



Small Scale Research Grants *for* University Students *in* Pakistan

Women Employment Concerns and
Working Conditions in Pakistan



International Labour Organization

funded by
Canadian International Development Agency
(CIDA)



Government of Pakistan

Employment Status and Conditions of Work in Pakistan

The employment status and conditions of working women in Pakistan present a dismal picture. Their problem is not only of exclusion but also of invisibility and a disadvantaged position. Apart from their low literacy rates, lack of access to vocational and skills training, lack of access to other productive resources, limited mobility, etc., there are contextual “disabling” factors that are not conducive to women's economic empowerment in Pakistan. They lack effective access to technology and skill training, credit, marketing information and outlets, business counseling, and other support services essential to the growth of women entrepreneurship.

Despite the fact that the share of women in the total labour force has almost tripled in about 30 years from 8.8 percent in 1973 to 20.3 percent in 2005-6, the overall labour force participation of women remains significantly low.

As such, women constitute a disproportionately higher ratio of the 'working poor' of Pakistan. The incidence of poverty among Pakistani women remains much higher as compared to that of men, while women-headed households remain especially vulnerable to conditions of poverty and inadequate access to education and resources. The latest Labour Force Survey done by FBS Pakistan shows that out of the total civilian labour force, 79.6% are men and only 20.4% are women. The labour force participation rate of men is 72.2% while it is only 19.3% for women. The unemployment rate for men is 6.5% and for women it is 9.9%.

In the formal sector, women's share of professional jobs has increased to about 20 percent, but they are concentrated mainly in the traditionally



feminine occupations such as education and health. The recent most Inquiry Report on Status of Women in Public Sector Employment of the National Commission on the Status of Women (2003) states that out of a total of 175,189 employees in the Federal Government 9,387 are women and of those a mere 1,898 are in the officer category.

More than three fourths of the economically active women in the urban areas are engaged in the informal sector. The majority of women in the informal economy are home based workers in petty manufacturing, producing a variety of goods involving intensive labor inputs, often including the inputs of other family members, especially children. Micro level studies indicate that home based workers constitute approximately 77 to 83 percent of all employed women in the informal sector. After agriculture, home based work constitutes the most important source of women's employment.

Women Employment Concerns and Working Conditions in Pakistan Project

In light of the current situation of Pakistani women in the world of work as articulated above, The International Labour Office, in collaboration with Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has launched a project titled "**Women Employment Concerns and Working Conditions (WEC-PK)**". Other implementing partners include Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Women Development, key ILO Constituents (Workers and Employers Federations) and other social partners.

This program aims at enhancing the quantity and quality of women's employment in Pakistan and to promote women's fundamental right to decent employment through designing and implementing comprehensive and integrated policies and programs for achieving



effective and sustainable improvements in the quantity and quality of employment for women.

Rationale for Research

Recognizing the present scenario of women's employment in Pakistan, Policy reform oriented research is imperative to make evidence-based policy decisions and strategies to enhance women's economic empowerment in Pakistan. Given the integral role of academic institutions in society, it is vital to augment the subject of women's economic empowerment and employment concerns to their research agenda. It is equally important to encourage and build the capacity of researcher, especially young researchers at academic institutions in Pakistan.

Initiation of Small Scale Research Grants for University Students is an effort to achieve this goal. This grant funded small scale researches that have direct practical relevance to the women employment concerns. The initiative has following objectives:

- Building the capacity of young researchers;
- Developing knowledge base in priority areas of women's employment concerns in Pakistan that may help in revising and amending the existing policies and steer towards designing evidence-based interventions/strategies;
- Develop a culture of policy oriented research in academic institutions.

To acknowledge the efforts of researchers, the best research reports would be published by ILO in the form of Compendium.



Implementation Mechanism

a) One-day Training Workshops on “Developing Research Proposals”

In view of geographical outreach, WEC-PK team collaborated with seven universities in four provinces of Pakistan for the commencement of Small Research Grant for the students and designed the implementation mechanism with the focal department. Recognizing the need to equip the students with necessary knowledge and skills on developing an appropriate proposal, one-day training workshops were organized at seven selected Universities, hosted by the focal Departments. The students from the department of Social Sciences including (Anthropology, Sociology, Social work, Gender Studies, Economics, MBA) attended the training.

b) Small Scale Research Grant Committee

A nominated committee of faculty members of focal department and Representative from ILO, Islamabad Office received and assessed the research proposals and finally five research grants were awarded to each university. The total amount for each proposal is **US \$ 500** awarded to winning student/ researcher as honoraria. The grant funding initiative was for the **period of maximum six months** including research, data processing and analysis, documentation of report, and dissemination. All (Masters, M.Phil or Ph.D) students from Department of Social Sciences were eligible to submit their research proposals. The host institution had complete autonomy for administering and execution of the activity.



