

THE CHANGING STATUS OF WOMEN
IN ISLAMIC PAKISTAN

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INTRODUCTION

The traditional role of women in the Islamic culture of the sub-continent has been receiving increasing attention since Pakistan became an independent nation in 1947. Pakistan's violent birth, the result of successful efforts by the Muslim minority of British India for partition, involved women in the important work of aiding misplaced persons in a nation torn by war. More importantly, Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan, wife of Pakistan's first Prime Minister, institutionalized the expanding role of women in the new nation by organizing the Pakistan Women's Voluntary Service.¹ This was the beginning of the "Women's Movement in Pakistan". Hundreds of Muslim women responded to Begum Liaquat's plea for volunteers to work in refugee camps, collect and distribute goods, clothing, medicine, and money; to help in hospitals; open and run dispensaries, schools, and industrial homes.

Under the guidance of Begum Liaquat, an Employment Exchange Bureau, a Lost and Found Bureau, a Marriage Bureau, a Widow's Home, and an Abducted Women's Home were also founded. Begum Liaquat's efforts subsequently gave rise to women's movement with the National Defense sector by the foundation of the Pakistan Women's National Guard (PWNG) and the embryonic stage of a female voice in labor by the formation of the Pakistan Cottage Industries Association.²

From these early movements the All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA), an organization created solely for the needs, advancements and integration of women into the national political and economic structure of Pakistan, emerged.³ With growing industrialization, continued high birth rates, and the possibility of future food shortages, Pakistan's political and social leaders have increasingly begun to direct their attention towards the need for women to become involved on a national scale in the labor force and the economy of their country. This year in observance of International Women's Year, women throughout the nation's cities are holding seminars, meetings and gatherings on the status of women in Pakistan. Indeed, the status of women in Pakistan is a topic whose time is ripe for exploration.

It is the purpose of this paper to examine the traditional role of women in the Islamic culture of South Asia, and to evaluate changes in their status in terms of social relationships, opportunities in education and economic participation. The paper is organized into three major sections. The first section describes the traditional role of women in Islamic society in terms of the attitudes of Islam toward women, the institution of pardah, and social status. In some instances the geographic focus has been expanded beyond South Asia to include the broader Islamic world, and in some cases regional variations within South Asia have been discussed, but the major emphasis has been directed toward describing conditions as they have traditionally existed in the area which is now organized as Pakistan.

The second section describes and evaluates changes in the status of women in Pakistan. Contemporary laws relating to women, attitudes toward pardah and opportunities in education and the economy are examined in an attempt to measure the changing status of women in Pakistan. Certain constraints have limited the measurement of change, such as the availability of reliable female labor force data, and the prohibition against field research resulting from the declaration of Martial Law in March 1969. Field research, however, has opened up considerably in the last few years, and new information is likely to be forthcoming in the near future. Certain trends are observable in the available data and the constraints are not considered overwhelming.

Section three provides a brief examination of the programs in Pakistan directed towards the improvement of the well-being of women. Adult Literacy Programs, Industrial Homes and Maternal Child Health (MCH) Centers are examined in order to determine their significance in enhancing the status of women. Integrated Programs are reviewed as model projects by which these programs could be integrated and expanded, based on the premise that a broader range of services and activities would attract a larger number of women. Population Planning Programs, while the objectives are not specifically designed to raise the status of women, are included in this section because of the large numbers of females employed in the programs and the anticipated long range impact.

TRADITIONAL ROLE OF WOMEN

Traditional Islamic Attitudes Toward Women

Pakistan is one of the few countries that incorporates religion in the Constitutional Laws. Islam is not only concerned with religious beliefs but is instead "an all-embracing mode of life,"⁵ setting up political and economic laws as well as rules of social behavior. This section details some of the most significant earlier attitudes of Islam towards the role of women. Specifically, religious participation, marriage, divorce and inheritance are examined.

Religious Participation

The introduction of Islam, among other things, was an attempt to raise the status of women in the Arab world. In many matters, equality between men and women is written in the scriptures of the Quran.

Women, according to the Quran, are equal to men as long as they are good believers and are offered the reward of Paradise for true faith.⁶ The Quran further emphasizes the equality of men and women, "I will not suffer the work of him among you that worketh, whether male or female, to be lost."⁷ The faithful people are:

. . . the men and women who resign themselves (to Allah), believing women, devout men and devout women, truthful men and truthful women, patient men and patient women, humble men and humble women, almsgiving men and almsgiving women, men who fast and women who fast, chaste men and chaste women and men and women who often call upon the name of God-and God has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty recompense.⁸

The Quran states that "the first duty of a woman, as it is of a man, is to believe in one God, Allah, which is the only means of salvation in the Hereafter."⁹ It has been noted, however, that while Muslim women make regular pilgrimages to Mecca, they attend prayers at the mosque only during festivals; and in both instances are separated from the men by a grille. This separation reflects the practice of purdah or seclusion of women.

Marriage

Prior to adopting Islam, men were allowed to marry as many wives as they wanted, but the Quran limited the number of wives to four. The passage in the Quran states that "you may marry two, three or four wives, but not more ... but if you cannot deal equitably and justly with all, you shall marry only one."¹⁰ Therefore, Muhammed was in favor of one wife, but under certain circumstances the practice of plural wives was necessary for the preservation of women from starvation or utter destitution. The frequent wars and the consequent decimation of the male population increased the number of widows. The primary reason for taking on more than one wife was to care for widowed women, particularly sisters-in-laws, who were not able to support themselves.

In other aspects concerning the life of women, it is thought that pre-Islamic traditions must have influenced Muhammed's views in the formulation of new laws. The Quran states that "Men stand superior to women in that God hath preferred the one over the other."¹¹

A Muslim man may marry a woman of Jewish or Christian Faith but a Muslim woman cannot marry a non-Muslim. No age limit for marriage is given in the Quran, but a couple cannot live together until the girl reaches puberty.

In addition to wives, the law places no limit on the number of concubines a man may possess. Restrictions placed on the owner of concubines are that the owner may not have social relations with two or more sisters and he cannot force them, into prostitution.¹² Towards the end of his career the Prophet forbade the custom of permitting concubines.

Divorce

The Quran makes it illegal to divorce a wife on a false charge whereby the husband might retain some of the property lawfully belonging to her. In contradiction to this a husband may divorce his wife for any or no reason since no justification is demanded by the Quranic law. A wife, on the other hand, is not allowed this privilege, "an inequality which has had the consequence of gravely

lowering the status of women in Islam." ¹³ This practice is similar to pre-Islamic times when a man could dismiss his total obligation to his wife by paying her any portion of the mahr (the amount agreed upon that the husband will pay the wife if he decides to divorce her) and by simply saying talaq talaq talaq (thou art dismissed). ¹⁴

After a divorce, a man may take his wife back without her permission. This is permitted two times, but after the third time, he has lost right to his wife and must wait to remarry her until she has married another man and divorced him. At this time a new contract must be drawn up between the couples. ¹⁵

If, during the 90 day waiting period, it becomes evident that the wife is pregnant and it is the final divorce, the Quran recommends that the husband take care of his wife until the child is born. ¹⁶ The child, in this case, belongs to the father unless conceived in adultery.

Before Islam a wife could buy her freedom from her husband by giving up her mahr to him. This divorce was called khul or "divestiture". While not completely abolishing this type of divorce, Muhammed permitted it only "if the parties fear they cannot keep within God's bounds." ¹⁷ If the husband accepts the mahr he loses complete rights over his wife, and upon wanting her back he must make new marriage arrangements for her.

Certain situations exist whereby a woman may also make claims for divorce or annulment. If both marriage partners are non-Muslims, and the wife adopts Islam but her husband does not, she may divorce him. Alternatively, a woman may seek an annulment if her husband is unable to pay the mahr or if he cannot provide her with necessities.

A divorced woman must wait three months before remarrying. A widow, in order to assure that she is not pregnant, must wait four months and ten days. If it is evident that she is pregnant the new husband must wait for cohabitation until the child is born. During this time a man may, however, propose marriage in veiled words, but not openly. ¹⁸

According to the Quran "If any of your women be guilty of fornication, then bring four witnesses against them from among yourselves." ¹⁹ If found guilty of adultery, which is an unlikely occurrence, two different views are held. Punishment is 100 strokes for both adulterer and adultress in one scripture (Sura 24²) and in another only adulterous wives are mentioned, and they are to be "kept in houses" until they die. ²⁰

If a husband accuses his wife of adultery and is not able to supply the witnesses he may, as stated in the Quran, "testify four times that, by God, he is of those who speak the truth, and the fifth testimony shall be that the curse of God shall be on him if he be of those who lie." ²¹ By remaining silent the wife admits her guilt and suffers the penalty. Even if a woman swears by God, that the accusation is a lie the marriage is annulled.

