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Wasim, Mohammad Pervez; Herani, Gobind M.; Farooqui,  
Wahid and Qureshi, M. A  
Karachi University, Indus Institute of higher Education

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## **Family Types, Authority Structure and Women Workers in Sindh Labor Force: Problems and Prospects**

Mohammad Pervez Wasim<sup>\*</sup>, Gobind M. Herani<sup>\*\*</sup>, Wahid Farooqui<sup>\*\*\*</sup> and M. A  
Qureshi

### **ABSTRACT**

The development of a society is virtually dependent upon the quality of human resources both male and female, the changing pattern of economic and social development of world societies irrespective of their level of development, necessitates and equal advancement of both the social segments. The numerical reality that women constitute about nearly half of the total population of Sindh ideally assigns to them equal participating role in the economic life of the province. However, like other developing countries, women's role in Sindh as an active worker-producer of goods and services has not been duly recognized by this male dominated society. With the objective of ensuring increased participation of women, clear-cut guidelines about integrating women in the development process and defining their roles are still lacking in Sindh. The present study is a step in the direction of bridging the gap of information about female labor force participation of Sindh in different, activity rates, industry group, occupation group and employment status in 1981 and 1998 population census. The most important conclusion that emerges from this study is that though percentage of women labor force in different, activities, industry group, occupation group and employment status has mostly increased in 1998 as

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\*Mohammad Pervez Wasim is staff Economist at Applied Economics Research Centre, University of Karachi-Pakistan

\*\*\* Dr. Gobind M. Herani is Senior Research Fellow at Indus Institute of Higher Education (IIHE), Karachi-Pakistan. Email: [g\\_m\\_rathore@yahoo.com](mailto:g_m_rathore@yahoo.com)

\*\*\* Mr. Wahid Farooqui is Director at Indus Institute of Higher Education (IIHE)

\*\*\*\*Dr. M. A Qureshi is a Rector at Indus Institute of Higher Education (IIHE), Karachi-Pakistan

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compared to 1981, but being nearly half of the population this increase is still very low.

**JEL. Classification:** J12; J21; J71

**Keywords:** Family, Authority, Problems, Female, Labor Force, Sindh

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Family**

Family is the basic unit of the society and consequently it occupies a most important place in the social structure. Family refers to a group of persons united by marriage, kinship or adoption and interacting roles of husband and wife, father and mother, son and daughter and brother and sister. It is a social group characterized by common residence, economic cooperation and reproduction. It also provides emotional, social and financial security to its members. The resources of the entire family are responsible for meeting all needs. The behavior of individuals is to great extent molded by influences within the family not only during the socialization process but also after they have reached maturity.

### **1.2 The Types of Family**

The types of family depends upon the composition of its membership pattern, socio-economic dependency and living conditions which also vary from one society to another or even in the different segment of the same society. In this paper the typology of family is confined to nuclear, sub-nuclear, joint and extended. A nuclear family refers to parents and their children in one household. No other relatives are present. Typically a nuclear family includes here a married man and woman in the relation of husband and wife with their offspring, although in individual cases one or more additional persons may reside with them which are also called supplementary nuclear family (Kolenda 1970).

A sub-nuclear family is a fragment of a former complete nuclear family such as a widow with her unmarried children. This may happen due to death, separation and divorce. Joint family is a system in which the agnostically related males of two or three generations live together with their dependents. Mainly the wives and children of the adult males, their parents and younger siblings and not usually, their first cousins, nephews and nieces. A common residence, common property, common worship, a common kitchen, and system of mutual obligations have been found among the different units of the joint family. The head of the joint family is the eldest male member or some other responsible male member of the family. The rest of the family members have to abide by the decision of the head. The extended family is a group of nuclear or joint families or of both, where all members are agnostically related and living together in the same home-stead. Though each unit of the extended family is economically independent but it has wide meaning of control over members'

behavior regarding marriage, divorce, observance of purdah, and women's participation in development programmes. It refers to all male patrilineal descendants of great grandfather, including unmarried sons, who are bound together through a common bondage.

### **1.3 The Authority Structure**

The authority of family depends upon the structure, composition and function of the family. Authority is meant the person who takes the responsibility for maintenance of family and plays a dominant role in decision making in any affair for the family irrespective of sex either individually or both (husband-wife). Thus the concept of authority undertakes to assign 'power' in the family. The authority relationship in the family includes the patriarchal, where authority is vested in the father or any responsible elder male member; matriarchal, where it is vested in the mother or any responsible elder female member; and egalitarian, where the husband and the wife have rough equality in decision making in any affair of the family, i.e., in the patriarchal system authority is vested in the man alone, in the matriarchal system authority is held by the woman alone, and in the egalitarian system it is shared by both man and woman.

### **1.4 Women Workers in Pakistan Labor Force**

The development of a society is virtually dependent upon the quality of human resources, both male and female. The changing pattern of economic and social development of world societies, irrespective of their level of development, necessitates equal advancement of both the social segments. The numerical reality that women constitute about half of the total population in Pakistan ideally assigns to them equal participating role in the economic life of the country. According to 1998 population census, the total population of the country is 130,580 thousand (Population Census Report of Pakistan, 1998), of which 62,740 thousand are females.

