

Women's Employment Discrimination: A Gender based Deterrence in Industrial Sector Mingora (Swat), Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to find out the role of gender as a structural barrier for women participation in industrial sector, Mingora, Pakistan. The authors were keenly interested to unveil the contribution of gender role perception for women work outside home in the study area through the lens of liberal feminism in pakhtun society. A sample of 192 out of 380 respondents was selected randomly from the concerned population. The association between independent variable (gender based deterrence) and dependent variable (women's employment) was established through the application of a chi square test. The dependent variable was indexed and recoded for a cross tabulation with the independent variable. A significant relation ($p = 0.002$) was identified between women are paid less in industry as compared to males. A highly significant ($p = 0.000$) association was found with gender wise segregation in the targeted industries and women were facing seclusion from top positions. The male's decision making regarding female's work were also found significant ($p = 0.002$) in affecting their access to employment opportunities in the study area. Patriarchal form of dwellings was also found highly significant ($p = 0.000$) in association with women's employment, either to join or leave a job decisions rest with males. Changing attitudes of the masses, government policies of equal remuneration, equal employment and educational opportunities for both males and females irrespective of their gender were a few study recommendations of the study.

KEYWORDS: Gender, Deterrence, Employment, Segregation, Decision making, Patriarchal structure, Gender disparity.

1. INTRODUCTION

Women around the world potentially experience oppression based on gender. They are oppressed by different intersections of other arrangements of social inequality. Intersectionality theory argue, that intersection itself in society produces experiences of oppression in society, for instance, says that black women often experience discrimination in employment because they are black women. Numerous studies consider gender as a socially constructed stratification system. Such system produces a gendered based division of labors and organization of society in both public and private spheres. On the one hand, within the public sphere of education, work, and politics women are restricted through discrimination, marginalization and harassment. While on the other hand in private sphere, they find themselves in a siege of child care and home making services for a second shift infused by the ideology of intensive mothering. Women's ability is ruined in career and professional line by the demands of private sphere (Gardner, 1995; Hochschild, 1997; Waldfogel, 1997; Risman, 2004; Anderson, 2005; McDowell, 2008).

The socio-cultural hurdles in a typical patriarchal society, where male dominance channelize all sphere of women's life like education, jobs, family planning, health care and even marriages have drastically ruined the counterpart. By performing more responsibilities in household matters, the women have lack of free time to participate in outside world, this further creates barriers to paid work and other productive services. The cultural phrases "Chaadar and Chaardiwari" (veil and four walls of the home) limit their mobility, because the outside work has to be done by men not women. Women's earning ability does not mean the relaxation of patriarchal control in society (Khattak, 2002; Ali et al., 2010).

A study on gender based labour division in Pakistan found mobility of women restricted to shopping and markets outside the villages. Social status of women is also differentiated based on their separate identity and social categories. Besides, ethnicity, age, class, caste, marital status, earning position, language and lack of education combine to make huge abstract layers of discrimination. To reduce such gender inequalities and other forms of discrimination, Pakistan has been implementing the Convention on Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) for the last fifteen years. The convention is aimed to provide equal rights in education, health, family planning, reproductive health services and employment opportunities for both

women and men. The capability approach assesses gender inequality intrinsically (like functioning and capabilities), rather than, just the means to achieve them like resources. For effective use of their empowerment, the role of gender relations and socio-cultural practices at both society and household level needs change, which play a vital role in making women empowered and disempowered (Akram, 1996; Ministry of Women Development, 2002; Robeyns, 2003; Kabeer, 2005; SDPI, 2008).

In addition, low female literacy rate is also a contributing factor for deprivation and violence experienced by them. It also affects their participation in the socio-politic-economic activities. They can not avail and compete for available job opportunities in the market. This situation has led to the dependency, in all aspects of life, which in turn ensures male domination in society. Women in such societies face exclusion and seclusion, due to the prevalence of norms based on patriarchy. In Muslim majority countries female have lower levels of economic activity rates relative to non-Muslim majority countries at the same level of economic development (Weeks, 1988; UNDP, 2004; Kazmi, 2005; Isran and Isran 2012).