Other grounds for divorce include physical imperfections in either husband or wife. For example, the marriage may be annulled if one is sexually "incapacitated". Non-fulfillment of the marriage contract is another means by which a divorce may be sought. A man may also make claims for an annulment if his wife is found not to be a virgin. ²²

Inheritance

In regards to inheritance, all women are permitted a portion of their parents and relatives inheritances. Islamic law states that: "Men should have a portion of what their parents and kindred leave." ²³ Concerning the disposal of the property of a person dying intestate the property should be divided as such: "for a male the like of the portion of two females, and if these be women (i. e. daughters) above two, then let them have two-thirds of what (the deceased) leaves. If there be one, let her have a half." ²⁴ The amount allotted a mother is a third, " and if he (the deceased) have bretheren, let his mother have a sixth after payment of the bequest he bequesths and of his debt." ²⁵ Regarding a married couple, the husband and wife retains possession of each of their own belongings. A woman is allowed to keep the mahr as her wedding portion and exclusive possession.

Discrepancies in these laws are found in many instances. A woman often does not receive her share from her father's estate, but instead is compensated with gifts by her brother at the time of her marriage. Fathers are known to have signed all of their land over to their sons without consulting with his daughters. In some instances a sister may give her share to her brothers in order to maintain good relations with her family. When a father, without having sons, dies, the daughter inherits the estate which she in turn passes on to her own sons. If she does not have a son, the inheritance goes to the closest patrilineal kin. ²⁶

In Panjgur, according to Pastner, women are often not aware of their rights of inheritance since property relations are controlled by men. Women are certain of inheritance only when there are no sons and then the estate is divided in half, one portion going to the father's male patrilineal kin and the other half among the daughters who pass it on to their sons. ²⁷

The motive behind these customary laws, which usually excludes females from inheritance, is to prevent the further splitting of the estate and the possible alienation of part of the estate by the sister's husband. According to the Quran the latter is entitled to one half of what his sterile wife leaves and one fourth if there were children. ²⁸

Pastner suggests that in cases where civil law is congruent with religious law that women have been able to enforce their legal rights. For example, in Panjgur, law has been implemented by religious heads and civil courts. Women, therefore, have retained their rights on such matters as inheritance and divorce; whereas in other areas of Baluchistan where customary laws prevail, women are not privileged these rights. ²⁹

Purdah

Perhaps no other factor symbolizes the traditional role of women in Pakistan so much as the outward manifestations of purdah. Purdah, as defined by Wilber, "involves the seclusion of women from males unrelated to them and their nonparticipation in mixed society." ³⁰ Observance of purdah may involve confinement to the zenana, the woman's quarters in the orthodox Muslim home where men cannot enter, or wearing a burqa, a veil-like garment covering the entire body except hands and feet.

A small net opening or peep-hole is inset over the eyes. Women who observe strict purdah wear the burqa any time they go outside the house. A burqa then, while a concealing garment is also a means of allowing a woman to go out in public. 31

Other concealing devices include walls surrounding homes and courtyards; women's compartments in trains and buses, women's offices, screened pathways, curtained cars, lecture rooms sectioned off by curtains; curtains of a tonga (a horse-drawn carriage); or a veil concealing a woman's face and body. 32

A symbolic form of purdah is practiced when a woman, upon meeting a stranger, quickly covers her face with a piece of cloth or simply lowers her eyes and bows her head.³³ The symbolic form of purdah is observed more frequently in villages isolated from strangers where women must work in fields. A burqa, in this situation, hampers mobility.

Different views are held concerning the institution of purdah as it relates to the Quran. Levy, for example, interpreted a scripture in the Quran pertaining to modest behavior of women to have been the initiation of the purdah system.

"Tell your wives and daughters and wives of believers when they go out of doors not to be like female slaves in their garb, leaving their hair and face uncovered; but let them let down part of their robes that no miscreant may expose them to harmful comments when he discovers them to be 'free-born women.' " 34

Obviously referring to this quote, Chipp points out that many Muslims consider the burqa to be a "cultural corruption" of what actually was meant to be rules of modest behavior and dress for Muslim women, "not that they cover their faces." 35

According to Levy, Muhammed entered in the scriptures of the Quran rules of modest conduct and chastity which apply to men as well as women.

Say to the believers that they cast down their looks and guard their privy parts and display not their ornaments, except those of them that are external; and let them pull their veils over the opening of their chemises at their bosoms and not display their ornaments save to their husbands or their fathers. ³⁶

Children too young to be conscious of sex differences and slaves, in particular eunuchs, are exempt from this rule. It is the author's opinion, however, that this scripture does not refer to both men and women, but rather relates specifically to women.

Male Honor

The protection of male honor is an important feature of Islamic culture. Purdah, since male honor depends on the honor of women, is one effective means of preserving this honor. Shame is associated with honor in the traditional belief that women have more inherent shame than men; therefore, women must be protected. ³⁷

Other ways of preserving a woman's honor include limited physical and educational mobility of women; non-socialization between men other than close relatives; dress; early arranged marriages, and kin endogamy. Ideas on sex and pollution reinforce the purdah system... "fear of adultery delimits the exposure of a woman to only her husband, (incestuous) close consanguines, and close male affines." ³⁸

Variations in Observance of Purdah

The many variations in observance of purdah "relate to differences in class, income, place of residence, level of education, occupation, religious or sectarian affiliation, ascriptive group membership and individual life circumstances." ³⁹ Preadolescent and post-menopausal women are not required to observe the custom because they are more sexually neutral. Purdah is more likely to be observed in instances where women have high social aspirations. This is a reflection in the greater enforcement of purdah among the middle class. ⁴⁰

In Peshawar, women are governed by the pardah system in the family labor organization. "The social traditions of pardah stipulate that women in either owner-cultivating or tenant families may not engage in any form of outside work." Women's activities are limited to those which may be performed in a closed courtyard protected from "intruding glances" which restricts the women to either housework or livestock tending. 41

Social Status of Women in Pakistan

The social status of women in Pakistan is largely determined by the status of her husband which is based on his power and wealth combined with his ancestry. A woman's involvement in public life is vicarious participation through her husband and other male kin. Her life is essentially private, revolving around "household activities, personal grooming, calls on female relatives, gossip at the village well or tank (if they belong to the lower agricultural classes) religious observances and visits to the shrines of saints ... " 42

of

The most important role of a woman is that a wife and mother. "Unless a woman succeeds as a wife and mother, she has no right to consider herself as a success in any sphere"... 43 Wilber emphasizes further the role of women.

The role of women is to care for the children, cook, manage the household, and discharge reciprocal family obligations at the time of marriages, deaths, and similar occasions. It is also to serve as symbols of family honor and prestige by their chaste and exemplary behavior, their jewelry, and, if possible, their seclusion. 44

Elderly women who have given birth to many sons enjoy much prestige. In a study conducted in Peshawar, Albrecht received such comments as:

"Like all Pathans I would rather have sons than daughters for sons are a good protection; they are an army, like a full cartridge belt." " We would rather have sons than daughters. Sons support the family with their income, but daughters leave for another house after marriage." 45

Due to the exclusion of females from most schooling and from public religious congregations, "formal religious piety" and secular education are not the basis for assigning high status to women.

Since women are prevented from seeing a male doctor, folk knowledge is a more important criteria. Midwives, however, are considered polluting in a "formal cultural sense," but are highly regarded for their specialized knowledge and skill. Because of the heavy reliance on folk medicine and folk-religious beliefs, the ability to write out religious formulas is another means by which a woman can achieve importance in a community. ⁴⁶

Visiting-Gossip

The social life of a woman in an Islamic society is extremely limited. However, each region in Pakistan varies in its traditional attitude towards the physical mobility of women. Visiting in individual homes, which almost always entails a large amount of gossip, is one of the few types of social life allowed a female. Pastner, in her study of women in Panjgur, states that "the only sanctioned form of physical mobility for women is on a group or individual level within participating households."⁴⁷ In other areas women are even more limited in that they are confined to their homes or courtyards surrounded by a high wall.

In Panjgur women perform a ritual in their visits. "Every adult female member of the household is greeted separately by each guest by means of a 'greeting formula' or hal which is repeated with each woman." Each of the two particular women greet each other simultaneously inquiring about the health and well-being of the other women, her husband, children and kin. Women of higher status, especially older women, receive a special greeting. "The low status woman takes the hands of the high status woman and presses them to her forehead and over each eye, invoking the 'blessings of Allah' and using other religious phrases." ⁴⁸

Gossip, during these visits often contain harsh and joking comments directed towards specific individuals. This type of gossip may serve as a method of social control in that "quarrels, obscenities and actual physical blows" frequently follow. This is considered shameful behavior and may lead to further gossip. ⁴⁹

Gossip carried down by the women often serve as an informal communications network which might not otherwise be available to men. In Panjgur, for example, information about civil servants and the government is often gained through the female communications network. ⁵⁰

Women depend primarily on friendships or alliances of other women in confronting an enemy, usually a male. In addition, each woman maintains a "linkage" of women friends based on the principle of reciprocity: "obligations to visit one another's household at frequent intervals, gift exchange on important occasions such as weddings, material aid in the form of goods and services, and long-term support of non-material nature." ⁵¹

This type of relationship helps support their own interests, but more importantly, it may be a woman's only social contact. Women observing pardah are restricted from important institutions. On the oasis of Panjgur, for instance, a woman is forbidden to enter the mosque, secondary school, police station, courthouse and the bazaar. ⁵²

Women, however, do have ways in which they can compensate for their subservient role in the household. Withdrawal of sexual favors, refusal to perform domestic duties, excessive complaining, and uncooperative behavior toward other women in the household are among the various ways of achieving this purpose. Occasionally, a woman may pretend she is ill in order to get excused from household duties and to gain attention. Playing off male relatives against one another will usually spur a compromise by her husband in order to restore harmony. ⁵³

Because women are forced to depend on each other in everyday situations, the female ranking system on the group level is less formal than the concept of caste status among males.