However, like other developing countries, women's role in Pakistan as an active worker-producer of goods and services has not been duly recognized by this male dominated society. In the sense of power and privilege, with certain exceptions, women have always been relegated to secondary position below men. Even in the societies which are called advanced or in which the women are sole bread earners, they are still living in a state of subjugation. In Pakistan, though the constitution provides for equal rights and privileges for men and women but such equality is far from reality. Even the persistent efforts by the planners, social welfare agencies and women's own organizations have failed to provide them their rightful place in the society. There are many interrelated factors including biological, socio-cultural, psycho-social and economic, low literacy level and the prevalent work preferences which have prevented women to attain their due place in the society. Women in Pakistan, since time immemorial have formed an organic component of the working force of the country. In the rural areas, they worked along with the male members of the household in sowing seeds, weeding, transplanting, watering the fields, harvesting

the crops, threshing and storage of crops, collection of fodder, livestock and poultry keeping. In addition, women are engaged in non-farm activities such as sewing, knitting, carpet making, rope making and pottery etc. They do all this in addition to their normal domestic works as housewives and thus they have been playing a dual role in the society. Although such activities provide supplementary income for the household, these are not fully captured in the computation of GNP.

According to 1999-2000 Labor Force Survey, the female participation rate in Pakistan labor force is 9.3 percent (10.7 percent in rural and 6.3 percent in urban areas). The female participation rate in Sindh labor force is 4.4 percent (6.0 percent in rural and 2.0 percent in urban areas). Higher participation in rural areas is due to larger self employment opportunities.

The conceptual distortions with regard to the participation of women in economic activities as discussed above provide the answer as to why too little attention has been given by researchers or planners in Pakistan (especially in Sindh) to women and the role they play in society. Women's role in development is not a simple one; it relates to a complete range of socio-economic activities. Women are not only users of basic services, but are either under-employed or over-worked in their sphere of activities; they also represent a productive potential which is not being tapped.

With the objective of ensuring increased participation of women, clear-cut guidelines about integrating women in the development process and defining their roles are still lacking (especially in Sindh Province). The present study is a step in the direction of bridging the gap of information about female labor force participation of Sindh in different industries and occupations of 1981 and 1998 Population Census.

### **1.5 Objective of Study**

The study has the following major objectives:

- i To see the strength of women population in Sindh during 1972, 1981 and 1998 population census.
- ii. To examine the percentage of Crude<sup>1</sup> Activity Rates (CAR) and Refined<sup>2</sup> Activity Rates (RAR) by sex, rural and urban in Sindh for 1972, 1981 and 1998 population.
- iii. To examine the percentage of Specific<sup>3</sup> Activity Rates (SAR) by age group, sex, rural and urban in Sindh during 1981 and 1998 population.

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<sup>1</sup> Crude activity rate is the percentage of persons in labor force to the total population.

<sup>2</sup> Refined activity rate is the percentage of persons in labor force to the population 10 years and above.

<sup>3</sup> Specific activity rates are the percentage of persons in the labor with specific characteristics (age, level of education, marital status, etc.) to the total population with the specific characteristics.

- iv. To examine the extent and nature of involvement in industries and occupations by sex and rural and urban in Sindh for 1981 and 1998 population census.
- v. To examine female employment by employment status and rural and urban areas.
- vi. To suggest measures for improvement of economic status of women.

## 2 THE DATA AND ANALYSIS

Data for the three population census (1972, 1981 and 1998) are taken from the Census Report of Sindh, Population Census Organization, and Government of Pakistan.

### 2.1 Women Population in Sindh

The overall population has been increasing at an annual compound growth rate of 2.80 percent which in turn is currently off-setting the GNP growth rate of 2.2 percent (1999-2000, Economic survey). The main factor leading to this high population growth is relatively stable birth rate accompanied by progressively declining death rate due to extension in medical and health facilities.

According to the 1998 census, the population of women in Sindh was 30440 thousand which was 47.12 percent of the total population (Table- 1). The total female population during the last three decennial censuses and their percentage share in the total population can be seen in Table-1, which indicates that the population of women in Sindh is increasing at a higher rate than that of male population except for the year 1998, in which the women population decreased marginally. It can be seen from the table that population of women increased from 44.21% in 1972 to 47.12% in 1998, which clearly indicates that with increasing urbanization the women population in the urban areas is also increasing.

Table – 1

#### Women Population in Sindh

Year	Total Population (000)	Female Population (000)	Female Population as % of the Total Population	Urban Population (000)	Percent
1972	14158	6260	44.21	2595	41.45
1981	19029	9030	47.45	3810	42.19
1998	30440	14342	47.12	6935	48.35

Source: 1972, 1981 and 1998 Census Report of Sindh Province, Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan.

