

# Women Home Based Workers in Rural areas of Pakistan

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## Abstract

Home-based work is a “general category of work within the informal or unorganized sector where workers carry out remunerative activities within their homes or in the surrounding areas but not at the premises of an employer”. The women Home-based workers defines as “The Women who work in their own dwelling or home stations. It is the moneymaking activity. The home based work includes the embroidery, handicrafts, stitching, weaving, shoe making, football making, garments, handmade jewelry and decoration piece making etc. The main purpose of this study was to explore awareness among women home based worker about their rights. The study was conducted in District Faisalabad. Multistage sampling technique was used in this study. At first stage, one Tehsil Faisalabad out of five Tehsils was selected by using simple random sampling technique. At second stage 4 union councils including UC-49, UC-157, and UC-274 were selected by using simple purposive sampling technique. At third stage four villages from each union council out of five villages (Chack No- 225 RB, Malkhawala), (Chack No-217 RB, Chakaira), (Chack No-218 RB, Pronkawala) and (Chack No-61 JB, Dharora) were selected purposively. The study was conducted in rural area of District Faisalabad. The sample size of one twenty women was selected by using simple random sampling. Questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection and collected data were analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Results of the study revealed that 61.7% of the respondents were illiterate, about 38.3% of the respondents earned 2501-5000 rupees, the significant majority 86.7% of the respondents belonged to lower class, about one third 40% of the respondents involved in stitching, more than half 51.7% of the respondents worked up to 6 hours per day, the majority 67.5% the of the respondents had muscular pain, and the significant majority 87.5% of the respondents had no awareness about their rights.

**Keywords:** Home-based worker; Home stations; Money making activity; Rural Women

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## **1. Introduction**

Home-based work is a general category of work within the informal or unorganized sector where workers carry out remunerative activities within their homes or in the surrounding areas but not at the premises of an employer. It has also been defined as “the production in the workers household of goods and services for monetary exchange”. The women Home-based workers defines as “The Women who work in their own dwelling or home stations”. It is the moneymaking activity. The home based work includes the embroidery, handicrafts, stitching, weaving, shoe making, football making, garments, handmade jewelry and decoration piece making etc. Pakistan is one of the Asian countries that have the big amount of females who are engaged in home based work. This unit is increasing with the high-speed rate. The increasing high rate of home based work can be linked to the globalization of industry. According to the World Bank study, 10 million females of Pakistan are engaged in home based work. The women home based work is contributed the economy of Pakistan [1].

The Government recognizes that there are 8.52 million home based workers in the country. The proportion of women workers in the home-based sector is 65% in contrast to only 4% of all male workers who are home-based workers. These home based workers contribute to the country’s economic growth. Pakistan accounts 80% of the world’s match-grade footballs and earns nearly \$50 million in foreign exchange from this industry alone. Most of these women home-based workers, who represent 60% of women workforce in the country, are piece rate workers involved in manufacturing and post-manufacturing tasks such as embroidery, carpet weaving and handlooms, woodwork and other handicrafts, bangle making, dates cleaning and packing prawn peeling and packing and many other similar tasks [2]. Providing the first-ever national platform to home-based female workers in Pakistan, a union has been launched to collectively fight for their rights. Three constituent organizations including Action Aid are demanding legal and social protection for these workers and repeal of discriminatory laws against women. The first ever women union of its kind in the country, Home-Based Aurat Workers Union Pakistan” (HBAWUP) was launched in Pakistan at a national congress held in Lahore on August 22, 2008. The congress was jointly organized by Women Workers Helpline, Labor Education Foundation and Action Aid Pakistan. Over 600 home-based women workers, representatives from Punjab, Baluchistan, Sindh, NWFP and Azad Kashmir participated in the congress [3].