Summary

The traditional role of women in Pakistan has its origins in the laws stated in the Quran. These determine rules of marriage, divorce, inheritance and child custody. In many instances, however, these laws are not consistent with regional customs which determine the limits of women's rights. The institution of pardah has restricted women from nearly every type of social

and professional activity, constraining them to homes and walled courtyards. Purdah is reinforced by the fact that it is also a means of protecting male honor. While the social status of women is largely determined by the status of her husband, a woman may enjoy high prestige by the number of her sons.

The truly restricted Pakistani woman can use sexual and domestic devices in her marital relationship to coerce her husband into following her will. In this respect a woman does yield a subtle influence at the familial and indirectly at the community level.

The following section examines certain specific ways in which aspects of this traditional role are changing.

CONTEMPORARY ROLE OF WOMEN

Revision of Laws Pertaining to Women

In many respects the contemporary role of a woman in Islamic Pakistan has not changed much from traditional attitudes towards her role in society. More recently, however, certain laws have been formulated which give women a minimal amount of rights they could not enjoy in the past.

In 1955, the Marriage and Family Laws Commission was initiated, but because of political instability and the intense opposition of the ulema, (Muslim scholars) the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance did not come into effect until 1961. Opposition to such a new legislation was rampant. Arguing that the role of women had deteriorated because they did not realize the rights that Islam had given them, Maulana Ihtisham-ul-Haq spoke out bitterly:

.... the effrontery of those who, ignorant of Arabic and Islamic jurisprudence, dared to propose Western innovations in the name of Islam. In Islam the provisions of the Holy Quran and the Sunnah, be they in the form of basic principle or in individual laws, are authoritative and final for all occasions and for all epochs between the time of revelation and doomsday. 54

Others argued that the Commission laws were no different from those rights granted women in the Quran. Yet, most of the members of the Commission asked for a liberal interpretation of the Quran, holding the view that:

Islam law, through the centuries, has suffered much distortion and its liberal aspects have been ignored and suppressed. We have to go back to the original spirit of the Quran and the Sunnah and lay special emphasis on those trends in basic Islam that are conducive to healthy adaptation to our present circumstances. ⁵⁵

Important provisions resulting from the 1956 Marriage Commission Report were: (1) age of permissible marriage; (2) compulsory registration of marriage; (3) restriction on polygamy; and (4) regulation of divorce.

An Arbitration Council is selected to handle cases under the Muslim Family Laws. The Arbitration Council consists of a chairman and a representative of each of the parties. The Chairman is either the Chairman of the Union Council (Town Committee) or a person appointed by the Central or Provincial Government to discharge the functions of Chairman. ⁵⁶

Marriage

The Marriage Commission set the age of marriage for a female to 16 and a male 18, a revision of the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929 in which a girl could marry at the age of 14. Anyone breaking the law is subject to punishment by imprisonment of up to a month or may be fined up to one thousand rupees or by both. Persons eligible for punishment are males above the age of 18 marrying a girl under 16; persons solemnising a child marriage; and parents or guardians who allow a child marriage. ⁵⁷ In addition the Ordinance requires registration of all marriages.

All of these laws met with some opposition, but the restriction of marriage under the set age was strongly opposed by one man who said "such a law was absolutely uncalled for . . . since boys and girls reach puberty long before the ages of 18 and 16, this would mean that we have no objection to their establishing non-martial sex relationship." ⁵⁸

The restriction on polygamy met with the most opposition.⁵⁹ Ordinance 15 did not completely ban polygamy, but it does require a man who wishes to contract another marriage to submit an application stating the reasons justifying a new marriage. The Chairman of the Arbitration Council must also know whether the applicant has the consent of his existing wife or wives. A fee of one hundred rupees is required by the applicant. Valid reasons for granting a second marriage include "sterility, physical infirmity, physical unfitness for the conjugal rights or insanity on the part of the existing wife."⁶⁰

Divorce

While some schools of thought (Hanafi) allowed a woman the right of divorce if the condition was written in the marriage contract, traditional custom law gave only the man the privilege of divorce. The Family Laws Ordinance rejected the traditional utterance of talaq! talaq! talaq! by the husband and gave women the right to dissolve a marriage. Pronouncement of talaq does not operate a divorce but is merely a manifestation of wish to divorce. The divorce is not final until the Arbitration Council has considered the case, and the divorce does not become effective until 90 days after the notice has been submitted to the Chairman.⁶¹

In an attempt to lessen the hardship placed on women and children involved in matrimonial disputes, the Registrar of the Sind-Baluchistan High Court has directed all judges not to take longer than six months for the final disposal of cases⁶²

The 1973 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan includes several articles concerning equality, non-discrimination, protection of family, etc. The following Articles relate to the status of women:

- | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|--|
| Equality of citizens | 25. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">(1) All citizens are equal before law and are entitled to equal protection of law.(2) There shall be no discrimination on the basis of sex alone.(3) Nothing in this Article shall prevent the State from making any provision for the protection of women and children. |
|-------------------------|-----|--|

- Non-discrimination in respect of access to public places.
26. (1) In respect of access to places of public entertainment or resort, not intended for religious purposes only, there shall be no discrimination against any citizen on the ground only of race, religion, caste, sex, residence or place of birth.
- (2) Nothing in Clause (1) shall prevent the State from making any special provision for women and children.
- Safeguard against discrimination in services.
27. (1) No citizen otherwise qualified for appointment in the service of Pakistan shall be discriminated against in respect of any such appointment on the ground only of race, religion, caste, sex, residence or place of birth.
- Promotion of Local Government institutions.
32. The State shall encourage Local Government Institutions composed of elected representatives of the areas concerned and in such institutions special representation will be given to peasants, workers and women.
- Full participation of women in national life.
34. Steps shall be taken to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life.
- Protection of family.
35. The State shall protect the marriage, the family, the mother and the child.
- Promotion of social justice and eradication of social evils.
37. The State shall -
- (c) make technical and professional education generally available and higher education equally accessible to all on the basis of merit;

- (e) make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work, ensuring that children and women are not employed in vocations unsuited to their age or sex, and for maternity benefits for women in employment;
- (g) prevent prostitution, gambling and taking of injurious drugs, printing, publication, circulation and display of obscene literature and advertisements.

National
Assembly

51. (1) The National Assembly shall consist of two hundred members to be elected by direct and free vote in accordance with law.

- (4) Until the expiration of a period of ten years from the commencing day or the holding of the second general election to the National Assembly, whichever occurs later, ten seats in addition to the number of seats referred to in clause (1) shall be reserved for women and allocated to the Provinces in accordance with the Constitution and law.

Composition 223. of
Islamic Council.

(1) There shall be constituted within a period of ninety days from the commencing day a Council of Islamic Ideology, in this Part referred to as the Islamic Council

(3) While appointing members of the Islamic Council, the President shall ensure that-

- (a) So far as practicable various schools of thought are represented in the Council;

- (b) not less than two of the members are persons each of whom is, or has been a judge of the Supreme Court or of a High Court;
- (c) not less than four of the members are persons each of whom has been engaged, for a period of not less than fifteen years, in Islamic Research or instructions; and
- (d) at least one member is a woman.⁶³

It is difficult to determine to what extent these provisions are implemented, but the Women's Rights Committee of the United Nations has submitted a set of resolutions to the Government; one of which calls for a "Permanent Status of Women Commission" to ensure that the provisions of Articles 34 and 35 are implemented.⁶⁴

Contemporary Attitudes Toward Purdah

Although the institution of purdah is weakening in certain areas, it is still held to be the most responsible source for limiting the participation of women in activities outside the home.⁶⁵ "The high value placed on chastity of women in addition to the prestige which purdah gives to the whole family, provides a strong force for the retention of the practice of seclusion."⁶⁶

Attitudes toward the observance of purdah vary considerably, but according to Emmy Bos Kunst in all the different ethnic groups of women she interviewed in Azam Basti, "the women without any exception are convinced that it is a must for women to observe purdah."⁶⁷ Reasons given for the need to practice purdah included religion, customs, self-protection, and respect. Kunst received such replies as:

"I go on in the way I have learnt; my mother did it, every woman does it, so do I."

"I am safe when I go out in a burqa" ... "otherwise you get in trouble with men."

"Our Pathan men are very strict about it; they want to keep their wives completely for themselves and don't like other men to look at them." 68

In a survey of men students taken in 1956, there was a general agreement that pardah was "illogical". However, when the question arose concerning their sisters the reply was quite the contrary. Woodsmall got the impression that the male students held a liberal point of view but were constrained from active promotion of the elimination of pardah "which would be unpopular with the religious forces." 69

Rural women who engage in agricultural activities have for the sake of convenience, discarded the burqa to work in the fields, but outside their own domain they don their burqa or one of the other concealing devices. Riding along country roads or walking through village streets today one seldom sees the face of a woman between about the ages of 16 and 45.