C) Role of ILO

WEC-PK team at ILO, Islamabad designed the initiative, coordinated with the focal department, and sponsored the resource persons to conduct the training session, designed guidelines for developing proposals and Research Report. In addition, relevant resource material was shared with the students. WEC-PK team extended technical backstopping to focal departments and students during each phase of the activity.

Topics for Research

The Grants are only for **Primary Research** addressing the issues of **“Women's Employment concerns and working conditions in Pakistan”**. Following are a few exemplary topics for research, these topics are indicative and any other issue of relevance can be included.

- Working conditions for women.
- Gender inequality in employment sector.
- Wage Discrimination.
- Mobility concerns of working women.
- Glass Ceiling in Management.
- Occupational health and safety at work place.
- Harassment at work place.
- Gender segregation in employment sector.
- Women and entrepreneurship/ self employment.
- Labour policies and standards.
- Home-based workers (women workers in informal sector).
- Child care problems for working mothers.
- Women in Bonded labour.



THE RESOURCE PERSONS

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COLLEGE OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, KARACHI

College of Business Management (CBM) is one of the three constituent colleges of Institute of Business Management (IoBM). In a short period, the College has established itself as a leading centre of business education in Pakistan. It is the only Pakistani business school with a full fledged research program.

Focal Person: Mr. Talib S. Karim
Director Academics & Business Support Centre

Selected Research Proposals:

- *Women Workers at Call Centres in Pakistan* by Sadia Aziz Ansari;
- *Glass Ceiling and Role of HR Management* by Muhammad Zuhaib;
- *A Proposal for Finding the Mobility Concerns of Working Women in Karachi* by Sadia Erum, Sana Pervez, Mehreen Ali & Faiza Akber;
- *Gender Segregation in the Employment Sector* by Sana Iqbal; Zainab Hussain, Rashida Fakhruddin & Rabia Gillani.

QUAID-I-AZAM UNIVERSITY, ISLAMABAD

The Quaid-i-Azam University is rated as one of the top public institutions of higher education in Pakistan with its qualified teams of teachers and researchers. It is recognized in Pakistan and abroad as an institution of high standards and its graduates receive acceptance in universities and research institutions the world over.

Focal Person: Dr. Hafeez-ur Rehman
Chairman, Anthropology Department

Five Selected Research Proposals:

- *Apathy among Retired Female School Teachers (A Case study of Farooqabad)* by Asima Hafeez ;
- *Emerging Trends in Women's Empowerment & Participation: A Myth or Reality? A Case Study of Tourism Based Economy* by Taniya Shah ;
- *Sexual Harassment in the Nursing Profession: Challenges and Opportunities for Policy Implementation* by Tooba Riasat;
- *Wage Discrimination among the Working Women in Private Educational Institutes and House Workers* by Muhammad Ali;
- *Occupational Health and Safety challenges faced by Women Workers in a Textile Unit at Faisalabad* by Amina Shafaat Bokhari.

UNIVERSITY OF PESHAWAR

The University of Peshawar is a unique institution where educational facilities exist from nursery to Ph.D. Having demonstrated excellence in almost all disciplines, both in terms of teaching and research, the university has over the years attained the credit of being one of the most significant universities in the Pakistan. It has academic links with numerous international research and academic institutions.

Focal Person: Dr. Rubina Khilji
Head, Department of Gender Studies

Five Selected Research Proposals

- *Unemployment among Educated Pukhtoon Women in District Mardan* by Mohammad Faisal;
- *Sexual Harassment in Nursing Profession (Case study of Khyber Teaching Hospital)* by Ahmed Zaib;
- *Sexual harassment of Working Women (Comparative study of Libra and Hamdard Pharmaceutical Industries)* by Nazia Hassan;
- *Women Working Conditions and Concerns in Legal and Judicial Profession. (Case study of District and Session Court Peshawar.)* by Rahat Ullah;
- *Psycho-social Problems Faced by Female Teachers at government Secondary Schools of Peshawar City* by Afsheen Saba.