“Moreover, Gender Equity Index developed by Social Watch, classifies 154 countries (Pakistan is ranked as 107th) and identifies that in very few countries women are provided with similar chances and facilities like men. It was also noted that certain areas were improved, however, in some areas such as the economic and political zones female participation is still too low. less provision of women rights, male dominance, inequality and overlooked presentation of Islamic beliefs further more contributed to the devastating situation of women not only in employment but affected every segment of women lives. It was further noted that from the day of independence several bills and legislative paper work has been done for ensuring equal status to women, however, the lack of intervention of executive bodies and the practical implementation of such laws is still to be observed and practiced. It is also believed that women employment is deterred by such gender influenced practices and legislations were directed to male and female segregation in roles as well as separation in communications. The unofficial female labor market in Pakistan had been arranged along different ways because specific norms of female isolation have led to choices of activities for females while co-work with males was associated with the degradation of status and contributed to less attention as far as marriage for females was concerned” (Kausar, 2006; Jessica, 2009; Awan, 2012).

“Furthermore, females especially the young ones and newly married are most of the times reluctant to get a job outside their home environment as they perceive that it will affect their children education and socialization and because of the child care activities female participation in non-agriculture sector is negligible. Social constraints were harsher for younger females and thereby disturb the time of the supply of their labor. The younger women were less compelled to contribute in the household income if they were married because they had less number of family members and lower number of off-spring. In the same way, due to child-care activities these women have less time for paid-work. In addition to child care activities, there are certain other deterrents such as burden of domestic activities and they mostly worked for the fulfilment of their needs, had gender based remuneration variations, less training and were paid less. Even though, their qualification did not matter as identified that instead of the same qualifications, women were paid less than men besides working for long hours which implies that women were confined into low paying occupations. Women tend to be concentrated in less prestigious and lower paying occupations that are traditionally considered women's jobs. Women are not paid the same wages as men for similar work. Gender differences in work and occupations begin with adolescents' first jobs. These jobs are significantly segregated by sex. Girls work fewer hours per week than boys. Similarly, they earn less per hour than boys. Hourly wages are higher in job types dominated by males (Bose and Rossi, 1983; Greenberger and Steinberg, 1983; Haq, 2000; Kausar, 2006).

“Examples of other gender based discrimination include: disadvantaging women by allocating fewer material resources to them, as was long the case in property settlements in divorce cases; judging men and women's similar actions in different ways, as in criminalizing the behaviour of the female prostitute but not her male client; and assigning men and women to distinct social roles, as in the sex-based classifications of “breadwinner” and “homemaker.” Just as women's work is not recognized or compensated by the market culture, women's injuries are often not recognized or compensated as injuries by the legal culture. The dismissal of women's gender-specific suffering comes in various forms, but the outcome is always the same: women's suffering for one reason or another is outside the scope of legal redress. Thus, women's distinctive gender-specific injuries are now or have in the recent past been variously dismissed as trivial (sexual harassment on the street); consensual (sexual harassment on the job); humorous (non-violent marital rape); participatory, subconsciously wanted, or self-induced (father/daughter incest); natural or biological, and therefore inevitable (childbirth); sporadic, and conceptually continuous with gender-neutral pain (rape, viewed as a crime of violence); deserved or private (domestic violence). Job options for women were limited to certain areas such as agriculture, domestic services and small-scale industries. Women in the rural areas were concentrated mainly in agricultural work and other specific informal zones most prominent of which were certain segments of manufacturing and other home based activities” (Siddiqui et al., 2006; Khan, 2007; Tucker, 2008).

1.1 Theoretical frame work

“Feminist theorist argued that the sociological theories have been written from a male perspective which has meant that women’s experiences have been marginalized and they not only criticized these male-centred theories, but they have also written new theories which place women experience centrally and attempt to explain the divisions between men and women (Marsh & Keating Ed. 2006). They further of the view that feminist theorist often criticized the early sociologist as they were not highlighted the issues of women's subordination. Bryson (2003) is of the view that in the history the most important aspect of women’s subordination was the exclusion from the public debate and the means of written expressions. Marsh & Keating Ed. (2006) state that Durkheim and Weber assumed that it was natural for the women to be in the private sphere of the home and the men should be active in the public sphere and both of the social theorist associated women with nature, biology and emotion and men with reason culture and rationality. However, the researchers based this study on the following feminist theory.”

1.2 Liberal Feminism

“Liberal feminists are of the view that women’s subordination is rooted in formal constraints which prevents the full participation of women in the public sphere and liberal feminists demanded “equal “opportunities and equal participation in the management of the societies (Kameri, 2003). She is of the view that the liberal feminists sought to increase their participation in the political organs, and they fought for greater participation in the education and training. Marsh & Keating (2006) states that liberal feminism has its roots in the liberal traditions of the enlightenment, which stressed the principles of justice, rationality, citizenship, human rights, equality and democracy and the treatment of women in society violates many of these values. They further assert that from the days of Mary Wollstone Craft had published her influential book in 1792, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, liberal feminists have stressed that as rational women should be entitled to full personhood and hence have same legal, political, social and economic rights and opportunities as men. Kameri (2003) is of the view that early women feminist starts its movement to attain the right of voting for women and equal participation of women in the public sphere.”