## 2.2 Women Crude Activity and Refined Activity Rate in Sindh

According to 1998 census economically active population to the total population also termed as crude activity or participation rate constituted about 4.4 percent out of the total women population of 14342 thousand (Table-2). In 1972 and 1981 censuses it was low being 1.47 and 4.12 percent respectively. As far as rural crude activity rate was concerned, it increased from 1.75 percent in 1972 to 6.72 percent in 1981. In 1998 it decreased to 6.0 percent. It is mainly due to increase in urban crude activity rate from 1.33 percent in 1981 to 2.7 percent in 1998. This also indicates that with increasing urbanization women activity rate in urban areas is also increasing. As far as the women refined activity rate is concerned it recorded an increasing trend in total, rural and urban in all the three censuses (1972, 1981, and 1998). In rural areas the rate increased more (from 2.74% to 10.10%) between 1972 and 1981 censuses while, in urban areas the rate increased more between 1981 and 1998 censuses (from 1.91 percent to 3.9 percent). Due to more unemployment in rural areas and also in search of better jobs most of the families are migrating to urban areas.

Table – 2

Percentage of Crude Activity Rates (CAR) and By Refined Activity Rates (RAR) by Sex, Rural and Urban in Sindh

Area/Years	Crude Activity Rates (CAR)			Refined Activity Rates (RAR)		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
<u>1972</u>						
Total	28.44	26.97	1.47	42.72	40.52	2.20
Rural	31.29	29.54	1.75	48.94	46.19	2.74
Urban	25.57	24.40	1.18	36.94	35.24	1.70
<u>1981</u>						
Total	31.23	27.11	4.12	45.90	39.85	6.05
Rural	37.18	30.47	6.72	55.88	45.78	10.10
Urban	24.85	23.52	1.33	35.68	33.77	1.91
<u>1998</u>						
Total	25.4	44.4	4.4	39.1	67.0	6.9
Rural	26.9	45.6	6.0	44.5	73.9	10.2
Urban	23.8	43.0	2.7	33.9	60.4	3.9

- Source:
1. 1972, 1981 and 1998 Census Report of Sindh Province, Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan.
  2. 1973-74, Labor Force Survey, Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan.

## 2.3 Women Specific Activity Rate In Sindh

Table 3 and 4 presents a comparative picture of age specific activity rates for Sindh by sex, rural and urban for 1981 and 1998 population censuses. The total female age

specific participation rate shows a gradual increase from the lowest of 2.17 percent for age group 10-14 to the maximum level of 3.82 for the age group 25-29 and then start declining with advancement in age in 1981. In 1998 the female specific participation rates show a gradual increase from the lowest level of 0.56 percent for age group 10-14 to the maximum level of 3.25 percent for age group 35-39 and then start declining with advancement in age. Nevertheless, 2.12 percent women in 1981 and 1.19 percent women in 1998 in the age group 60 and above are shown active reflecting the need for work even at this age in the absence of any old-age financial support programmes. In 1981 the maximum female participation in rural areas (3.29 percent) was experienced by very young (10-14). On the other hand, the profile of urban female participation registered a peak, 4.91 percent at the age group of 30-34. In 1998 the maximum female participation in rural areas (1.58 percent) was experienced by the prime age group of 25-29. On the other hand the profile of urban female participation registered a peak, 4.92 percent in the age group of 35-39. In 1981 the lowest rural female activity rate (1.10 percent) was recorded in the age group of 60-64, while lowest urban rate (0.84 percent) was recorded by the age group 10-14. In 1998 the lowest rural female specific activity rate was 0.73 percent in the age group of 10-14, while in urban the lowest rate is 0.41 percent in the same age group. The percentage of total age specific activity rates for females is low in 1998 (except age group 35-39 and 45-49) as compared to 1981. In the age group of 35-39, it is 3.25 percent as compared to 3.11 percent in 1981.

Similarly in the age group of 45-49, it is 2.86 percent as compared to 2.85 percent in 1981. The maximum percentages of specific activity rates for females are found between the age group of 20-54 in both census 1981 and 1998. It is 22.46 percent in 1981 and 19.20 percent in 1998. The highest specific activity rates for females are 3.82 percent in 1981 for the age group of 25-29 while in 1998 the highest percentage (3.25 percent) is recorded in the age group of 35-39. (Organization Government of Pakistan)

This high percentage of females may be only because women health are good in these ages and also they want to help their husband in wage earning for good future of their children. As far as the specific activity rates for rural and urban women are concerned it decreased for rural areas while in urban areas it increased in some age groups in 1998 as compared to 1981. It is somewhat alarming question because with the passage of time instead of increasing, the activity rates of women decreased. Data from both the table (Table -3 and 4) indicates that women who need to work and who do enter the labor force continue working a good part of their lives. 73.94 percent married women of the age group 15-39 worked in 1981 (Population Census of Sindh). Their activity rates are 14.93 percent. In 1998 the activity rates are 12.32 percent for 66.88 percent of married women (Sindh Population Census). This clearly indicates that married women work more in their life because they want to see good future of their children. Both the table also indicates that the specific activity rates for urban women are high as compared to rural women in both the censuses (1981 and 1998). This may be because our country is basically an agricultural country. In agriculture nearly all the activities (ploughing, leveling, irrigation, cultivation, fertilizing,



picking, spraying etc.) are laborious and women can not do such hard work; though they work in some of the activities mentioned above.

