

# IMPEDIMENTS TO WORKING WOMEN AT THE UNIVERSITIES OF PESHAWAR-KPK

Rabia Shah<sup>\*</sup>, Asim Shah<sup>\*\*</sup> & Lal Muhammad<sup>\*\*\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> Assistant Professor, Sarhad University of Science & IT Peshawar, Pakistan.  
Email: [rabia.ba@suit.edu.pk](mailto:rabia.ba@suit.edu.pk)

<sup>\*\*</sup> Lecturer, University of Swabi, KPK, Pakistan  
Email: [asim@uoswabi.edu.pk](mailto:asim@uoswabi.edu.pk)

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Coordinator, Sarhad University of Science & IT Peshawar, Pakistan  
Email: [lal.ba@suit.edu.pk](mailto:lal.ba@suit.edu.pk)

---

**Abstract.** *In KPK, many universities have been established in public and private sector pertinent to last decade; which can directly affect the emergence of job opportunities equally provided to both genders. Universities normally are considered the platform for respect, dignity among the literate community members of the society. However, in our culture the men still dominate the female as they are not suppose to work despite their financial problems. People are bound to their religious cultural and social traits; illiteracy plays a vital role in this regard. In some families if the women break the barriers and come out to the market in order to join the economic activity, they face a lot of problems at their relevant work places. Therefore the researcher has tried to make detail investigation of the impediments of working Women at different universities of Peshawar.*

**Key words:** Impediments, working women, university

---

## Introduction

In KPK, many universities have been established in public and private sector pertinent to last decade; which can directly affect the emergence of job opportunities equally provided to both genders. Universities normally are considered the platform for respect, dignity among the literate community members of the society. However, in our culture the men still dominate the female as they are not supposed to work despite their financial problems. People are bound to their religious cultural and social traits; illiteracy plays a vital role in this regard. In some families if the women break the barriers and come out to the market in order to join the economic activity, they face a lot of problems at their relevant work places. Therefore the researcher has tried to make

detail investigation of the impediments of working women at different universities of Peshawar.

A research provided the facts that 60.8% of the employed women in Faisalabad have problems in managing house and children and 14.8% faced conflict with their husband and in-laws due to their jobs. 34% of the respondents are facing conveyance problem and 41.4% thought that their working conditions are not desirable (Maqsood, 2005).

Working women felt that their job is not secured; owner of the factories changed the workers without any reason and promotion offered on the basis of sexual favor. Most working women also facing face harassment in the form of catcalls and Gestures (Cheema, 2003).

In Pakistan Majority of women are working in Factories, where, they are facing three types of harassment namely, sexual harassment, physical harassment and mental harassment. A very few number of females are facing the husband's opposition towards their jobs. Reasons for those who do have the community and familial censure leading to male ego-problems neglect of children, housework and family ill health. Relatives (in-laws) criticize there paid employment because they are afraid of their morals will become loose; they become too independent and forget their actual status.

The women are suffering from market discrimination and hence are pushed to separate low-paid and low-status jobs. Majority of women are employed in the unorganized sectors. Mostly women are concentrated in sector known for low level of productivity, less income stability and low security of employment due to their dual role at home and workplaces. An organized service sector is mostly provides employment to a small proportion of women. The rate of unemployment among women is consistently higher than that of men, both in rural and urban areas (Mahpara, 2011). Many female face problems of daycare facility as there should be someone to look after them when these moms are working and if this facility is sponsored by the employer than the outcomes are even higher (Bowdoin, 2005). Another research showed that working women face two types of harassment at work one is due to discrimination and another is workplace harassment (Nobullying, 2015). According to Mordi (2011) women are mostly affected by their gender imposed factor, organization related factors & family oriented issues.

Most of the societies consider the top management positions suitable for men rather than women (Hannagan, 2005). Furthermore, it was explained with the help of different gender based theories by Blau and Hendricks (1997) that at lower level positions get less time for performing official duties because they have to work full time at home.

Some other factors considered to create problems to working women in order to reach to management positions is the reality that women most of the time can not avail the training opportunities and specially sponsored one might be caused be their high employee turnover rate which also affects the employers indirect cost (Blau &

Hendricks, 1997). While exploring about the problems Abidin (2009) argued that among various factors traveling was not notified as a hurdle to the working women, but the factors commonly affecting were stress related to job activities, working for some extra hours and keeping a balance between family life and job.

As per the findings of Still (1994), the recently identified significant factor was the cultural forces & dilemmas such as if rare number of females were given top managerial positions was considered as to be a non-traditional area which required special efforts.

Gregory (2003) argued that women workforce might be increased in upcoming time but men employment ratio will still be nearly 75 % of the total employment. Williams (1989) notified in his research conducted on US economy that gender differences also arise from the appraisal perspectives of the supervisors.

Keeping in view the cultural and organizational barriers it was extracted by Cobb (1994) that major constraints to working women are the limited access to job opportunities, unfavorable working atmosphere at work and high iteration levels in different industrial sectors. His findings also highlighted about the other problems such as sexual harassment, paternalism & different standards for both genders such as their suggestions are given less importance than man etc.

This study was designed keeping in view the following objectives:

- 1) To find out the problems that employed women have to face in the universities (i.e., Harassment, Facilities provided by the organization, Job satisfaction & Requirements);
- 2) To find out the problems from their family side;
- 3) To find out the attitude of male colleagues/friends & Owner (Head) towards the working women; and
- 4) To suggest the measures to solve the problems of working women in Universities.