“Important contributors of the liberal feminism were John Lock, David Hume, Jeremy Bentham, and John Stuart Mill and these feminists were of the view that human beings guided by enlightened self-interest, rationality and free choice (Khan, 2010). Marshall (2006) was of the view that these feminists stressed the involvement of the state in the lives of individuals. In this regard Sandel (1984) is of the view that liberal feminism divided into two main categories i.e. classical liberal feminism and modern liberal feminism. She is further of the view that the classical liberal feminists were in favour gaining civil rights for the marginalized sectors of society which is the primary responsibility of an ideal state while the modern liberal feminists were in favor of demanding equal opportunity in all the sectors of life.”

2. METHODOLOGY

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The area of the research study was Mingora City, which is the most congested area in district Swat having a great number of small scale industries such as plastic, cosmetic, medicine, hardware, etc. with more number of female employees. This research study is limited to female employees of autonomous body and that of private small industrial sector in district Swat. Purposive sampling method was used to choose the respondents for the interview. A preliminary survey was conducted for finding out the number of females involved in small industrial sector in district Swat.”

“A well-structured interview schedule focusing upon all major aspects, objectives and parameters of the study was used for data collection. The collected data was coded and entered in SPSS software for analysis. The statistical technique used for data analysis was chi-square test, briefly discussed below;

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}} \quad (\text{Baily, 1982})$$

Where

χ^2 = Chi-square for two categorical variables

f_{ij} = the observed frequencies in the cross-classified category at i th row and j th column

F_{ij} = the expected frequency for the same category, assuming no association between variables under investigation.

The above formula simply directs one to take squared summation of the frequencies for each cell, divided by the expected frequency. The resulting frequency is distributed as chi-square with relevant degree of freedom. The degree of freedom (DF) is calculated as follows;

$DF = (r - 1)(c - 1)$

Where

r = the number of rows and
c = the number of columns.”

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Perception of respondents about gender based deterrence

“The frequency and percentage distribution of respondents in accordance with their view regarding gender-based deterrence is given (See table 1). The table states that majority 76.6 percent of the respondents’ view that male and female have separated roles in the society. The result is supported by Shahnaz (1999) who stated that cultural norms separated the activities of men and women. Another majority, 80.2 percent of the respondents believed labor was segregated gender wise in the industry. It is further supported by Khalid (2006), who found that women were kept working in the least skilled jobs such as packing, sorting and cleaning. Shahnaz (1999) further affirmed that certain gendered work patterns kept women in low-paying, low-status activities. The table further illustrates that 90.3 percent of the respondents believed that segregated labor is a cause of less women labor force in industry. The result is supported by CSSR (2004) whereby it is stated that segmentation of the labor market affects women workers, especially the poorest. Moreover, 75.5 percent of the respondents believed females are expected to marry early as compared to males. Khalid (2006) supported the statement by identifying that in many traditional contexts early marriage is the only development option for a girl child. The table also indicates that 44.8 percent of the respondents held the view that early marriage leads to less participation of women in industrial jobs. The result is supported by Kausar (2006) who identified that females especially the young ones and newly married are most of the times reluctant to get a job outside their home environment. The findings of Pritchett (1998) further supported the statement whereby it is stated that decision regarding the participation of one’s daughter or wife in industrial labor was guided by cultural values and social roles assigned to individuals. Further, majority 45.8 percent of the respondents believed that male employment is favored over female employment in the industry. The result is further supported by Kandawala (1994-1995) who identified that males are viewed more credible and reliable than females based on certain social beliefs. The table also shows that 80.7 percent of the respondents believed that decision making regarding female’s job rests with the male member of the family. It is further supported by Pritchett (1998) who stated that decision regarding the participation of one’s daughter or wife in industrial labor was guided by cultural values and social roles assigned to individuals. Another majority 87.5 percent of the respondents held the opinion that paternal authority is a cause of less female industrial employment. The result is further supported by Awan (2012) who identified that traditional patriarchal attitude of society is a serious hindrance for women empowerment. Pritchett (1998), in his study further added to the result whereby it was identified that the women labor force participation was regarded as a family decision. The table further illustrates that 47.9 percent of the respondents believed that women’s pre-occupation in the household activities was a cause of less female participation in industrial jobs. Kausar (2006) supported the result who stated that Purdah, male opposition, pre-occupation in the household chores were hindering women in seeking better paid jobs outside the home. Furthermore, majority 37.5 percent of the respondents were of the idea that more maternity needs of women reduce their chances of employment in industry. The result is further supported by Haq (2000) who identified that women workers brought their own issues such as greater absenteeism, need for maternity/childcare benefits.”