Table – 3  
Percentage of Specific Activity Rates (SAR) by Sex, Rural and Urban in Sindh, 1981

Age Groups (Years)	Total			Rural			Urban		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
10–14	19.28	33.69	2.17	29.77	51.06	3.29	6.07	10.74	0.84
15–19	31.28	54.76	2.35	44.07	74.77	2.68	19.49	34.75	1.80
20–24	39.56	70.92	3.39	43.96	82.61	2.47	35.05	59.72	4.41
25–29	47.86	84.98	3.82	49.93	91.12	2.46	45.39	77.82	5.51
30–34	49.05	88.72	3.26	48.91	92.50	2.05	49.22	84.33	4.91
35–39	49.59	92.05	3.11	49.85	94.93	1.90	49.28	88.63	4.65
40–44	48.95	92.25	3.02	47.62	94.72	2.06	50.61	89.46	4.36
45–49	51.06	93.11	2.85	49.57	95.82	2.05	53.01	89.96	4.05
50–54	51.98	90.35	2.32	52.23	94.45	3.06	51.64	85.06	4.19
55–59	50.15	88.94	2.21	49.98	94.55	1.31	50.39	81.80	3.77
60–64	38.49	57.42	1.92	44.47	79.41	1.10	35.41	52.11	2.16
60 years and above	42.76	73.98	2.12	47.20	83.34	1.68	34.97	58.18	2.93

- Source:
1. 1981 Census Report of Sindh Province, Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan.
  2. Labor Force Survey, 1982-83, Federal Bureau of Statistics, Government of Pakistan.

Table – 4

Percentage of Specific Activity Rates (SAR) By Sex, Rural and Urban in Sindh, 1998

Age Groups (Years)	Total			Rural			Urban		
	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female	Both Sexes	Male	Female
10–14	3.68	6.27	0.56	4.97	8.21	0.73	2.40	4.20	0.41
15–19	13.43	24.76	1.26	15.26	28.53	1.23	11.81	21.49	1.28
20–24	26.13	49.17	2.11	26.27	52.76	1.33	25.99	46.08	2.92
25–29	36.00	64.88	2.78	34.39	65.44	1.58	37.57	64.81	4.03
30–34	40.96	72.07	2.92	30.45	70.25	1.42	43.17	73.62	4.30
35–39	41.87	74.72	3.25	38.94	72.79	1.36	44.33	76.26	4.92
40–44	39.98	74.23	2.91	36.02	71.14	1.45	43.55	76.78	4.35
45–49	41.35	74.14	2.86	38.18	71.39	1.44	44.39	76.63	4.31
50–54	38.22	68.33	2.37	36.99	67.42	1.39	39.43	69.19	3.34
55–59	35.56	62.92	1.71	35.71	64.60	0.96	35.42	61.40	2.42
60–64	28.51	51.66	1.48	31.46	56.92	1.44	25.23	45.74	1.53
60 years and above	23.67	37.18	1.19	23.69	43.63	1.15	16.64	29.73	1.25

Source: 1998 Provincial Census Report of Sindh, Population Census

### 3. COMPARISION

#### 3.1 Employed Women Population by Industry and Rural/Urban Areas, 1981 and 1998

It is evident from Table 2 and 3 that the female workers always constituted a small proportion of the female population. Another lamentable point in case of women is that the bulk of them are employed in primary sector and that too in the low paid jobs, 1.18 percent of women workers in 1981 (Table- 5) and 36.44 percent in 1998 were engaged in service sector (Table- 6). As many as 1.13 percent in 1981 and 35.22 percent in 1998 were employed as personal servant. 1.18 percent in 1981 and 29.82 percent in 1998 were employed as agricultural laborers against the respective figure of 51.62 percent and 39.39 percent in the case of male workers. In the secondary and

tertiary sector, (as shown in the tables) the female participation as workers is much less as compared to males.

Table – 5

Working Population by Industry, Sex and Rural/Urban Areas: 1981

(Percentage)

Industry Group	All Areas		Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing	51.62	1.18	80.42	1.85	5.93	0.12
2. Mining and quarrying	0.31	0.00	0.36	0.00	0.23	0.01
A) Sub-Total: Primary Sector	51.93	1.18	80.78	1.85	6.16	0.13
1. Manufacturing	7.52	0.33	1.71	0.12	16.74	0.66
2. Electricity, gas and water	0.58	0.01	0.22	0.00	1.15	0.02
3. Construction	3.45	0.07	1.75	0.02	6.15	0.14
B) Sub-Total: Secondary Sector	11.55	0.41	3.68	0.14	24.04	0.82
1. Finance, insurance, real estate and business services	1.00	0.04	0.14	–	2.38	0.10
2. Community, social and personal services	11.10	1.13	5.07	0.32	20.68	2.43
C) Sub-Total: Service Sector	12.10	1.17	5.21	0.32	23.06	2.53
1. Wholesale and retail trade, restaurants & hotels	9.86	0.23	3.38	0.12	20.12	0.39
2. Transport, storage & communications	4.38	0.08	1.23	0.01	9.39	0.18
3. Activities not adequately defined	6.90	0.20	3.20	0.07	12.78	0.41

D) Sub-Total: Tertiary Sector	21.14	0.51	7.81	0.20	42.29	0.98
TOTAL WORKING POPULATION	4926441	166561	3044433	78909	1882008	87652
TOTAL POPULATION	9998000	9031000	4432000	3810000	5566000	5221000

Note: Due to rounding the figures may not add up to exactly 100.