On the one hand, HBW is an important source of income for the home worker households. This aspect underlines the central role of these earning activities in the welfare of the households. On the other hand, there are poor conditions of work and related health issues, the low rates of pay (which often keep the households close to poverty-line), and the vulnerability of the households especially if home based work is the main source of income. Furthermore, home based workers are invisible, non-unionized and the lack of collective action can make them very vulnerable totally lacking social protection. Ignoring their existence and the perspectives of such workers by focusing social protection on the formal sector was one of the mistakes of previous policy makers. At the household level, the impact of this first synergy can be demonstrated by examining the life cycle of an educated girl. There is evidence that an educated girl is likely to marry later than a girl who remains without any education [4].

Now a day's Pakistan is dealing more than one issues of economy problems. The females of Pakistan know about rights, common values and norms of society. The limited rights and restricted moving system are forced the women to do home based work in their homes. Home base worker also charged a little amount of money in return the job or work. The women who are experts charged more and those females whom are inexpert gaining low salary. However, they have no promotion of their work [5].

## **2. Materials and Methods**

Research methodology is a set of explicit rules and regulations on which the foundation of research is laid down [6]. The major objective of methodology is to explain various tools and techniques employed for the collection, analysis and interpretation of data related to research problem under investigation.

### **2.1 Universe**

Universe is any set of individuals or objects having common observable characteristics constitute a population or universe. The Universe of the present study was district Faisalabad.

### **2.2 Sampling Technique**

Multistage sampling technique was used in this study for sample selection. At first stage, one Tehsil Faisalabad out of five Tehsils was selected by using simple random sampling technique. At second stage 4 union councils including UC-49, UC-157, and UC-274 were selected by using simple purposive sampling technique. At third stage four villages from each union council out of five villages (Chack No- 225 RB, Malkhawala), (Chack No-217 RB, Chakaira), (Chack No-218 RB, Pronkawaland (Chack No-61 JB, Dharora) were selected purposively. The study was conducted in rural area of district Faisalabad.

The sample size of one twenty women was selected by using simple random sampling. The one twenty women were interviewed by taking women from each selected household, 30 women from each selected villages.

### **2.3 Sample Size**

Sampling is the process of selecting units (people, organizations) from a population of interest so that by studying the sample we may fairly generalize our results back to the population from which they were chosen [7]. The study was conducted in rural areas of district Faisalabad. A sample of 120 respondents was selected by using multistage sampling technique. The purpose of selecting the sample (women) was the representatives of their household.

### **2.4 Data Collection Tool**

A well-designed questionnaire was used for data collection, which were based upon open ended and close-ended questions.

## 2.5 Statistical Analysis

Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used for the analysis.

## 3. Results and Discussions

Analysis of data and interpretation of results are the most important steps in scientific research. Without these steps generalization and prediction cannot be achieved, which is the target of scientific research. Generalization and conclusion are drawn based on characteristics and attitudes of the respondents. Both Uni-variate and Bi-variate statistical analysis were performed.

### *Uni-Variate Analysis*

**Table 1:** Distribution of the respondents according to their educational level

Educational level	Frequency	%age
Illiterate	74	61.7
Primary	16	13.3
Middle	15	12.5
Matric or above	15	12.5
Total	120	100.0

Table 1 indicates that more than half i.e. 61.7 % of the respondents were illiterate. The small majority i.e. 13.3 % of the respondents had primary education. About 12.5 % of the respondents had middle education. The small majority i.e. 12.5 % of the respondents had metric above education o education. Similar literacy rate were found by [8] and noted that the overall literacy rate (age 10 years and above) is 57.7 % (69.5 % for male and 45.2 % for female) compared to 57.4 % (69.3 % for male and 44.7 % for female) for 2008-09.

**Table 2:** Distribution of the respondents according to their income from home based work

Income (Rs.)	Frequency	%age
Up to 2500	38	31.7
2501-5000	46	38.3
Above 5000	36	30.0
Total	120	100.0

Table 2 reflects that less than one third i.e. 31.7 % of the respondents had up to 2500 hundred monthly. More than one third i.e. 38.3 % of the respondents were earned 2501-5000 monthly. The small majority i.e. 13.3 % of the respondents were earned above 5000 monthly. Govt. of Pakistan in 2010 [9] found that the female's home-based workers mostly come from the poor and middle class families, lower or the lower middle-income people and from different age groups very little or no qualification.