Table 1: Perception of the sample respondents about gender based deterrence

Statement	Yes	No	Don't know
Male and female have separated roles in society	147(76.6)	26(13.5)	19(9.9)
Labor is segregated gender wise in industry	154(80.2)	26(13.5)	12(6.2)
Segregated labor is a cause of less women labor force in industry	190(99.0)	01(0.5)	01(0.5)
Females are expected to marry early as compared to males	145(75.5)	30(15.6)	17(8.9)
Early marriage leads to less participation of women in industrial jobs	86(44.8)	48(25.0)	58(30.2)
Male employment is favored over female employment in industry	88(45.8)	67(34.9)	37(19.3)
Decision making regarding female's job rests with the male member of the family	155(80.7)	26(13.5)	11(5.7)
Paternal authority is a cause of less female employment in industry	168(87.5)	11(5.7)	13(6.8)
Females pre-occupation in the household activities is a cause of less female participation in industrial jobs	92(47.9)	58(30.2)	42(21.9)
More maternity needs of women decrease their chances of employment in industry	72(37.5)	67(34.9)	53(27.6)

Table values represent frequencies, while parenthesis values are percentages of the respondents

3.2 Relationship of gender based deterrence with women industrial employment

“It can be seen from the table (2) that an exceedingly significant association ($p = 0.000$) was found between gender wise segregation of labor and women’s industrial employment which shows that labor in the industry was segregated gender wise. It is further supported by Khalid (2006) who found that women were kept working in the least skilled jobs such as packing, sorting and cleaning. Shahnaz (1999) further affirmed that certain gendered work patterns kept women in low-paying, low-status activities. The relationship between male’s decision making regarding female’s job and women’s industrial employment was found significant ($p = 0.002$) which implies that the decision making regarding female’s job rests with the male member of the family. It is further supported by Pritchett (1998) who stated that decision regarding the participation of one’s daughter or wife in industrial labor was guided by cultural values and social roles assigned to individuals. Furthermore, a highly significant association ($p = 0.000$) existed between paternal authority a cause of less female employment and women industrial employment which describes that women industrial employment is deterred by paternal authority. The study of Haghighat (2005) reveals that the Muslim majority countries taking initiatives, comparing the non-Muslim majority countries on female employment as gender relation phenomenon. The result is further supported by Awan (2012) who identified that traditional patriarchal attitude of society is a serious hindrance for women empowerment. Pritchett (1998) in his study further added to the result whereby it was identified that the women labor force participation was regarded as a family decision. Moreover, a non-significant ($p = 0.694$) association was witnessed between early marriage as a cause of less female employment and women’s industrial employment. Similarly, the relationship between preference over male industrial employment and women industrial employment was also non-significant ($p = 0.721$). Likewise, a non-significant association ($p = 0.533$) existed between women’s pre-occupation in the household chores and women’s industrial employment.” The association between women’s more maternity needs and women’s industrial employment was also found non-significant ($p = 0.646$).

Table 2: Association between genders based deterrence and women industrial employment