Source: 1981 Census Report of Sindh Province, Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan.

Table – 6  
Working Population by Industry, Sex and Rural/Urban Areas: 1998

(Percentage)

Industry Group	All Areas		Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing	39.39	29.82	71.09	66.32	7.65	3.14
2. Mining and quarrying	0.12	0.05	0.14	0.06	0.09	0.05
A) Sub-Total: Primary Sector	39.51	29.87	71.23	66.38	7.74	3.19
1. Manufacturing	8.70	13.74	1.60	11.29	15.81	15.52
2. Electricity, gas and water	0.46	0.14	0.55	0.12	0.37	0.16
3. Construction	11.96	6.00	8.50	4.30	15.42	7.24
B) Sub-Total: Secondary Sector	21.12	19.88	10.65	15.71	31.60	22.92
1. Finance, insurance, real estate and business services	2.10	1.22	0.34	0.11	3.87	2.03
2. Community, social and personal services	14.41	35.22	7.00	10.75	21.83	53.11

C) Sub-Total: Service Sector	16.51	36.44	7.34	10.86	25.70	55.14
1. Wholesale and retail trade, restaurants & hotels	10.21	4.69	3.21	1.43	17.22	7.07
2. Transport, storage & communications	3.74	1.89	1.37	0.35	6.12	3.02
3. Activities not adequately defined	8.90	7.23	6.19	5.26	11.62	8.68
D) Sub-Total: Tertiary Sector	22.85	13.81	10.77	7.04	34.96	18.77
TOTAL WORKING POPULATION	5646285	278357	2825308	117539	2820977	160818
TOTAL POPULATION	16098000	14342000	8193000	7407000	7904000	6935000

Note: Due to rounding the figures may not add up to exactly 100.

Source: 1998 Provincial Census Report of Sindh, Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan.

In rural areas most of the female employed population is engaged in “agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing” which accounts for about 1.85 percent and 66.32 percent in 1981 and 1998 respectively. In 1998 the less rural female workers are engaged in mining and quarrying, (0.06 percent) while in 1981 no female workers are engaged in mining and quarrying. In urban areas most of the female workers are engaged in community, social and personal services. 2.43 percent in 1981 and 53.11 percent in 1998.

Generally speaking women have been employed in occupations involving less skill or in those for which they have special attitudes. Most of the women workers are illiterate which restricts their entry into the employment market. Even among the employed main workers as many as 94.78 percent and 87.77 percent of females were illiterate in rural and 57.76 percent and 43.34 percent in urban areas in 1981 and 1998 population census respectively. Those with matric and above qualifications constituted 13.10 percent and 17.77 percent in rural areas and 24.23 percent and 38.90 percent in urban areas against respective figures of 16.84 percent and 28.96 percent in rural areas and 29.13 percent and 43.63 percent in urban areas for males in 1981 and 1998 population census respectively. Pakistan society cared little for the education of girls and generally placed women in an inferior position. This low level of literacy combined with other physical, social, psychological and cultural barriers compels

them to seek their employment in the low paid primary sector. Here, in comparison to the male workers, their wage level is also lower even for the similar jobs.

### **3.2 Comparison Between 1981 And 1998 Population Census**

The percentage of female working population in all industry group for all areas increased in 1998 as compared to 1981. The highest percentage was recorded for community, social and personal services, (from 1.13 percent to 35.22 percent) followed by agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing, (from 1.18 percent to 29.82 percent) and manufacturing (from 0.33 percent to 13.74 percent). In rural areas the percentage of female working population in agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing increased from 1.85 percent in 1981 to 66.32 percent in 1998, followed by manufacturing (from 0.12 percent to 11.29 percent) and community, social and personal services (from 0.32 percent to 10.75 percent). The urban female working population recorded its highest percentage (53.11 percent) in community, social and personal services in 1998, being 2.43 percent in 1981. The second and third highest percentage of working population was recorded in manufacturing and construction (increased from 0.66 percent and 0.14 percent in 1981 to 15.52 percent and 7.24 percent in 1998). Due to low literacy rate in rural areas women working populations are mostly in agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing and manufacturing, while due to high literacy rate in urban areas the working populations are mostly in community, social and personal services, manufacturing, construction, restaurants and hotels. Table 5 and 6 clearly indicates that a majority of urban working women are engaged in their personal services.