ISLAMIA UNIVERSITY, BAHAWALPUR

The Islamia University has developed partnership with indigenous labour market and local community to improve economic growth. The university offers innovative programmes to satisfy the needs of students and employers related to the world of work. Its mission is to produce a variety of scientists and researchers, responsive to national needs and priorities focusing on issues relating to socio-economic development of Southern Punjab and national self-reliance.

Focal Person: Prof. Dr. Karamat Ali
Chairman, Department of Economics

Five Selected Research Proposals:

- *Role of Local Government towards Women Empowerment (A Case study of Dist. Multan) by Waseem Alam;*
- *Reimbursement of Medical Charges to the Working Women: Public Education Sector of Bahawalpur by M. Arshad Baig;*
- *Labour Policy and Standards (A Case Study of Female Teacher of Private Schools in Bahawalpur) by Hina Rafique;*
- *Working Women in Formal Sector (A Case study of Police Women in Southern Punjab) by Atif Nawaz;*
- *Socio Economic Status and Determinants of Young Women in Formal Labour Market (A Case study of Daewoo Hostesses) by Ammara Aziz.*

SHAH ABDUL LATIF UNIVERSITY, KHAIRPUR

Shah Abdul Latif University is meant to provide higher education facilities in various modern and scientific fields to the people of Sindh. The university has a rich tradition of producing highly educated and intelligent people.

Focal Person: Prof. Majeed Chandio
Chairman, Department of International Relations

Five Selected Research Proposals:

- *Unrecognized Labour of Women in Agriculture Sector (A case study of Village Lyari, Khairpur) by Zaheer Hussain Soomro;*
- *Role of Home-based Workers in Promoting Handicrafts in Khairpur by Uzma Iqbal;*
- *Women's Role and Emerging Trends of Beauty Parlour Business in Khairpur by Fahmida Bhutto;*
- *Role of Lady Health Workers in Primary Health Care. (A Case Study of Kandh Kot Distt: Kashmir) by Mehnaz Akbar Awan and Farzana Khoso;*
- *Gender Inequality in Employment Sector (A case Study of Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur) by Khalil-ur-Rehman Sheikh Mahjabeen Samo.*



It is a unique university, situated in the mountainous areas of Pakistan. Its training and education focus primarily on mountain environment and resource development with contextual relevance and field based experience. The educational strategy followed at KIU is somewhat unconventional, more visionary and application oriented. It moves away from the conventional and rigid compartmentalization of departments and facilitates a multidisciplinary integration in formulating courses, projects and programs that are most suited to the diverse needs of the mountain areas. However, in terms of quality, it ensures that graduates are on a level playing field with others when it comes to competition for jobs and further study.

Focal Person: Dr. Arif un Nisa Naqvi
Director

Five Selected Research Proposals:

- *Role Of Women Entrepreneurs in the Economic Development of Gilgit City: (A Case Study Of Gilgit City)* by Bushra Akhter, Rozina and Nargis Khatoon;
- *Problems Faced By Working women in Non Government Organizations in Gilgit* by Fatima Zahra and Mah e Bilqis;
- *Impact of Female Entrepreneurship on Family's Income* by Sadaf Alam and Abdul Basit;
- *Working Condition of Women In Government Organizations (Gilgit City)* by Shahina Perveen and Hooran Pari;
- *Women's Employment Concerns & Working Conditions in the Northern Areas of Pakistan* by Fayaz Karim.

UNIVERSITY OF BALOCHISTAN, QUETTA

The University of Balochistan has been the prime institute in Balochistan. Its vision is to be a model public university providing affordable quality, higher education opportunities to develop the potentially rich human resource in Balochistan through knowledge-centered teaching and research while maintaining and fostering high levels of ethical and professional standards and promoting national identity.

Focal Person: Prof. Farkhanda Aurangzeb
Chairman, Department of Women Studies

Five Selected Research Proposals:

- *Glass Ceiling in Management in Private Sector* by Syed Tanzeem;
- *Women's Employment Conditions in the Field of Embroidery* by Aliya Nazar;
- *Working Conditions for Women in Carpet Industry* by Zafarullah;
- *Women and Entrepreneurship: Enabling Environment for Businesswomen is Developing in Quetta* by Tasneem Fida;
- *Gender Inequality in Employment in Public Sector: Absence of Gender Policy Leading Towards Gender Inequalities* by Rabia Khalid.