Women of middle-class families appear to observe pardah as a symbol of prestige. In cities a black or tan silky burqa, is often worn as a fashionable garment.

In urban areas and on university campuses, however, the use of the burqa is apparently diminishing among the highest socio-economic and educated strata of the population. The implications of continued urbanization and an increase in the number of women in universities would seem to suggest a continued lessening of the influence of pardah, but as yet such innovative influences have had little impact on the overall situation.

Education

Traditional Attitudes and Customs

The attitude towards female education is generally negative. Traditionally, education is associated with working, and, since a woman is not required to earn money, it is not necessary for a woman to be educated. Housework is considered sufficient. 70

Parents are also reluctant to spend money on female education because girls will go into another family at marriage. Education, therefore, from the economic point of view, would be a bad investment.

In recent years even, the impression of men about the average Pakistani educated woman is not one of high opinion.

... "they consider her quite useless. An expensive good-for-nothing. A white-elephant. "over-possessive, small hearted, narrow-minded, unnecessarily jealous, too demanding, nagging, domineering, arrogant, stubborn, short-sighted and rigid." Best to be avoided, for so stifling, gagging and suffocating. Especially if she is a career woman, for then her so-called independence or ability to fend for herself, makes her not a friend, companion or equal to man, but his constant rival and critic -- the leader of the opposition." 71

Similar statements are not uncommon, but this short-sighted attitude is certainly not held by all Pakistani men. For example, the men interviewed by the author appeared quite proud of their wife's or sister's achievements. Perhaps this reflects a change in attitude towards female education in Pakistan.

Rural Education

Even in remote villages, girls primary schools have finally found their place. The Pakistan Government has made the Education Department responsible for establishing new schools in all villages where the Union Council could provide a building and at least 30 girls could be enrolled." 72 Most of the village schools are one or two room rented buildings, usually dilapidated 'katcha houses' (houses made of mud, dung and straw) furnished with mats woven from date leaves or bamboo (chatais).

Progress in the education of rural females is hindered by the fear of the majority of villagers about the impact of education on their girls. As Saeed aptly phrased it "They are unaware whether education will increase their daughter's prestige or make them a victim of social censure." 73

The misconception that education for females is an evil thing is largely rooted in the traditional attitude of villagers towards the urban population. Village parents fear that their daughters

will develop the habits and fashion, i. e., the vices, of the city life. Besides not understanding the importance of sending girls to school, parents do not realize the detrimental effects of absenteeism. In most of the village schools Saeed visited, hardly 60 percent of the students attend school. ⁷⁴

Illiteracy

Illiteracy is probably the greatest handicap of women in Pakistan today. Table I shows that only 8.7 percent of the female population was literate in 1971-72. The most obvious observation is the vast difference between rural and urban female literacy rates. The average number of literate urban females in 1971-72 is 26.4 percent contrasted to a mere 3.3 percent rate among rural females.

The impact of the increasing number of schools is evident, as shown by the increase of literacy between the ages of 10 and 24. In urban areas more than 50 percent of the females between the ages of 12 and 19 are literate. Although the number of literate rural females is still low, there has been a three-fold increase between 1968-69 and 1971-72.

TABLE 1

Female Literacy By Age And Residence:
1968-69 and 1971-72

| Age Group | Female Literacy (Percent) | | | | | |
|-------------|---------------------------|---------|-------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| | Rural Areas | | Urban Areas | | All Pakistan | |
| | 1968-69 | 1971-72 | 1968-69 | 1971-72 | 1968-69 | 1971-72 |
| 9 | 1.4 | 1.2 | 12.8 | 15.6 | 4.2 | 4.5 |
| 10-11 | 5.7 | 7.8 | 36.2 | 44.2 | 13.7 | 17.1 |
| 12-14 | 8.2 | 11.5 | 45.5 | 51.4 | 19.0 | 22.6 |
| 15-19 | 8.2 | 9.0 | 43.0 | 51.9 | 18.1 | 20.6 |
| 20-24 | 2.9 | 4.6 | 30.5 | 35.7 | 7.9 | 12.0 |
| 25-29 | 3.5 | 2.2 | 22.3 | 25.0 | 7.9 | 7.0 |
| 30-34 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 17.0 | 18.7 | 5.0 | 5.4 |
| 35-39 | 2.2 | 1.3 | 17.7 | 18.6 | 6.2 | 0.1 |
| 40-44 | 1.2 | 1.5 | 12.6 | 15.3 | 4.2 | 4.6 |
| 45-49 | 0.9 | 0.5 | 12.1 | 12.0 | 3.3 | 3.4 |
| 50-54 | 0.5 | 0 | 6.3 | 7.8 | 1.6 | 1.6 |
| 55-59 | 0 | 0 | 7.1 | 8.9 | 1.8 | 1.8 |
| 60-64 | 0 | 0 | 3.8 | 4.8 | 0.7 | 1.1 |
| 65 and Over | 0 | 0 | 3.7 | 3.1 | 1.1 | 1.1 |
| All Females | 1.1 | 3.3 | 22.2 | 26.4 | 7.6 | 8.7 |

Educational Opportunities

While the number of female educational institutions has increased considerably since 1947, there is still a wide gap when compared to the number of male educational institutions.

Table 2 shows that women have fewer educational facilities than those enjoyed by men at all levels up to universities which are co-educational. The opportunities for girls to continue education beyond primary schools are restricted by the small number of schools beyond the primary level. During the 1972/73 academic year there were 14,087 primary schools for girls, 1,127 middle schools, and 603 high schools. In other words, there was one girl's high school for every 23 primary schools and one middle school for every 12.5 primary schools. Comparable figures for boys yielded one high school for every 10 primary schools and one middle school for every 10.5 primary schools. Opportunities in higher education for women, while greatly expanded since 1947/48, are still far fewer than for men. Only seven professional colleges for women existed in Pakistan in 1972/73 compared to 69 for men.

The situation with respect to enrollments in primary through high school is similar (Table 3). There has been a ten-fold increase in the numbers of girls enrolled in schools between 1947/48 and 1972/73, but there are still nearly three times as many boys in school as girls. Even more discouraging is the fact that there is only one girl in middle school for every nine in primary. However, the difference between girls enrolled in high school to those in middle is not nearly as great. There is one girl enrolled in high school for every two in middle school. The attrition rate for boys is also high although not as high as for girls. There is one boy in high school for every 10 in primary schools and four boys in Middle school for every 10 in primary. It must be emphasized that these are only approximations of the actual school attrition rates for they mask differences in cohort size and the fact that progressively larger numbers of students have been enrolling in primary schools each year, but they represent a reasonable overview of the process. The process becomes even more acute in higher education as can be seen in Table 4.

TABLE 2

| | | Y E A R | | | | |
|------------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | 1947/48 | 1954/55 | 1962/63 | 1967/68 | 1972/73 |
| Primary | Male | 6,864 | 11,688 | 28,338 | 27,129 | 33,719 |
| | Female | 1,549 | 2,474 | 6,715 | 9,324 | 14,087 |
| Middle | Male | 2,037 | 1,321 | 1,814 | 2,299 | 3,208 |
| | Female | 153 | 196 | 423 | 719 | 1,127 |
| High | Male | 344 | 599 | 1,074 | 1,369 | 1,799 |
| | Female | 64 | 148 | 275 | 458 | 603 |
| Secondary Vocational | Male | 28 | 50 | 99 | 93 | 149 |
| | Female | 18 | 40 | 41 | 72 | 135 |
| Arts and Science Colleges | Male | 35 | 58 | 120 | 175 | 263 |
| | Female | 5 | 19 | 39 | 76 | 99 |
| Professional Colleges | Male | ... | 22 | 36 | 45 | 69 |
| | Female | ... | 2 | 5 | 5 | 7 |
| Universities | Total | 2 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 8 |

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics, 1947/48 to 1972/73;
Bureau of Educational Planning and Management,
Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

TABLE 3

Enrollment in Primary and Secondary Educational
Institutions in Pakistan by Sex

| | | Y E A R | | | | |
|----------------------|--------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | | 1947/48 | 1954/55 | 1962/63 | 1967/68 | 1972/73 |
| Primary (I - V) | Male | 660,000 | 1,310,000 | 1,960,000 | 2,760,000 | 3,230,000 |
| | Female | 110,000 | 240,000 | 530,000 | 990,000 | 1,210,000 |
| Middle (V - VIII) | Male | 200,000 | 287,000 | 409,000 | 629,000 | 811,000 |
| | Female | 21,000 | 45,000 | 82,000 | 164,000 | 195,000 |
| High (IX - X) | Male | 51,000 | 94,000 | 171,000 | 225,000 | 334,000 |
| | Female | 7,000 | 15,000 | 38,000 | 50,000 | 75,000 |

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics, 1947/48 to 1972/73;
Bureau of Educational Planning and Management.
Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