**Table 3:** Distribution of the respondents according to their family status

Family status	Frequency	%age
Lower class	104	86.7
Middle class	16	13.3
Total	120	100.0

Table 3 indicates that the significant majority i.e. 86.7 % of the respondents were belonged to the lower class. The small majority i.e. 13.3 % of the respondents were belonged to the middle class family status. According to the [9] found that the women home-based workers mostly come from the poor and middle class families.

**Table 4:** Distribution of the respondents according to the type of work they perform

Type of work	Yes		No		Total	
	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age
Embroidery	36	30.0	84	70.0	120	100.0
Stitching	48	40.0	72	60.0	120	100.0
Parlor	4	3.3	116	96.7	120	100.0
Weaving	4	3.3	116	96.7	120	100.0
Makaish and Sitara work	3	2.5	117	97.5	120	100.0
Knitting, sewing	28	23.3	92	76.7	120	100.0
Gloves making	8	6.7	112	93.3	120	100.0
Bangle Seller	4	3.3	116	96.7	120	100.0
Any other	12	10.0	108	90.0	120	100.0

Table 4 shows that about one third i.e. 30.0 % of the respondents were engaged in embroidery work. More than half i.e. 70.0 % of the respondents were not engaged in embroidery work. Less than half i.e. 40.0 % of the

respondents were engaged in stitching work. More than i.e. half 60.0 % of the respondents were engaged in stitching work. Only 3.3% of the respondents were engaged in parlor work. The significant majority i.e. 96.7 % of the respondents were engaged in parlor work. Only 3.3 % of the respondents were engaged in weaving work. The significant majority i.e. 96.7 % of the respondents were not engaged in weaving work. Only 2.5 % of the respondents were engaged in makaish and sittara work. The significant majority i.e. 97.5 % the respondents were not engaged in makaish and sittara work. More than one fifth i.e. 23.3 % of the respondents were engaged in knitting and sewing work. The majority i.e. 76.7 % of the respondents were not engaged in knitting and sewing work. Only 6.7 % of the respondents were engaged in gloves stitching work. The significant majority 93.3 % of the respondents were not engaged in gloves stitching work. Only 3.3 % of the respondents were engaged in bangles celling work. The significant majority 96.7 % of the respondents were not engaged in bangles celling work. Similarly [10] also observed that majority of females are involved in the production and post-production tasks as embroidery, stitching, handlooms, carpet weaving, wood work and the other handicrafts, making of bangles, purse making ,gloves making, knitting, cleaning and packing of dates, prawn shelling, packaging, shoes stitching and the many other same tasks and assignments etc. These home- based female workers were making a considerable addition to the economy of Pakistan but their work was unrecognized.

**Table 5:** Distribution of the respondents according to their working hours

Working hours	Frequency	%age
Up to 6 hours	62	51.7
8 hours	32	26.7
9-10 hours	12	10.0
11-12 hours	12	10.0
More than 12 hours	2	1.7
Total	120	100.0

Table 5 reveals that more than half i.e. 51.7 % of the respondents were worked up to 6 hours per day. About one fourth i.e. 26.7 % of the respondents were worked 8 hour per day. The small majority i.e. 10.0 % of the respondents were worked 9-10 hours per day. About 10.0 % of the respondents were worked 11-12 hours per day. About 1.7 % of the respondents were worked more than 12 hours per day. According to the [11] in Germany stated that Majority of female workers 65 % worked for six to eight hours in their daily life inside their houses and earned a minimum of five hundred to two thousand rupees in a month after doing vary laborious works.

**Table 6:** Distribution of the respondents according to the part of unit

Part of unit	Frequency	%age
Private unit	24	20.0
Self-base	96	80.0
Total	120	100.0

Table 6 indicates that one fifth i.e. 20.0 % of the respondents were the part of private unit. The significant majority i.e. 80 % of the respondents belonged to the self-base work. Similarly [12] depicted that An analysis of data from the Pakistan Integrated Household Survey 1998-99 suggests that women who are younger, poorly educated and from larger families enter the labor market not out of their own choice at all, they do self-based work.

