members	Value of Assets (Rs.)	1137692.3
		Male	3
		Female	4
		Employed	2
	Employed Status of Husband	Unemployed	4
		Employer (Percentage)	15
		Employee (Percentage)	10
Self-Employed (Percentage)		5	
Education of Husband	Unemployed (Percentage)	1	
	Avg. Education (Years)	14	
Household Ownership	Own (Percentage)	95	
	Rented (Percentage)	3	
	Govt. Provided (Percentage)	2	
After Getting Job, Have You Got Better Importance in H.H Decision Making?	Yes (Percentage)	73	
	No (Percentage)	27	

Table 2 represents the household information of respondents. With respect to locality of household 17% rural and 83% urban. We examined the household construction, we found 87% cemented, 13% semi-cemented and 00% of mud. We observed the No. of Rooms and home appliances, 3% average of Rooms, 97% TV and 100% Electricity, 89% having Refrigerator. 38% having the facility of Telephone while 75% having Room Air Cooler and 87% of respondent having Separate kitchen.

73% of respondent have Nuclear household setup while 27% have Joint household setup. Average education of respondent is 11 years and average income of head of household is 21585.85Rs. The percentage of ownership of asset owing by household respondents is 26% and their value of asset is 1137692.3Rs. Average no. of male member is 3 and female is 4 while average no. of employed member is 2 and unemployed is 4. The employed status of husband of respondents is as employer are 15%, employee are 10%, self-employed are 5% and unemployed are 1%. Average education of husband of respondent is 14 years. 95% of respondents have household ownership and 3% are rented and 2% have houses provided by Government. When the respondent are asked that after getting job, have you got better importance as before in household decision making ? 73% give answer in 'Yes' and 27% give answer in 'No'.

**Table 3: Working Information of Respondents**

Working Information	Posting Area	Home Station	61%
		Out Station	39%
	Working Hours	Avg Working Hours	9 Hours
	Medical Allowance	Avg Medical Allowance	776.315(Rs.)
	How you got this job?	News Paper	22%
		Other Sources	78%
	Approach of Your Relatives/ Neighbours/Friends toward Your Job?	Good	45%
		Bad	4%
		Normal	51%
	Conveyance Availability by the department?	Yes	5%
		No	95%
	Job Security?	Yes	70%
		No	30%
	Do You Face Any Sort of Social Problem While Going or Coming Back From Job?	Yes	39%
		No	61%
	Working Environment	V.Good	20%
		Good	38%
		Normal	42%
	Relation With Co-Workers	V.Good	25%
		Good	57%
		Normal	18%
		Bad	0%
		V.Bad	0%
	Response From Your Social Circle	V.Good	5%
		Good	25%
		Normal	65%
Bad		5%	
Gender Discrimination Against Employed Women	V.Bad	0%	
	Yes	20%	
Ever Get Frustration Frustrated in Job?	No	80%	
	Yes	58%	
	No	42%	

Table 3 describes the working information of respondent relating to their jobs. With respect of posting area 61% have home station whereas 39% have out station. Average working hours of them is 9 hours. Average medical allowances which they get are 776.315Rs. 5% of respondent have conveyance availability by the department and 95% of respondents have no conveyance

availability. 70% of respondents have job security while 30% have not. 39% of respondent face problems while going or coming back from job whereas 69% of respondents have no problems. 20% of respondent having very good working environment and 38% respondents have good working environment. Whereas 42% of respondents having normal working environment. 22% of respondents got their job through news-papers and 78% by other sources. 25% have very good relation with co-workers, 57% have good relation with co-workers while 18% have normal relations. 5% of respondents facing very good response from their social circle, 25% face good response, 65% facing normal and 5% facing bad response from their social circle. 20% of respondents have gender discrimination while 80% having no discrimination. When the respondent are asked that have you ever faced frustration in your job? 58% of respondent give answer in 'Yes' and 42% in 'No'.

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Keeping in view the findings of the study, it is concluded that working women in formal sector in Bahawalnagar are facing social and work place problems. Among these major problems some are as follows; their working hours are too long, most of respondents face unavailability of conveyance, most of the respondents have no job security, they have very low allowance, they are facing gender discrimination and the problem that is especially related to school teachers and nurses is of low wages. The problem which is related to police women that they are facing long and unscheduled working hours, low social status and non-recognition of their work.

### **Suggestions**

Working problems of the employed women should be removed by taking following important measures:

- The work of police women in their departments should be recognized by Inspector General of Police.
- There is need for protective laws that would limit employed women's working hours.
- Salaries of the women workers specially school teachers and nurses must be increased by their departments.
- Conveyance facility should be provided by the concerned departments of working women, so they can be protected from social problems.
- Government must increase the medical allowance of women workers.

### **Implications of the study**

The study can be used for education purpose, for examining problems of working women in formal sector in general and in selected departments in specific. This study can be useful from policy viewpoint as to reduce or eliminate all the problems of working women in formal sector in Bahawalnagar in specific and in Pakistan in general.

### **Limitation of the study**

The study is limited to a small group of labour force i.e. women working in formal sectors in Bahawalnagar, a district of Pakistan. This study opens horizons of research to study problems of women working in informal sectors in different countries or in different regions of Pakistan. The study included only three formal sectors; Police, Education and Nursing, further research can be done in many other departments in formal sector in Pakistan or in the world.



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