TABLE 4

Enrollment in Colleges and Universities in Pakistan by Sex

| | | Y E A R | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | 1947/48 | 1954/55 | 1962/63 | 1967/68 | 1972/73 |
| Secondary Vocational | Male | 2,300 | 7,300 | 11,800 | 16,000 | 30,000 |
| | Female | 1,600 | 3,300 | 8,200 | 8,400 | 13,000 |
| Arts & Science Colleges | Male | 12,400 | 37,400 | 76,000 | 119,000 | 150,000 |
| | Female | 1,100 | 5,900 | 18,100 | 34,300 | 50,000 |
| Professional Colleges | Male | 4,041 | 7,249 | 12,436 | 21,700 | 32,146 |
| | Female | 327 | 833 | 2,470 | 3,300 | 5,450 |
| Universities | Male | 588 | 1,949 | 7,785 | 12,910 | 17,800 |
| | Female | 56 | 49 | 1,679 | 2,993 | 4,500 |

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics, 1947/48 to 1972/73;
 Bureau of Educational Planning and Management,
 Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

Table 5 displays the changing pattern of sex ratios by level of school in Pakistan between 1947/48 and 1972/73. For the first three levels of schools, sex ratios have declined impressively since partition. Whereas there were 6 boys for every girl in primary school in 1947/48, there were only 2.7 boys for each girl in 1972/73. Interestingly though, the sex ratio in high schools has remained constant from 1962/63, and changes in the sex ratio for the various higher education levels have been slight since 1962/63. In both Secondary-Vocational schools and Professional Colleges there were actually a larger proportion of women to men enrolled in 1962/63 than there were in 1972/73.

An examination of the enrollment in Professional Colleges by type provides a partial explanation of this phenomenon (Table 6). The total number of women enrolled more than doubled, but the total number of men enrolled nearly tripled. Women experienced large absolute increases particularly in medicine, home economics, and education, while numbers of men enrolled in engineering, medicine, commerce, law, and education increased substantially. In balance what has happened is that while opportunities have expanded rapidly for women in professional colleges, they have expanded even more rapidly for men.

TABLE 5

Sex Ratios of Enrollment in Educational Institutions

Male - Female

| | Academic Year | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 1947/48 | 1954/55 | 1962/63 | 1967/68 | 1972/73 |
| Primary | 8:1 | 5.5:1 | 3.7:1 | 2.8:1 | 2.7:1 |
| Middle | 9.5:1 | 6.4:1 | 5.0:1 | 3.8:1 | 4.2:1 |
| High | 7.3:1 | 6.3:1 | 4.5:1 | 4.5:1 | 4.5:1 |
| Secondary - Vocational | 1.4:1 | 2.2:1 | 1.4:1 | 1.9:1 | 2.3:1 |
| Arts and Science Colleges | 11.2:1 | 6.3:1 | 4.2:1 | 3.5:1 | 3.0:1 |
| Professional Colleges | 12.4:1 | 8.7:1 | 5.0:1 | 6.6:1 | 5.9:1 |
| Universities | 10.5:1 | 39.8:1 | 4.7:1 | 4.3:1 | 4.0:1 |

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics, 1947/48 to 1972/73;
Bureau of Educational Planning and Management,
Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

TABLE 6

Enrollment in Professional Colleges in Pakistan
by Type and Sex

| | | Academic Year | |
|-----------------------------|--------|---------------|---------|
| | | 1962/63 | 1972/73 |
| Total Professional Colleges | Male | 12,436 | 32,146 |
| | Female | 2,470 | 5,450 |
| Agriculture | Male | 1,631 | 1,607 |
| | Female | - | 3 |
| Engineering | Male | ... | 4,162 |
| | Female | ... | 31 |
| Medicine | Male | 3,068 | 5,262 |
| | Female | 1,050 | 1,697 |
| Commerce | Male | 2,897 | 7,484 |
| | Female | 4 | 234 |
| Law | Male | 3,462 | 10,010 |
| | Female | 50 | 134 |
| Education | Male | 1,570 | 2,517 |
| | Female | 746 | 1,741 |
| Indigenous Medicine | Male | ... | 663 |
| | Female | ... | 58 |
| Homeopathic | Male | ... | 230 |
| | Female | ... | 17 |
| Fine Arts | Male | 88 | 311 |
| | Female | 19 | 57 |
| Home Economics | Female | 601 | 1,478 |

Source: Pakistan Education Statistics 1947/48 to 1972/73;
Bureau of Educational Planning and Management,
Ministry of Education, Islamabad.

LEGEND: 1) ... = data not available 2) - = data nil.

Economic Role Of Women

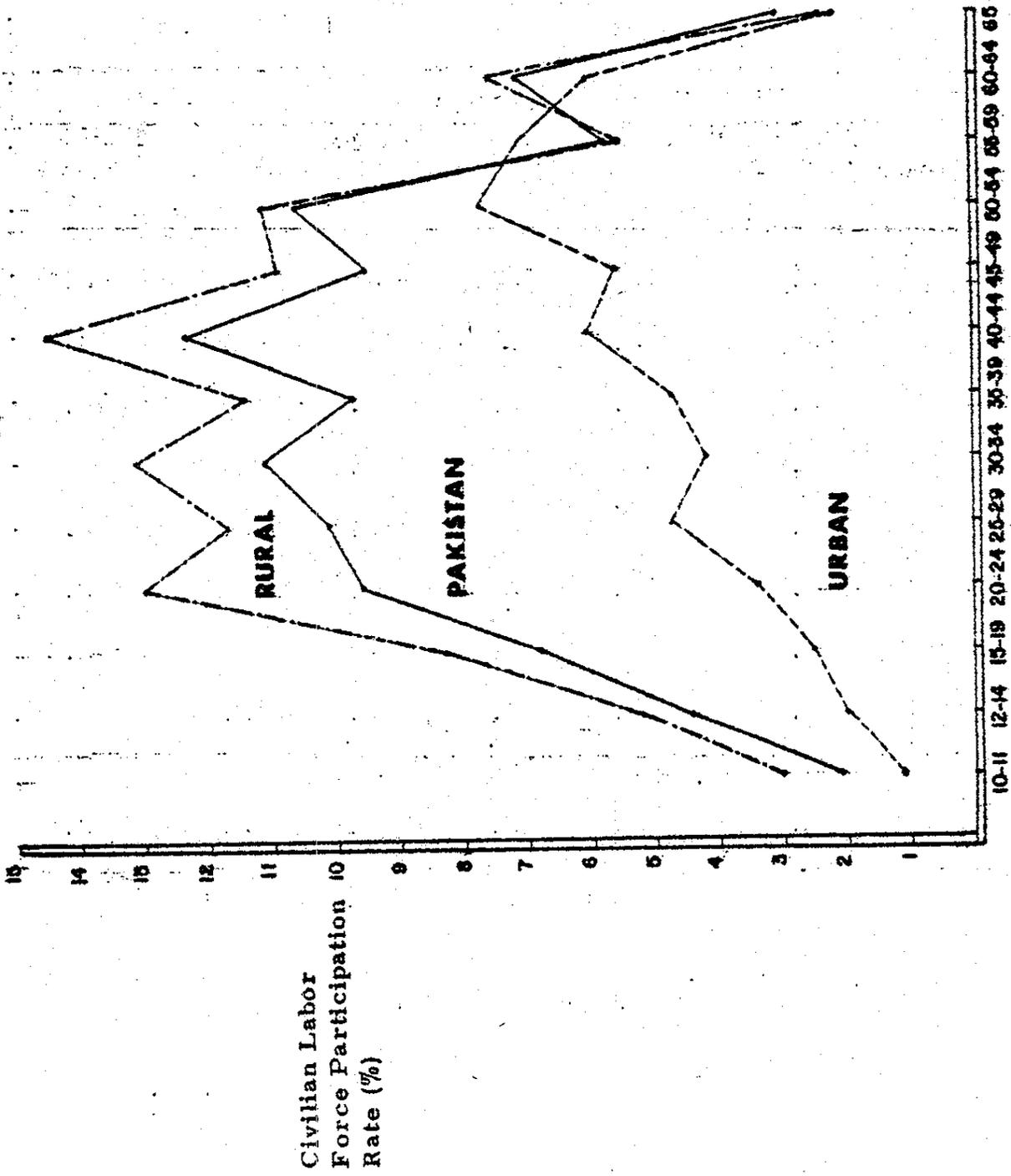
The proportion of women in the labor force of Pakistan is among the lowest in the world. The Labor Force Survey, 1971-72⁷⁵ shows that only 8.1 percent of females aged 10 and over were actively involved in the labor force. This compares with 78.7 percent for males.⁷⁶

Figure 1 shows that rural female labor force participation rates are significantly higher than urban rates in nearly every age group. The fact that the urban rate appears to be higher than the rural rate for women in the 55-59 age group is probably not statistically significant.

The shape of the participation rate curve differs markedly between rural and urban women. Labor force participation is relatively high for rural women of all age groups from 20-54. It rises sharply from age 10-20 and declines sharply after age 54. Urban women, on the other hand, demonstrate a gradually increasing level of participation in the labor force from age 10 through age 54. The decline in rate after age 54 is not as precipitous for urban women.

These basic differences in the shape of the curves undoubtedly reflect the differences in physical demands between urban and rural work. They may also reflect differences in the amount of training for urban jobs, the relative difficulty of entering the urban labor force, and the constraints children represent to young women who might otherwise enter the urban labor force. The similarity of the shape in participation rate curves between rural areas and all Pakistan is an indication of the proportion of the total labor force made up by rural workers.