Gender based Deterrence	Women's Industrial Employment			Total	Chi Square
	Yes	No	Don't know		
Male and female have separated roles in society	105(54.7)	30(15.6)	12(6.2)	147(76.6)	$\chi^2=16.369$ ($p = 0.003$)
	13(6.8)	04(5.2)	09(4.7)	26(13.5)	
	15(7.8)	03(1.6)	01(0.5)	19(9.9)	
	133(69.3)	37(19.3)	22(11.)	192(100.0)	
Labor is segregated gender wise in industry	116(60.4)	27(14.1)	11(5.7)	154(80.2)	$\chi^2=22.357$ ($p = 0.000$)
	09(4.7)	08(4.2)	09(4.7)	26(13.5)	
	8(4.2)	02(1.0)	02(1.0)	12(6.2)	
	133(69.27)	37(19.27)	22(11.4)	192(100.0)	
Females are expected to marry early as compared to males	111(57.8)	23(12.0)	11(5.7)	145(75.5)	$\chi^2=17.722$ ($p = 0.001$)
	12(6.2)	10(5.2)	08(4.2)	30((15.6)	
	10(5.2)	04(5.2)	03(1.6)	17(8.9)	
	133(69.3)	37(19.3)	22(11.5)	192(100.0)	
Early marriage leads to less participation of women in industrial jobs	59(30.7)	18(9.4)	09(4.7)	86(44.8)	$\chi^2=2.228$ ($p = 0.694$)
	31(16.1)	09(4.7)	08(4.2)	48(25.0)	
	43(22.4)	10(5.2)	05(2.6)	58(30.2)	
	133(69.3)	37(19.3)	22(11.5)	192(100.0)	
Male employment is favored over female employment in industry	61(31.8)	17(8.9)	10(5.2)	88(45.8)	$\chi^2=2.081$ ($p = 0.721$)
	46(24.0)	15(7.8)	06(3.1)	67(34.9)	
	26(13.5)	05(2.6)	06(3.1)	37(19.3)	
	133(69.3)	37(19.3)	22(11.5)	192(100.0)	
Decision making regarding female's job rests with the male member of the family	116(60.4)	27(14.1)	12(6.2)	155(80.7)	$\chi^2=16.503$ ($p = 0.002$)
	12(6.2)	06(3.1)	08(4.2)	26(13.5)	
	05(2.6)	04(5.2)	02(1.0)	11(5.7)	
	133(69.3)	37(19.3)	22(11.5)	192(100.0)	
Paternal authority is a cause of less female employment in industry	126(65.6)	28(14.6)	14(7.3)	168(87.5)	$\chi^2=29.612$ ($p = 0.000$)
	06(3.1)	03(1.6)	02(1.0)	11(5.7)	
	01(0.5)	06(3.1)	06(3.1)	13(6.8)	
	133(69.3)	37(19.3)	22(11.5)	192(100.0)	
Females pre-occupation in the household activities is a cause of less female participation in industrial jobs	65(33.9)	18(9.4)	09(4.7)	92(47.9)	$\chi^2=3.150$ ($p = 0.533$)
	41(21.4)	12(6.2)	05(2.6)	58(30.2)	
	27(14.1)	07(3.6)	08(4.2)	42(21.9)	
	133(69.3)	37(19.3)	22(11.5)	192(100.0)	
More maternity needs of women decrease their chances of employment in industry	51(26.6)	15(7.8)	06(3.1)	72(37.5)	$\chi^2=2.490$ ($p = 0.646$)
	47(24.5)	10(5.2)	10(5.2)	67(34.9)	
	35(18.2)	12(6.2)	06(3.1)	53(27.6)	
	133(69.3)	37(19.3)	22(11.5)	192(100.0)	

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMENDATIONS

The study area has been remained a ground for war on terror recently and women were mostly the victims of insurgency, especially those working in a school and industries. Their outdoor participation was harshly prohibited, including professional jobs, educational, political and legislative activities. Manzoor (2008) study shows that in swat education, jobs and the pursuit of a career by women were considered exertions of the government to westernise the society. Women's inclusion in industrial sector is negatively affected by the active involvement of male members in decision making regarding job. Patriarchy, paternal authority, and pakhtun codes resist women to participate in outside activities per their own will. Moreover, the heterogeneity of experiences of women and men from different backgrounds in the study population, in terms of the opportunity gap between both the genders has an enormous effect on women participation in employment sector. Working women has a dual responsibility of work, contributing toward household chores as well as profession. Pakistan Report (2004) concluded that the patriarchal nature of the society, women's share in professional and related jobs is relatively low with male counterpart and mostly confined to the traditional teaching and medical professions.

National cultures and government policies shape women's participation in national as well as communal workforces, sectoral cultures, values and practices also plays a pivotal role. The results of the study shown that women in industries of the area are facing barriers in participating line and top positions. They are also under represented in mobility sphere of their life. In addition, special skills needed to equip them for upper positions within the industries. Klasen, (2004) concluded that women under representation in labor market and decision making is the outcomes of gender discrimination and social stereotypes in most of the Muslims majority countries and therefor needs special context specific strategies of gender management and empowerment. This study suggests the comprehensive policies for the work force to promote gender parity and retain new talent of female, against past experiences based on cultural practices, conservatism, and seclusions. Equal remuneration for all workers irrespective of their gender in these industries ameliorate their exacerbated conditions. Women's lack of confidence and aspirations needs to be resolved for their full participation through encouragement, either locally and nationally. It is important to emphasize that the initiatives to promote gender equality does not produce good results but needs a long-term commitment, by industry officials, policy makers, as well as by industrial culture and local policy environment.

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