**Table 7:** Distribution of the respondents according to their thinking that work is not highlighted on print/electronic media

Respondents' thinking that work is not highlighted on print/electronic media	Frequency	%age
Yes	72	60.0
No	48	40.0
Total	120	100.0

Table 7 reflects that the majority i.e. 60 % of the respondents were preferred that their work should be highlighted on print/electronic media. Less than half i.e. 40.0 % of the respondents were not preferred that their work should be highlighted on print/electronic media. Above results, supported by [13] stated women got authority by getting information and knowledge through the print media and electronic media, which directly affects the job of females in the houses and the involvement ratio of the women.

**Bi-Variate Analysis**

Table 8 represents the association between age of the respondents and their problems. Chi-square value shows a non-significant association between age of the respondents and their problems. Gamma value shows no relationship between the variables. It means age had no impact on the home based workers. So the hypothesis “Higher the age of the home based workers, lower will be facing problem” is rejected.

**Table 8:** Association between age of the respondents and their problems

Age (in years)	Barriers/Problems			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Less than 20 years	11 35.5%	5 16.1%	15 48.4%	31 100.0%
20-30	9 23.7%	18 47.4%	11 28.9%	38 100.0%
31-40	9 34.6%	10 38.5%	7 26.9%	26 100.0%
Above 40	8 32.0%	6 24.0%	11 44.0%	25 100.0%
Total	37 30.8%	39 32.5%	44 36.7%	120 100.0%

Chi-square = 9.77      d.f. = 6      P-value = .134<sup>NS</sup>      Gamma = -.040  
 NS = Non-significant

**Table 9:** Association between education of the respondents and their problems

Education	Barriers/Problems			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Illiterate	16 21.6%	29 39.2%	29 39.2%	74 100.0%
Literate	21 45.7%	10 21.7%	15 32.6%	46 100.0%
Total	37 30.8%	39 32.5%	44 36.7%	120 100.0%

Chi-square = 8.30      d.f. = 2      P-value = .016\*      Gamma = -.287  
 \* = Significant

Table 9 represents the association between education of the respondents and their problems. Chi square value shows a significant association between education of the respondents and their problems. Gamma value shows a strong negative relationship between the variables. It means educated home based workers were facing fewer problems as compared to illiterate home based workers. So the hypothesis “Educational status of the home based workers will be influencing on their problem” is accepted.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The conclusion of my study is those women home based workers are facing many problems. They are getting very low wages. They are very hard working and work 6-8 hours per day. Mostly the females who are engaged in home based work, they are illiterate, they have no awareness about their rights. They have no security of work. Health problem also faced by women home based worker such as eyesight, muscular pain and headache. The home-based female workers are escalating swiftly due to many reasons, poverty, unemployment and the soaring prices of the almost all essential and basic foodstuffs in the country. Home based workers joint this profession to increase their family income and they were satisfied with their work, whereas these females belong to neglected part of the community in the country. Home based workers faced many problems i.e. exploitation of intermediary, insufficient income and irregularity in giving wages. They wanted to social security, small loan and old age benefits. The home-based female workers are un-organized, scattered and perform their work assignments independently. In very rare cases, they have associations with the each other. These types of female workers have no platform to gather and discuss about their problems and benefits. The home based female workers have to care for their children, cooking, cleaning and on the top of it all; they have to formulate these things. There is a dire need of the media to pinpoint the problems of these women workers because these types of females’ workers belong to one of the most ignored part in our country. With increasing unemployment, more and more males are coming back to their homes to sit and stay for another job whereas the load of earning income lies on the females’ shoulders. Most of them are not yet skilled appropriately. In the similar way the organizations, doing work for their betterment have not established linkages with the each other. Further, these home-based workers are working in the informal sector of the economy, deprived of the efforts of the labor unions for the rights of these female workers.

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