Some indication of the changing nature of female participation rates can be gained through a comparison of the Labor Force Survey statistics between 1968-69 and 1971-72 (Table 7). For urban female workers, changes in each age group appear to be quite small. On the other hand, participation rates for rural women seem to have increased in nearly each age group. For the most productive age groups, from 20-49, increases in participation rates have been sizeable. Due to the short time span and the relatively small sample on which the Labor Force Survey



Civilian Labor
Force Participation
Rate (%)

RURAL

PAKISTAN

URBAN

Females By Age Group

Female Labor Force Participation Rates By Residence By
Age Group 1971-72

TABLE 7

Change in Female Labor Force Participation
Rates by Residence, By Age Group
1968-69 to 1971-72

| Age Group | URBAN | | RURAL | | PAKISTAN | |
|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|
| | Rate 1971-72 | Change 1968-69- 1971-72 | Rate 1971-72 | Change 1968-69- 1971-72 | Rate 1971-72 | Change 1968-69- 1971-72 |
| 10-14 | 1.6 | -0.4 | 4.3 | -0.1 | 3.4 | +0.2 |
| 15-19 | 2.5 | +0.2 | 8.5 | +1.5 | 6.8 | +1.3 |
| 20-29 | 4.1 | -0.4 | 11.6 | +4.7 | 9.9 | +3.6 |
| 30-39 | 4.4 | -0.5 | 12.4 | +3.4 | 10.5 | +0.9 |
| 40-49 | 5.8 | -0.6 | 12.8 | +4.1 | 11.1 | +2.9 |
| 50-54 | 7.7 | +1.7 | 11.1 | +0.6 | 10.6 | +0.7 |
| 55-64 | 6.5 | -0.2 | 6.7 | +0.1 | 6.4 | -0.6 |
| 65 & Over | 2.4 | -0.5 | 2.3 | -0.4 | 3.0 | 0 |
| Total (10 & Over) | 3.9 | -0.2 | 9.5 | +2.0 | 8.1 | +1.5 |

is based it may be dangerous to infer large scale changes in female labor force participation. However, these statistics would seem to suggest that at least in the case of rural women participation in the labor force is increasing. Availability of the 1972 Housing, Economic and Demographic Survey (HED) next year may shed more light on this question.

In addition to the constraints imposed by the low educational achievement of women, traditional attitudes and the practice of purdah hamper women from working outside the home.

Traditional Attitudes

As in all cultural aspects there are regional variations in attitudes toward women working outside the home, but in most instances "... it is the role of the man to provide the family livelihood, and a man who allows his women folk to take jobs outside the home is reproached." ⁷⁷ Dependency on the male family members, for the most part, has restricted females from becoming self-sufficient.

In a study concerning 66 women registered with the Employment Exchange in Lahore, 30 percent said their relatives and their community did not approve of their working outside their homes. About 70 percent said that their immediate family members approved of their working. Reasons for seeking employment were as follows:

| | |
|--|--------------|
| "To support the family" | 50 percent |
| "To supplement the family income" | 45.5 percent |
| "To live an economically independent life" | 4.5 percent |

The reasons given suggest that a small minority work for the sole purpose of living an economically independent life. ⁷⁸ Rather, women are forced to work to provide more resources for their families consumption.

A very small percentage of the women working are unmarried. Of the 66 women interviewed 72 percent were not single. Single women, if they work at all usually quit after they are married. "Employment in such cases is regarded as an interim period of waiting for the right man to appear rather than a career." ⁷⁹

Dr. Baqai, a sociologist from the University of Karachi, has recently completed a survey of 225 professional women of various occupational groups in the Karachi area, including professors, beauticians and packaging girls, a unique occupation in Pakistan where women pack garments for export. Baqai found that the major goal for working women was to educate their children. He also found that, even if working full time, women still take care of household activities. These findings reflect the continued interest in the family and home which is contrary to the traditional belief that educated and working women neglect their family and household activities. ⁸⁰

Another commonly held belief that girls will not work after they have finished their schooling, that is a waste of money, has been disproven at least in ^{the} medical field. Recent statistics, however sporadically gathered, disclosed that 98 percent of the qualified female doctors are working either full time or part time. ⁸¹

Purdah

The purdah system is one of the major factors keeping women from seeking employment. They face great difficulties in finding jobs where they can work in seclusion from males. Reluctant to work in offices as clerks, typists, or as sales girls, the majority want jobs in girls schools or colleges secluded from males. Of the 66 women Shah interviewed, 30 preferred teaching because purdah could still be observed. ⁸²

In an interview with a 22 year old unmarried girl, she related how the traditional observance of purdah limited her to teaching girls at home. While she did not mind working in an office, her mother, because of the family tradition of purdah, preferred to live under great economic hardship rather than risk her daughter's reputation and the family's face by exposing her daughter to supposedly a "hostile" environment. ⁸³

Even in the fast growing metropolitan city of Karachi, educated working girls, in some instances, prefer to work in seclusion from males. For example, young girls employed at the United Bank Limited and Habib Banks of Karachi are demanding separate working sections from the men and want a female supervisor. ⁸⁴

Other factors appear to limit women from taking jobs outside the home. In addition to the constraints imposed on women by low educational achievement, traditional attitudes and the practice of pardah, young unmarried girls face the problem of finding proper housing in both the rural and urban areas. In rural areas where openings for college and university trained women are available in social welfare, family planning and rural development, girls are discouraged from accepting these jobs because of the lack of proper housing. Working mothers are further restricted from taking a job outside the home because of the lack of day care centers.

It is obvious that a number of problems must be solved if more women are to be integrated into the labor force in Pakistan.

Women in Farm Activities

While the 1971-72 Labor Force Survey showed that 9.5 percent of rural females were participants in the labor force, authorities believe that women contribute considerably more to the agricultural sector if indirectly.

By working in the fields women in rural areas, in addition to earning some of the family income, save on expenditure that would have incurred by having to pay hired hands. In this respect women contribute significantly to both the family income and the national economy.

The results of a study conducted in four villages in Lyallpur District revealed that women are actively involved in farm operations from the beginning of the harvesting season to the storing of the yield.⁸⁵ Women also feed and milk animals, clean cattle sheds, carry meals to the farm, and during leisure hours, spin, weave, sew, knit or make other handicrafts. This survey may not represent the total rural female contribution in farm activities, but it is indicative of the widespread involvement of women in agriculture. In more than 80 percent of the families interviewed, women were actively involved in farm work. The other 20 percent either observed pardah; were from nuclear families whereby the housewife did not have time to work in fields; or they did not have to work because they could afford to hire laborers.

The three major factors affecting the working behavior of women were the type of community; the caste to which the women belong; and the level of education. The most significant observation from Table 8 shows those farm activities which demand the larger proportion of women's time. These activities are cleaning grains, cutting fodder, and threshing wheat. In addition to working in the fields, women prepare and take foods to their husbands on the farm and a large percentage, 84.2 percent, make handicrafts during their leisure hours.

Education appears to have a significant affect on participation in farm activities (Table 9). It is interesting to note that any amount of education automatically lessens the involvement of women in farm activities. There is essentially no difference in the rate of participation between women who have been educated up to middle school and women who have completed Matric and above. The high rate of literate women working during leisure hours reflects the available time they have over illiterate women who spend much more time in farm activities.

The caste to which a female belongs has a striking effect on her participation in farm activities (Table 10). However, it should be noted that the caste system in Pakistan does not have any religious connotations, but is instead an occupational strata. The concept of a caste system in the Islamic society had its origins from the Hindus who converted to Islam and retained their occupational caste identity. Definitions of the different casts are as follows by rank:

- (1) Rajput means "prince" (rajas'son). Rajputs are traditionally warriors, rulers, landowners and cultivators who were probably descendants of Central Asia who came to India before Islam.
- (2) Jats are landowners, superb farmers and contribute substantially to the Pakistan fighting forces. They hold a highly respectable social position, but are lower ranking than Rajputs.
- (3) Arians are an agricultural tribe of good standing, but have adopted new occupations as well. When new land was opened by irrigation many moved into the canal colony districts.

- (4) Gujars are most numerous in Northwest Punjab. They are related to the Gujars of former NorthWest Frontier Province, but have a higher status in the Punjab ranking only slightly below the jats.
- (5) Baluchis are most numerous in the Southwest Punjab. They work in agriculture and animal husbandry, and are especially known as camel drivers.³⁶

Rajput women of the highest ranking caste have a much lower participation rate than the lower ranking castes. High caste, as with educational attainment, acts as a prohibition against women in farm activities. Therefore, they have more leisure time to spend in household related activities.

Nevertheless, women in all three of the listed categories, whether by community, level of education or caste, contribute highly to the agricultural sector as well as to the overall needs of the family. This is extremely important to bring attention to in the discussion of female labor force participation, because the capabilities of women are too often overlooked as a potential human resource for economic development.

