

A Sociological Study of Factory Working Women: A Case Study of Faisalabad City

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ABSTRACT

Men and women are two essential parts of society. A society or nation cannot progress where one of them is inactive. Working women are most important for the family and national development. In the present study, working women are those who work in factories. There is need to change the attitude of people towards factory working women. Women encouragement is essential for the economic uplift. A sample of 120 respondents was selected from the two randomly selected textile factories of Faisalabad. Data were collected with the help of well-designed interview schedule.

Key Words: Working women; Textile; Industry

INTRODUCTION

Working women are most important for family and national development. In Pakistan inspite of limited education and gender biases women have been using their skills to create merchandise and to improve economic condition. According to labour force survey of Pakistan (2004), in Pakistan there is wide variation between male and female labour force participation rates. It is 37.13% for males compared to only 8.10% for females, resulting in very low overall participation rate compared to other countries. In Pakistan, industry is another sector where a lot of women work and is the second highest percentage of women workers.

The poor women are working for 10 to 14 h a day getting less than that of men. They have to face unfair ratio of work, inadequate economic incentives. It is also argued that many employers prefer to employ women because they do not unionize and can be paid less. So, the majority of women are engaged in low-paid economic activities. Employing women is the key to generate profit for the employers (Brdhain, 1988). The need of time is to change the attitude of people towards working women. The women come in textile industries for work not for enjoyment. Their economic needs compel them to do so. But our society does not like them. They are not treated as respected citizen. They have to face an unfavorable attitude of their family members on one side and on the other exploited by their owners and colleagues.

This paper describes the socio-economic characteristics of factory working women and their level of satisfaction with their jobs and economy. It also describes the status of factory working women in their families and society and what are the problems they have to face in their occupational and family life.

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted in textile factories of Faisalabad City. A sample of 120 respondents was selected proportionately through random sampling techniques from two randomly selected factories of Faisalabad City. The data was collected with the help well-designed interview schedule, which was analyzed through statistical analysis to draw the conclusion and to formulate suggestions for improvement of the working conditions for working women.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of respondents with regard to their age, marital status, education and income has been presented in Table I. Only 5.8% of the respondents were engaged in administration sector, while 29.2% of the respondents belonged to clipping section. 14.1% of the respondents were final checkers and 27.5% of the respondents were engaged in packing work. While 17.5% respondents were engaged in sewing and 5.8% of the respondents were engaged in other activities as supervision and security incharge. Majority of the respondents (67.5%) of the respondents worked to fulfill economic needs while 7.5% of the respondents worked to improve living standard. 21.6% of the respondents worked to fulfill economic needs and prepare dowry. Only 3.4% of the respondents worked to spend time. It is noted that majority of the respondents are working to fulfill economic needs so, it is resulted that major factor is poverty which compel the women to work in textile industry.

Distribution of respondents with regard to their level of satisfaction with their job has been presented in table II. It can be conclude that majority of the respondents were not satisfied with their salary and job. It was also found 43.3% of

Table I. Distribution of respondents with regard to their age, marital status, education and income

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19-22	39	32.5
23-26	45	37.5
27-30	14	11.7
31-34	2	1.7
35+	20	16.6
Total	120	100
Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Married	27	22.5
Unmarried	88	73.3
Widow	5	4.2
Total	120	100
Year of Schooling	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	32	26.7
Primary	26	21.7
Middle	13	10.8
Matric	24	20.0
F.A. and above	25	20.8
Total	120	100
Monthly income	Frequency	Percentage
1500 – 2500	39	32.5
2600 - 3500	54	45.0
3600 – 4500	17	14.2
4600 and above	10	8.3
Total	120	100

Table II. Distribution of respondents according to the level of satisfaction from their salary and jobs

Level of satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
Not at all	48	40.0
To great extent	23	19.2
To some extent	49	40.8
Total	120	100

the respondents were agreed that their salaries were according to their experience and qualification. While more 56.7% of the respondents reported that their salaries were not according to their qualification and experience. Half of the respondents 50.8% of the respondents were doing jobs to support their families as to fulfill the needs of their family members while 4.2% of the respondents spent major part of their income on themselves and 21.7% of the respondents spent their one part of their income in prepare dowry and some income spent their families while 23.3% of the respondents reported they spent their income on children education and to fulfill needs of their family members.