### **3.3 Women Employed Population by Occupation**

According to 1981 population census a majority of female workers were engaged in the occupation of agriculture and related activities (1.05 percent), followed by production and related workers, transport equipment operators and laborers (0.70 percent), professional and technical work (0.68 percent), and in the occupation not classified (0.34 percent) (Table 7 and 8). As for as 1998 population census is concerned maximum number of the female workers are engaged in the occupation of professional and technical works (27.55 percent), followed by agriculture related activities (25.34 percent), elementary occupations (22.53 percent) and production and related workers, transport equipment operations and laborers (10.43 percent). In 1998 though women's participation increased but majority of the women are engaged in professional and technical occupations (27.55 percent). Such an increase is a welcome change in the occupational structure. A majority of all professional women in Sindh are teachers at various levels or nurses and midwives (including dais, traditional midwives). In rural areas agriculture and related activities (livestock keeping) are the major occupations for females in 1981 and 1998. In 1998 female percentage in agricultural labor force increased. In 1998 the percentage of professional and technical occupation increased as compared to 1981. This may be due to the increase in the percentage of women teachers. In urban areas the percentage of women in professional and technical occupations are high in both the

census (1981 and 1998). In 1998 the percentage increased too much (from 1.39 percent in 1981 to 40.99 percent in 1998). This increase is a welcome change. A majority of all professional women in Sindh (mostly in Karachi) are teachers at various levels, office jobs mainly in Pharmaceutical factories, Banks, Insurance companies, factories and nurses and midwives (including dais, traditional midwives). The services group seems to be one of the three most important groups employing women in urban areas. In the production sector the predominance of women in the tailoring and spinning or weaving occupations is noteworthy. Recent industrial growth in Sindh shows that enterprises such as the production of ready-made garments and rugs and carpets have received a considerable boost. These industries have traditionally employed many females and continue to do so. One reason for the possible increase in the percentage of production is related to the flexibility that such work probably provides in terms of the place of work. Women engaged in weaving and tailoring shows that almost all of the women in these occupations work at home in both rural and urban areas. Thus, due to lack of education, (especially in rural areas) training and technological knowledge, the women workers, even in the field of industry and teaching have got the lower level of jobs, which are low paid.

Table – 7

Employed Population by Occupation, Sex and Rural/Urban Areas: 1981

(Percentage)

Occupation Group	All Areas		Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Professional, technical & related workers	3.93	0.68	2.98	0.22	5.38	1.39
2. Administrative and managerial workers	2.81	0.06	2.54	0.04	3.23	0.10
3. Clerical & related workers	3.50	0.16	1.00	0.04	7.29	0.34
4. Service workers and sales worker	11.92	0.43	4.34	0.10	23.43	0.92
5. Agricultural, animal husbandry and forestry workers, fisherman and hunters	46.93	1.05	74.61	1.67	4.94	0.11
6. Production and related workers, transport equipment operators and laborers	21.53	0.70	9.69	0.43	39.49	1.10
7. Workers not classified by occupation	5.97	0.32	2.18	0.16	11.72	0.56

Note: Due to rounding the figures may not add up to exactly 100.

Source: 1981 Census Report of Sindh Province, Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan.

Table – 8

Employed Population by Occupation, Sex and Rural/Urban Areas: 1998

(Percentage)

Occupation Group	All Areas		Rural		Urban	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
1. Legislators, Senior Officials and Managers	0.57	0.67	0.26	0.26	0.87	0.96
2. Professionals, Technicians and Associate Professionals	8.09	27.55	3.69	9.15	12.50	40.99
3. Clerical and Related Workers	2.46	3.96	0.62	0.67	4.30	6.36
4. Service Workers and Shop and Market Sales Workers	11.37	8.88	4.18	1.83	18.57	14.02
5. Skilled Agricultural and Fishery Workers	35.31	25.34	65.90	57.44	4.67	1.88
6. Production and Related Workers, Transport Equipment Operators and Laborers	7.49	10.43	2.08	11.03	12.92	9.98
7. Elementary Occupations	32.89	22.53	23.02	19.58	42.78	24.68
8. Workers not classified by occupation	1.82	0.66	0.25	0.02	3.39	1.12

Note: Due to rounding the figures may not add up to exactly 100.

Source: 1998 Provincial Census Report of Sindh, Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan.

### 3.4 Women Employment by Employment Status and Rural/Urban Areas, 1981, 1998

The percentage of the working population in 1998 increased in all the employment status as compared to 1981 (Table 9). Among the employed population the percentage of employee increased to a maximum of 40.55 percent in all areas in 1998



as compared to 1981. The break-up of this increase is government employee 20.36 percent, autonomous employee 2.56 percent and private employee 17.63 percent. It means that the maximum increase is in government employee, followed by private employee.

Table – 9

Female Employment by Employment Status and Rural/Urban Areas Sindh 1981, 1998

(Percentage)

Status	1981			1998		
	All Areas	Rural	Urban	All Areas	Rural	Urban
1. All Groups	3.27	2.52	4.44	100.00	100.00	100.00
2. Self Employed	1.02	1.10	0.88	24.29	34.92	16.52
3. Employee	1.55	0.41	3.34	40.55 <sup>a</sup>	10.43 <sup>b</sup>	62.56 <sup>c</sup>
4. Employer	0.03	0.03	0.04	1.63	0.99	2.09
5. Unpaid Family Helper	0.67	0.98	0.18	33.54	53.66	18.83

Source: Provincial Census Report of Sindh, 1981 and 1998, Population Census Organization, Government of Pakistan.