A number of dedicated women working for voluntary organizations are continuing their struggle to focus attention on the energies and abilities of women throughout Pakistan. Women's voluntary associations, especially APWA as mentioned earlier, has, from the inception of Pakistan, devoted a large amount of time and effort towards raising the status of women. Non-profit, other international voluntary organizations and several Divisions of the Pakistan Government have begun to focus on the activities that would lead to the enhancement of Pakistani women.

The following section provides a brief description of the efforts directed toward the improvement of the well-being of women in Pakistan.

TABLE 8

- 38 -

Participation of Women in Farm Operations by Type of Community

| Type of Community | Preparation of Land | | Sowing Season | | Harvesting Season | | Sugarcane Processing | | Cleaning | | Animal Care | | Other Activities | | Average recent of total participations |
|-------------------|---------------------|------|---------------|--------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|-----------------|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------|------|--|
| | Fodder-Cutting | Land | Hoeing | Season | Wheat Cutting | Wheat Threshing | Cotton Picking | Pro-cessing | Grains | Milking animals | Work During Leisure Hours | Meals to the Farm | | | |
| Janglees* | 61.1 | | 5.6 | | 64.8 | 81.5 | 24.5 | 25.9 | 96.4 | 29.1 | 74.5 | | 96.4 | 55.9 | |
| Settlers** | 63.6 | | 52.3 | | 45.5 | 38.6 | 56.8 | 6.8 | 81.8 | 5.5 | 96.4 | | 78.2 | 52.5 | |
| Refugees*** | 80.2 | | 4.9 | | 27.2 | 72.8 | 44.4 | 48.1 | 80.0 | 10.3 | 81.8 | | 87.3 | 53.7 | |
| Average % | 68.3 | | 20.9 | | 45.8 | 64.3 | 43.2 | 26.9 | 86.1 | 31.6 | 84.2 | | 89.9 | = | |

* Those who settled before colonization, i. e. native inhabitants

** People who migrated from the densely populated areas of East Punjab in the beginning of this century.

*** Those who came here after the independence of Pakistan in 1947.

Source: Kishwar Saeed, Rural Women's Participation in Farm Operations, Jyallpur: West Pakistan University (1966)

TABLE 9

Effect of Education on Female Participation Farm Activities

| Education | Preparation of land | | | Sowing Season | | | Harvesting | | | Animal Care | | | Average Percent of Participation |
|------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|---------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| | Fodder Cutting | Pouring Seeds | Fodder Cutting | Seeds Cutting | Floeing | Fodder Cutting | Season Fodder Cutting | Feeding of Milk Animals | Feeding Power Animals | Cleaning Cattle Shed | Activities Work During Leisure Hours | | |
| Non-Literate | 75.0 | 51.0 | 77.0 | 15.4 | 82.7 | 89.6 | 92.1 | 51.9 | 75.9 | 67.4 | | | |
| Upto Middle | 27.7 | 29.5 | 70.5 | 9.1 | 75.9 | 75.9 | 71.2 | 30.9 | 93.3 | 53.8 | | | |
| Matric and Above | 51.6 | 22.6 | 48.4 | 32.3 | 61.3 | 78.6 | 67.4 | 30.6 | 90.9 | 53.5 | | | |

Source: Kishwar Saeed, Rural Women's Participation in Farm Operations, Lyallpur West Pakistan University (1966)

TABLE 10

- 40 -

Affects of Caste on Female Participation in Farm Activities

| Sowing Season | Caste | | | | | | | | | | Animal Care | | | Other Activities | |
|---------------|--------|---------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--|
| | Hoehng | Wheat Cutting | Blinding Sheaves | Thresting Wheat | Cotton Picking | Sugar-cane Processing | Fodder-cutting | Cleaning Grain's | Feeding Milk Animals | Milking Animals | Cleaning Cattle Shed | Work During Leisure to the Hours | Meals to the Farm | % of Partici- pation | |
| Rajput | 40.0 | 80.0 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 20.0 | 60.0 | 78.3 | 47.8 | 91.3 | 52.2 | 95.7 | 39.1 | 68.41 | | |
| Jat | 5.8 | 20.0 | 57.1 | 51.4 | 40.0 | 14.3 | 80.0 | 95.0 | 87.5 | 82.1 | 87.5 | 95.0 | 80.57 | | |
| Arahn | 45.5 | 41.8 | 74.5 | 52.7 | 63.6 | 27.3 | 74.5 | 91.7 | 91.9 | 89.1 | 87.7 | 87.7 | 89.57 | | |
| Gujar | 3.4 | 31.0 | 93.1 | 86.2 | 33.3 | 75.9 | 79.9 | 91.2 | 88.2 | 91.2 | 87.9 | 76.5 | 76.6 | 93.24 | |
| Baluch | 3.6 | 65.5 | 87.3 | 83.6 | 27.3 | 23.6 | 78.2 | 94.8 | 82.8 | 74.1 | 80.7 | 77.6 | 94.8 | 87.39 | |

Source: Kishwar Saeed, Rural Women's Participation in Farm Operations, Lyallpur: West Pakistan University (1966)

PROGRAMS FOR ENHANCING THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Industrial Homes

Industrial Homes are women's handicraft centers, of which 3,000 are in existence throughout Pakistan. The objective behind these centers is to provide employment opportunities for women to supplement the family income. The two-fold approach is to provide: 1) assistance to already skilled women in locating work opportunities; 2) training of unskilled and semi-skilled women. 87

Industrial homes focus on females aged 12-35 who are trained in a variety of handicraft skills such as embroidery, sewing and cutting of dresses, knitting, mirror work on cloth, woodwork, leather craft, and weaving. The women, after training, usually do their work at home and bring the finished product to the local center which markets the handicrafts through its own sales shop.

Adult Literacy Programs

Adult Literacy Programs, initiated in 1956 by APWA, have expanded in recent years. Adult literacy activities are being conducted in 90 different district units and 70 training courses for teacher-trainers have been conducted involving local women leadership in organizing and running the program. Literacy is the foundation for broadening interests and the basis for further training and education. Therefore, the Adult Literacy Program has the potential for opening up new vistas for women who did not have the opportunity to attend formal schooling. 88

Maternal Child Health Centers

Some 894 Maternal Child Health (MCH) Centers have been established throughout Pakistan. MCH Centers vary in size, facilities and popularity, but in general they provide a family planning program and a motivational program two or three times a week to instruct women in family planning and nutrition.

MCH Centers usually employ one Lady Health Visitor (LHV) who is a trained paramedic, and is assisted by a dai, or local midwife. The LHV examines and diagnoses patients, dispenses medicines, conducts various clinics, gives health and nutrition talks, holds sewing classes and also visits patients at home. 89

Population Planning Programs

Population Planning Programs, while their objectives are not specifically designed to raise the status of women are worthy of mention. Population Planning Programs provide employment for 6,941 females working as doctors, inspecting assistants, health visitors, motivators, dais and dai motivators. The long-range effects of smaller families are even more important in terms of health, education and welfare for both mothers and children. ⁹⁰

Integrated Programs

The Orangi Pilot Project established near Karachi by Central All Pakistan Womens Association (APWA) represents a model by which other projects could be based. In 1970, the Orangi Project started with a simple milk feeding program, but has expanded its facilities to offer health services, adult education classes and needlework and tailoring classes. A Day Care Center was started in 1972 for children of working mothers of the Orangi Sector. Nutrition education and supplementary feeding programs have been added. CARE has assisted in providing wheat, flour, milk powder and other food supplements. ⁹¹

Integrated programs show great promise for the future in that they offer a broader range of services and activities which attract a larger number of women. These various programs represent an initial step towards raising the status of women in Pakistan and an increasing awareness of the state of womankind in Pakistan. But they also represent the efforts of a very small number of dedicated individuals who have only recently begun to get the programs on their feet.

Undoubtedly, International Women's Year has had an impact on focusing attention to the overall situation of women throughout the world. In Pakistan, a number of institutes have contributed in some way, by holding seminars, gatherings, workshops, compiling bibliographies of literature on women and looking into areas where research on women is weak.

Begum Nusrat Bhutto has demonstrated her support for International Women's Year by speaking out on women's issues throughout the year. Begum Bhutto presiding over the first meeting of the National and Coordinating Committee set up for the observance of International Women's Year ... said that International Women's Year is being observed in pursuance of the resolution by the United Nations General Assembly to intensify efforts and undertakings to improve the conditions of women and their contribution, with special reference:

- (a) To the promotion of equality between men and women.
- (b) To ensure full integration of women in the total development efforts at the national regional and international levels.
- (c) To recognize the importance of increasing women's contribution in strengthening world peace. ⁹²

The present Government has taken an interest in women by making provisions for vocational and technical training. Recently a Rs. 10 lakh project has been approved by the Government under which the Manpower Division will set up five Secretarial Training Centers for training women as secretaries, receptionists, account assistants and telephone operators. Secretarial Training Centers are proposed to be located one each in Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar and Quetta. ⁹³

CONCLUSION

There is already a general agreement among those interested in improving the status of women that it is necessary to expand existing programs to reach a larger proportion of the female population.

Women make up 46.96 percent of the population of Pakistan of whom 73.95 percent live in rural areas. Yet, in general, the rural female population has been neglected in attempts to improve the well-being of women in Pakistan.