Data revealed that 4.1% of the respondents facing their family religious imposition by their family members, while 12.2% of the respondents felt insecurity among males. 20.4% of the respondents had to face negative attitude of people around them. 4.1% of the respondents were facing the problems in looking after children. 25.5% of the respondents were facing the problem of the house close, 6.1% of the respondents were facing the problems of serve to in-laws. 5.2% of the respondents were facing the

problems to look after themselves. 10.2% of the respondents were facing the problems in meeting with relatives, while 12.2% of the respondents were facing the problems to attend the ceremonies. It was found 15% of the respondents considered the status of the women as superior to male, while 15.8% of the respondents answered that the status of women in the society is inferior to male. According to 69.2% of the respondents, women are equal to male. Majority of the respondents 90.0% of the respondents were satisfied with the working conditions while 10% of the respondents were not satisfied with the working conditions.

The value of chi-square shows significant relationship between the education of the respondents and their level of satisfaction with job. So the hypothesis “Lower the level of education of the respondents higher will be their level of satisfaction with their job” is accepted.

The value of chi-square shows non-significant relationship between the present salary of the respondents and their satisfaction with the working conditions. So the hypothesis “Higher the present salary of the respondents higher they will be satisfied with the working conditions” is rejected.

CONCLUSIONS

Single and unmarried women get preference for job in factories. Mostly the women were working in factories to fulfill economic needs. Those who were married reported that the occupations of the respondent’s husbands were less paid and semi-skilled. Some of the respondents said that their husbands were edicted. The major problem of the married women was to look after children and home. Most of the single girls reported the problems of feeling insecurity among males and negative attitude of the people. A large

Table III. Association between the present salary of the respondents and their satisfaction with the working conditions

Present Salary	Satisfaction with the working conditions		
	Yes	No	Total
1500-2900	37 94.9%	2 5.1%	39 32.5%
3000-44s00	58 85.3%	10 14.7%	68 56.7%
4500 & above	13 12.0%	—	13 10.8
Total	108 90.0%	12 10.0%	120 100.0%

$\chi^2 = 4.146$ D.F = 2 Significance = .126 (Non-Significant)

Table IV. Association between the education of the respondents and their level satisfaction with their jobs

Education	Level of satisfaction with job			
	Not at all	To great extent	To some extent	Total
Illiterate	6 18.8%	11 34.4%	15 46.9%	32 26.7%
Primary	8 30.8%	3 11.5%	15 57.7%	26 21.7%
Middle+Matric	18 48.7%	6 16.2%	13 35.1%	37 30.8%
F.A and above	15 60.0%	3 12.0%	7 28.0%	25 20.8
Total	47 39.2%	23 19.2%	50 41.7%	120 100.0%

$\chi^2 = 18.014$ D.F = 6s Significance = .055 (Significant)

number of the respondents engaged in low paid activities in the factories. The attitude of the owners and colleagues was good. However the attitude of the relatives and some other society members, especially in-laws was not good. Most of the workingwomen were educated, which indicates that the trend has changed and educated women want to work outside to share the economic burden of the family. Taking into account all the facts it can be concluded that the attitude of the people towards working women is changing. The males want that the females get education and do jobs but working in factories/industries is still considered irrespective.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Involvement of women in economic activities should be encouraged by the relatives and society.
2. Salaries should be increased and facilities of pension should be provided to working women. Salaries also must be paid on right time.

3. Working hours should be short for women and overtime is not necessary.

4. Considering the interest of women in economic activities, Government should provide them such opportunities at their own door to improve their economic conditions.

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