Note: a Government: 20.36, Autonomous Body: 2.56,  
Private: 17.63  
b Government: 6.34, Autonomous Body: 0.86,  
Private: 3.23  
c Government: 30.61, Autonomous Body: 3.80,  
Private: 28.15

This increase in the women employment is mainly due to job increase in banks, teaching institutions, pharmaceutical industries, government and private offices, ready-made garments industries, carpet making and financial institutions. After employee, the maximum increase is recorded in the percentage of self employed (24.29 percent) women in 1998. These self-employed women are mainly in tailoring and sewing and knitting in rural areas and have their own schools, ready-made garment factory and beauty parlors in urban areas. The percentage of autonomous employee and employer are quiet negligible. One thing which is alarming is that the percentage of unpaid family helper has increased to 33.54 percent in 1998, as compared to 0.67 percent in 1981. This increase in the percentage is more pronounced in rural areas (53.66 percent) as compared to urban areas (18.83). In rural areas the women employees are less as compared to self employed. It is mainly because in rural areas the women are mostly illiterate and also job getting is very difficult. Our cultural constraint is also the major factor. In urban areas it is just opposite mainly

due to high literacy rate of women. The women are mostly engaged in government and private jobs. They also have their own small business as self employed women. The percentages of employer in rural and urban areas are negligible.

#### **4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

Why too little attention has been given by researchers or planners in Pakistan (especially in Sindh) to women and the role they play in society. Women's role in development is not a simple one; it relates to a complete range of socio-economic activities. Women are not only users of basic services, but are either under-employed or over-worked in their sphere of activities; they also represent a productive potential which is not being tapped.

With the objective of ensuring increased participation of women, clear-cut guidelines about integrating women in the development process and defining their roles are still lacking (especially in Sindh Province). The present study is a step in the direction of bridging the gap of information about female labor force participation of Sindh in different, activity rates, industry group, occupation group and employment status of 1981 and 1998 Population Census in Sindh.

The population of women in Sindh is increasing at a higher rate than that of male population except for the year 1998, in which the women population decreased marginally. The table also indicates that the population of women increased from 44.21 percent in 1972 to 47.12 percent in 1998, which clearly indicates that with increasing urbanization the women population in urban areas is also increasing.

Crude activity rates in 1998 is 4.4 percent out of the total women population of 14342 thousand. In 1972 and 1981 census it was low being 1.47 and 4.12 percent respectively. As for as rural crude activity rate was concerned, it increased from 1.75 percent in 1972 to 6.72 percent in 1981. In 1998 it decreased to 6.0 percent. It is mainly due to increase in urban crude activity rate from 1.33 percent in 1981 to 2.7 percent in 1998. This also indicates that with increasing urbanization, women crude activity rate in urban areas is also increasing.

Women refined activity rate recorded an increasing trend in total, rural and urban areas in 1972, 1981 and 1998 census. Due to more unemployment in rural areas and also in search of better jobs most of the families are migrating to urban areas.

Women age specific activity rates for urban women are high as compared to rural women in both the census (1981 and 1998). This may be because our country is basically an agricultural country. In agriculture nearly all the activities (ploughing, leveling, irrigation, cultivation, fertilizing, picking, spraying etc.) are laborious and women can not do such hard work. Though some females work in some of the activities mentioned above. The highest specific activity rates for females are recorded in the age group of 25-29 and 35-39 in 1981 and 1998 census. This high percentage of females may be only because their healths are good in these ages and

also they want to help their husband in wage earning for good future of their children. Women in the age group of 60 years and above are shown active reflecting the need for work even at this age in the absence of any old-age financial support programmes.

The percentage of female working population in all industry group for all areas increased in 1998 as compared to 1981. The highest percentage was recorded for community, social and personal services followed by agriculture, forestry, fishing and manufacturing. In rural areas percentage of female working population in agriculture, forestry increased in 1998 as compared to 1981, followed by manufacturing, community and social and personal services. The urban female working population recorded its highest percentage in community, social and personal services in 1998 as compared to 1981. Manufacturing recorded second and construction recorded third highest percentage of women working population. Due to low literacy rate in rural areas women working population are mostly in agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing and manufacturing, while due to high literacy rate in urban areas the working populations are mostly in community, social and personal services, manufacturing, construction, restaurants and hotels. In 1981 and 1998 population census a majority of urban working women are engaged in their personal services.