If rural women could be partially relieved of some of the burdensome time consuming tasks such as carrying water and gathering fire materials, their energies and abilities could be better concentrated on the development of the country. Rural women must develop an awareness of themselves as active contributing members of their families and communities, but until they are relieved of some of their cumbersome chores, they will not have time to do so.

Although the trend is definitely changing towards improving the status of women in Pakistan, the traditional domestic role is slow in breaking down. The form and magnitude of women's emancipation tends to vary with the type and size of community. In large cities like Karachi and Lahore, women have secured considerable physical, social and cultural emancipation. Rural women, however, for the most part, have not experienced such an emancipation.

As it stands, nearly half of the nation's human resources are wasted because women have not been integrated into the labor force. Interviews with village women revealed a strong desire to earn wages to supplement the family income. Those who have had even the simple opportunity to learn handicraft skills take great pride in their work.

International Women's Year brings a unique opportunity to focus attention on the status of women, but it should be a continuing process and not end in December, 1975.

Women in Pakistan are becoming increasingly aware of their rights and self-dignity. The opportunity exists to launch a campaign to extend the rights of women through governmental legislation and provision of employment activities in the private and public sectors throughout Pakistan.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 S.A. Chipp, The Role of Women Elites in a Modernizing Country: The All Pakistani Women's Association (Dissertation), Ann Arbor, Michigan: University Microfilms (1970), pg. 69.
- 2 Ibid., pg. 70
- 3 See Chipp, pg. 73-74 for further details on the objectives of APWA.
- 4 Carroll McClure Pastner, Sexual Dichotomization in Society and Culture: The Women of Panjgur, Baluchistan (Dissertation) Brandels University, Department of Anthropology (January, 1971), pg. 7.
- 5 Centre Cultural Islamique, Paris Introduction to Islam, Hyderabad, India: Citizen Press (1959), pg. 77.
- 6 Ibid., pg. 129
- 7 Quran 973 and 485 CF. 3193 as quoted in Reuben Levy's, The Social Structure of Islam, Cambridge; University Press (1957).
- 8 Quran 3335 as quoted in Levy, pg. 129.
- 9 Center Cultural Islamic, Paris, op.cit., pg. 131.
- 10 Ameer Ali Syed, The Spirit of Islam: A History of The Evaluation and Ideals of Islam, London; Christophers (1961).
- 11 Quran 438
- 12 Levy, op.cit., pg. 117-118
- 13 Ibid., pg. 121
- 14 Levy, op.cit., pg. 97-121
- 15 Ibid., pg. 121

- 16 Quran 2228 in Levy, pg. 121.
- 17 Levy, op. cit., pg. 123
- 18 Ibid., pg. 106
- 19 Quran 419
- 20 Sura 419
- 21 Qoran 4 6-9
- 22 op. cit, Levy, pg. 123.
- 23 Pastner, op. cit., pg. 160
- 24 Quran 43, in Levy, pg. 97
- 25 Ibid., .. 12 in Levy, pg. 97
- 26 Zekiye Eglar, A Punjabi Village in Pakistan, New York: Columbia University (1960) pg. 45.
- 27 Pastner, op. cit., pg. 155
- 28 Surah 413
- 29 Pastner, op. cit., pg. 160
- 30 Donald N. Wilber, Pakistan: Its People Its Society Its Culture New Haven: HRAF Press (1964, pg. 129)
- 31 Chipp, op. cit., pg. 59
- 32 Hanna Papanek "Purdah in Pakistan: Seclusion and Modern Occupations for Women" Journal of Marriage and the Family (Aug. 1971), pg. 519-20; and Herbert Albrecht, Living Conditions of Rural Families in Pakistan (translated by V. June Hager), Islamabad: Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany: (1974), pg. 31
- 33 Ibid., Albrecht, pg. 31

- 34 Quran 33⁵⁹ F., as quoted in Levy, pg. 124-125
- 35 Chipp, op. cit., pg. 59
- 36 Quran 24³⁰ as quoted in Levy, pg. 125
- 37 Carroll McClure Pastner. "Accomodations to Purdah: The Female Perspective" Journal of Marriage and the Family (May 1974), pg. 409
- 38 Ibid., pg. 410
- 39 Papanek, op. cit., pg. 519
- 40 Pastner, "Accomodations to Purdah: The Female Perspective" op. cit., pg. 410
- 41 Albrecht, op. cit., pg. 14
- 42 Wilber op. cit., pg. 129
- 43 Begum Zeb-un-Nisa Hamidullah "The Progressive Role of Women in Pakistan" NIPA Public Administration Review (April - June, 1964), pg. 16 in Chipp, op. cit., pg. 36
- 44 Wilber op., cit. pg. 129
- 45 Ibid., pg. 21
- 46 Pastner, op. cit., pg. 239-240
- 47 Ibid., pg. 232-233
- 48 Ibid., pg. 233
- 49 Ibid., pg. 236
- 50 Ibid., pg. 236
- 51 Pastner "Accomodations to Purdah", op., cit. pg. 411
- 52 Ibid., pg. 411
- 53 Ibid., pg. 411

- 54 Donald E. Smith (ed.) South Asian Politics and Religion
Princeton: Princeton University Press, (1966), pg. 42-43
as quoted in Chipp, pg. 38
- 55 Md. Iqbal Choudhry and Mushtaq Ahmed Khan, Pakistan
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(1964), pg. 45 as quoted in Chipp, pg. 39.
- 56 Chaudhary, Zafar Hussain and Zia-Ul-Islam Janjua, The
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- 57 Ibid., pg. 32-33
- 58 Chipp. op. cit., pg. 45-46
- 59 Ibid., pg. 40
- 60 Op. cit., Chaudhary, Ordinance 14, pg. 28
- 61 Ibid., pg. 10-11
- 62 Dawn, April 11, 1975
- 63 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- 64 Resolutions submitted by the Women's Rights Committee
of the United Nations Associations, March 8, 1975.
- 65 Papanek, op. cit., pg. 515
- 66 Ruth Woodsmall, Women and the New-East, Washington,
D. C. The Middle East Institute, (1960), pg. 103 in Chipp,
pg. 61
- 67 Emmy Bos Kunst, Women of Azam Basti, Karachi, by
author (1970), pg. 46
- 68 Ibid., pg. 46
- 69 Woodsmall, op. cit., pg. 103 in Chipp, pg. 61

70. Khalida Shah "Problems of Pakistani Women Seeking Employment" Contemporary Affairs, Vol. 2, (Autumn 1970) pg. 45.
71. Ikram Azam, "Women and the Home" The Pakistan Review Vol. XVII, #12 (December 1969), pg. 13
72. S. A. Saeed, "Problems of Female Education in Rural Areas" The Pakistan Review, Vol. XVI, #12 (December, 1968) pg. 23
73. Saeed, op.cit., pg. 23
74. Ibid., pg. 23
75. Labor Force Survey 1971-72, Statistical Division, Ministry of Finance, Planning and Development, Government of Pakistan
76. The Labor Force Survey uses the term "civilian labor force" where "labor force participation" is used in this paper. The civilian force as defined by the Labor Force Survey comprises the non-institutional population of 10 years and above who were found employed or unemployed during the reference period, i. e., the last week preceding the data of enumeration.
77. Wilbur, op. cit., pg. 128
78. Khalida Shah op. cit., "Problems of Pakistani Women Seeking Employment", pg. 46
79. Ibid., pg. 46
80. Dr. Baqai's report is in the process of being published. Information in this paper was obtained by a personal interview with Dr. Baqai, May 3, 1975.
81. Shahida Sheikh, (mimeograph) "Integration of Women in Development: Consultations in Pakistan" (April, 1975)
82. Shah op.cit., pg. 48
83. Ibid., pg. 47-8

- 84 Interview with Kris Lokin, Fredrickson Intern at University of Karachi, May 4, 1975
- 85 Kishwar Saeed, Rural Women's Participation in Farm Operations, Lyallpur: West Pakistan Agricultural University (1966).
- 86 Richard F. Nyrop and others Area Handbook of Pakistan Washington, Foreign Affairs Studies; American University, (1971).
- 87 Nasir Jafri (mimeograph) Industrial Homes and Nutrition Education: Women's Participation in People's Works Program (December 1972)
- 88 Dr. Firoza Ahmed "A Report of APWA's Activities in the Field of Adult Literacy Community Development in Rural and Fringe Areas" APWA Newsletter, Karachi: All Pakistan Women's Association (May - December, 1974).
- 89 See Donna L. Hardee's report on "Involving People in Nutrition Education, Health and Nutrition Division, USAID/ Islamabad, June 9.
- 90 Population Planning Program Statistics. USAID (1975)
- 91 Interview with Sarah Nasim, Research and Information Officer, APWA Headquarters Karachi and "Central APWA Pilot Projects" APWA Newsletter May-December, 1974 pg. 13-16
- 92 Begum Nusrat Bhutto, Speech given at the National Organizing and Coordinating Committee set up for the observance of International Women's Year in Rawalpindi, April 23, 1975, Pakistan Times, April, 24, 1975.
- 93 Khalida Shah "New Approaches to the Full Utilization of Womanpower," speech delivered at the International Women's Club Meeting. (April 23, 1975).

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