### **Research Methodology**

There are 15 universities, both public & private sectors, currently working in Peshawar and our aim to study the problems of working women in universities, therefore, primary data is collected through scheduled interviews by using convenient sampling technique from the sample of 120 women, 10 from each university. The outcomes reveal on the basis of qualitative analysis technique. Although the research is qualitative in nature but the database was created to highlight the priority of the issue to be addressed and to know the most important problem.

### **Key Findings**

### **Problems at university level**

While investigating about the problems at university level it was observed that most of the married women claimed to give even better output if they are provided with day care facility for the infants. They argued that for the mental and physical participation there should be certain places at their workplace for their children so they can at least once or twice visit them. Some other universities do not provide the facility of sick room which is also very much important for their better performance. Similarly working women have the responsibilities at home and at work so they have to manage both lives and have to keep a balance between two therefore, in those universities where Saturdays are not off it was a major problem for workload management. According to the cultural differences some women face the gender discrimination related their pay/ wage. As males are considered for higher pay/ wage then women which are also a major problem to them. Transportation and separate offices were also among the problems they face.

### **Problems from Family**

In order to know about the problems that working women face due to family the researcher came to know after investigating them that most of the family members expect them to keep a balance between their family life and job. Another major problem to working women is that they get fewer chances to continue their education as they have to work at home after coming back from work. Furthermore some working women also identified as having health related issues in case of over burdening themselves when work is tough and time consuming.

Similarly while discussing about other problems such as child care and family politics the responses included that working women get less time to take care of their child although they try to but since most organization do not provide childcare facility so they have to leave their children with other family members or at daycare centers. They also argued that inspite of financial support to their families they suffer from family politics such as competition about lifestyle the working women have, specially to married working women where she is living in a joint family setup. Some married working women shared their problems related earning capacity that if their husbands earn less than they earn mostly husbands go into inferior complexity and their family life get disturbed.

### **Attitude of Male colleagues/Friends and Head**

While inquiring about their problems with Colleagues, friends & head the response revealed upon these findings. The first and the most important are of attention they described was the gender discrimination related compensation. As per them here in this society working men are given higher pay then working women. Another problem not all of them but few face is related to harassment workplace harassment & harassment

due to discrimination. According to them those working whose skin complexion are fair and they are beautiful plus they give more time to bosses get better promotions than those who do not have. Some women pointed out that their male colleagues take better care of them than female colleagues might be because of jealousy problem.

## **Conclusion**

The researcher has tried to investigate about the problems of working women at different universities of Peshawar concisely from 120 women from 12 universities. It was observed that working women face different problems at university level, from family and from their colleagues. The problems included daycare facility for married working women, sick room, separate offices, transportation, and less wage due to gender discrimination. Whereas from family they face the problems of family and work life balance problem, health issues, less attention to their children, family politics and life disturbance due to increased pay from their husband. Similarly while investigating about the problems they have from colleagues and head it was noticed that they suffer from harassment problems, gender discrimination issue once again and jealousy problem from other women.

## **Suggestions**

The women are playing a vital role in the growth of Pakistan; therefore, it's the responsibility of organization that they provide all the facilities required to the working women. These can include Separate offices, Sick rooms, separate conveyance and time relaxation in case of married women, day care facility for the women having kids as their rights.

Keeping in view the above stated few facilities working environment should also be relaxed and respectful so that the women feels secured & comfortable in performing their duties. Furthermore, Higher Education Commission has already introduced implemented Harassment policies/Law in all universities but HEC should keep a control over the proper utilization of these policies in the universities. And at university level the women suffering from workplace harassment should note down all the facts with them and should take their supervisor into confidence and professionally should discuss with them along with all the facts they have gathered so their bosses are convinced and support them by taking proper action against the person creating problems for them.

## **References**

Abidin, Z. Z., Penafort, F., Jusoff, K., & Marzuki, M. (2009). Impediments to Women Accountants' Career Progression in Malaysia. *Asian Social Science*, 4(10), 159.

- Blau, F. D., & Hendricks, W. E. (1979). Occupational segregation by sex: Trends and prospects. *Journal of Human Resources*, 197-210.
- Bowdoin. (2005). Employer-sponsored daycare can be profitable: New study shows. available at <https://www.bowdoin.edu/news/archives/1academicnews/001791.shtml>
- Cheema, S. A. Y. (2003). Problems of working women in export garment factories in Faisalabad, Pakistan. *International Journal of Agriculture & Biology*, 5(3), 279–280.
- Cobb, J. P. (1994). *Women Scientists and Engineers Employed in Industry: Why So Few?*. National Academies.
- Hannagan, T. (2005). *Management: Concepts And Practices* (4<sup>th</sup> Ed.). Great Britain. Pearson Education Limited.
- Mahpara, B. S., & Ali, Q. (2011). Employment situation of women in Pakistan. *International Journal of Social Economics*, 38(2), 98–113.
- Maqsood, R., Zia, Q., & Chema, A. (2005 ). Problems of employed women in Faisalabad–Pakistan. *Journal of Agriculture & Social Sciences*, 1(3), 245 - 247
- Mordi, C., Adedoyin, H., & Ajonbadi, H. (2011). Impediments to women career advancement: The Nigerian experience. *Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti Bulletin, Economic Sciences Series*.
- Nobullying.com. (2015). How to identify the different types of harrassments. Retrieved from <http://nobullying.com/types-of-workplace-harassment/>
- Still, L. V., (1994). Where to from here? Women in management. *Women in Management Review*, 9(4), 3-10.
- Gregory, R. F. (2003). *Women and Workplace Discrimination: Overcoming Barriers to Gender Equality*. Rutgers University Press.
- Williams, C. L. (1989). *Gender Differences at Work: Women and Men in Non-Traditional Occupations*. University of California Press.