In 1981 population census a majority of female workers are engaged in the occupation of agriculture and related activities, while in 1998 they are mostly engaged in the occupation of professional and technical works. In rural areas agriculture and related activities (livestock keeping) are the major occupations for females in 1981 and 1998. In 1998 female percentage in rural agricultural labor force increased. In 1998 the percentages of urban women in professional and technical occupations increased and were high as compared to 1981. This increase is a welcome change. A majority of professional women in Sindh (mostly in Karachi) are, teachers at various levels, office workers, in pharmaceutical factories, banks, insurance companies, factories and nurses and midwives (including dais, traditional and wives). The services group seems to be one of the three most important groups employing women in urban areas. In the production sector the predominance of women in the tailoring and spinning or weaving occupations are noteworthy. Recent industrial growth in Sindh shows that enterprises such as production of ready-made garments and rugs and carpets have received a considerable boost. These industries have traditionally employed many females and continue to do so. One reason for the possible increase in the percentage of production is related to the flexibility that such work probably provides (in terms of the) place of work. Women engaged in weaving and tailoring shows that almost all of the women in these occupations work at home in both rural and urban areas. This is due to lack of education (especially in rural areas), training and technological knowledge, the women workers even in the field of industry and teaching have got the lower level of jobs, which are low paid.

The percentage of working population in 1998 increased in all the employment status as compared to 1981. Among the employed population the percentage of employees increased more in 1998 as compared to 1981. The maximum increase is in government employee, followed by private employee. This increase in the women

employment is mainly due to increase, in banks job, teaching institution, pharmaceutical industries, government and private offices, ready-made garments industries, financial institutions and carpet making in urban areas. After employee, the maximum increase is recorded in the percentage of self employed women in both the census. These self employed women are mostly in tailoring and sewing and knitting in rural areas and having their own schools, ready-made garment factory and beauty parlors etc. in urban areas. The percentage of autonomous employee and employer are quiet negligible. In rural areas the women employees are less as compared to self employed. It is mainly because in rural areas the women are mostly illiterate and also job getting is very difficult. Our cultural constraint is also the major factor. In urban areas it is just opposite mainly due to high literacy rate of women.

In conclusion, it can be said that though the percentage of women labor force in different, activities, industry groups, occupation groups and employment status has mostly increased in 1998 as compared to 1981, but this increase is still very low. Being 47 percent of the population of Sindh, women percentages in different type of labor force are very low. In developed countries the male and female labor force participates equally in different activities and occupations.

## **5. THE CONDITION OF WOMEN LABOR FORCE: HOW TO AMELIORATE?**

The available evidence shows that the WOMEN'S participation in the total labor force (rural and urban) is very low and a vast majority of them are engaged in agricultural operations. Here also they are not the owner cultivators but the casual laborers. Their employment is quite irregular and they suffer from maximum insecurity in employment. The backward social culture has contributed to retaining women's work status at a low level. Hence, the policies of the government must recognize the actual role of the women workforce and specially of the rural women. More jobs must be created for women both in rural and urban areas. The main challenge before the policy makers is to reach the neediest women with employment and related services such as child care and minimum health facilities. The main potential for the women labor absorption in Sindh is agriculture and allied occupations such as food-grains processing, dairy, poultry and fishery as well as forestry including collection and sale of forest products and the development of these occupations must get due preferences. Sewing, knitting, carpet making and small scale industries may provide more gainful job opportunities to the women workers and, therefore, their development should get a preferential treatment with a policy of providing more employment opportunities to the Sindhi women workers.

Regularity of employment is also essential condition for ameliorating the economic condition of women workers. In order to give them income stability, regularity of employment must be increased.

Again, the nature of jobs for women workers can be changed mainly with their education combined with training programmes in activities like sewing, embroidery,

knitting, carpet making and technical knowledge. For a rational distribution of women labor in economic activity, it is desirable to give preference to women for training in those trades and occupations for which they have special aptitudes. The pace of vocational training programmes should be further accelerated for the purpose. The spread of education and training facilities will improve upon their employability in other industries where technological changes have necessitated their retrenchment.

In order to increase the supply elasticity of female workers apart from making special efforts to improve their skills and qualifications, their mobility both – geographic and occupational – should be facilitated. Better and efficient transport network can go a long way in this regard.

The working conditions of women workers should also be improved. They are the weaker section of the society and they must get incentives and protections. Government enactments must be rigorously implemented in the case of women workers. Since rural women constitute a substantial share of female workforce, they should be 'target-group' for all programmes undertaken by the government. Women's organizations can also play an important role in awakening the women workforce for changing their attitude towards work, earning and standard of living.

Finally, we can say that women work force must be placed on the equal footing with men in all spheres of activity and the traditional view of looking at women as 'dependents' must be changed.

And finally, we can say that female work participation is not a highly valued activity in Sindh. While participation in the professional category is on the increase and while more women are entering non-traditional occupations there are still many constraints on female work participation. One of the most important constraints in Sindh is observance of Purdah. Participation is significantly lower among women who observe purdah.

There are signs of change, however, symbolized by an increased participation by young village girls in activities such as carpet weaving. Research should be undertaken on issues relating to the impact of women's participation in economic activity. The most relevant agencies to undertake such theoretical and empirical research are the Manpower and Overseas Pakistani Division and the Women's Division which particularly, has a research section to undertake research on women's issues.

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