



REASON BEHIND LOW LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF FEMALE: A STUDY OF RURAL GUJRAT, PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Female participation in labor force is very important in the development of any economy. In Pakistan, the rate of female participation in real labor force is very low especially in country side areas, so the present study is conducted to find the reasons behind low labor force participation of female among rural areas of Gujrat, Pakistan. The objective of the study is not only to investigate the socio-economic factors but also to identify the demographic causes behind smaller quantity female in labor force. The universe for the present study was women aged 25-49 who work or not from rural area of Gujrat, Pakistan. Convenience sampling, a type of Non-probability Sampling was used to select respondent with sample size of 250. Questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection and Interviews schedule (face to face interview) for conducting information from respondents. The data was analyzed by and logistic regression model was applied to test the data. The result shows that family system, father's education, and attitude of relatives toward working female, number of dependents in household, female education, availability of job at nearest station and total household members were the reasons behind low labor force participation of female in rural Gujrat.

Keywords

Rural, Female, Labor Force, Economics, Pakistan.



1. Introduction

In Asian countries, an important factor behind less participation of women in labor force activities, are male dominancy and bad attitude of society towards working women. So, they mostly

engaged in unpaid services, greater efficiency in taking care of one's children or one's health, or enhanced ability to deal with problems or "disequilibria" in one's daily life. In these nations

the sensitivity of parents toward labor force activities influence on female decision about participation.

No doubt, there is rapid development in female education and healthcare, they continue to grip up by men in almost all fields of life. Pakistani women are not so dependent that they can take any decision due to social, cultural and traditional norms. This setup shows that women stay behind males not only in the house but in the society too. This practice is common in all developing countries. Low literacy rate, high birth rate, low life expectancy and non-recognition of their work in the family are some of the common characteristics of women of Pakistan.

The figures shows that now female labor force participation is considerably increasing in Pakistan as it was 4% in 1980-1990, 5.1% in 1995-98, 14% in 1999-2000 (according to labor force survey 1999-2000) and 21.5% in the year 2009-10. Female participation in labor force is not very high when it is compared with other South Asian countries i.e, 42% Bangladesh, 41% Nepal, 32% India and Bhutan, 37% in Srilanka (World Bank, 2002) .The South Asian's average FLFP rate is 33% (Human Development in South Asia 2000). The current study is an effort to investigate the different social, economic, and demographic factors which highly influencing the decision of women if they enter in job or not. Same topic is discussed in many studies by different researchers .But still there are some

factors which have not been discussed and identify the reasons behind low participation from female side by any researcher like effect of mother's education of the respondent, behavior of society towards working ladies, job restriction by head of the family, etc. So, the specialty of this study is to make sure the influence of above factors, if they effect the women's decision to enter in paid labor force.

A women has different reasons when she decide to participate in economic activities, at the individual level, when she decide to work it is subject to the factors like availability of job, level of education, any skill if she has. Her choice is determined by the different social, economic and demographic circumstance of her locality or area where she is living.

According to Neo-classical economists, education is the key determinant of women's entering in the labor market. The higher the level of education, indicates that the more women's participation in the labor market. It is also a fact that with more education they have more chances to get a suitable job. When investment on human capital increases, i.e. for education, for skills, training workshops, all these will enhance the efficiency of females. The study is conducting in various villages of tehsil Gujrat that are Kasab, Gondal, Dhudhra Chak Kamala, Ranjha Jhamat, Wazeed and Meero Kot. These villages are about 40 km far-away from Gujrat which is the main district of

Punjab. This is known as city of Shuhdah, fans and furniture.

The Gujrat have both rural and urban population. But the portion of rural population is greater than urban population so that's why researcher conducted this study by focusing rural area. In this research, researcher tries to explain the main and significant reasons behind low or no working of female labor force participation by focusing some reasons like education of parents, family norms, attitude of family and society, female's education, household income and number of dependents.

2. Objectives

- 1) To investigate the reasons behind low labor force participation of female in Rural Area of Tehsil Gujrat.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Universe and Study Area

The study is conducted in the various villages of Tehsil Gujrat those are Kasab, Gondal, Dhudhra Chak Kamala, Ranjha Jhamat, Wazeed and Meero Kot.

3.2 Population and Sample

Women aged 25-49 who work or not from rural area of Gujrat, Pakistan were taken as the population of the study.

The researcher used non-probability sampling for collecting sample from the population because sampling frame is not available. From non-probability sampling, convenience sampling was used to select samples because it is easier to

locate the sample unit by this method. Researcher selected 250 women from these villages by this method.

3.3 Data Collection Tool

Researcher used questionnaire as a tool for data collection. She went to the respondent and conduct face to face interview.

3.4 Model Specification

Researcher has used **Binary Logistic Regression Model** for examining the reasons behind low labor force participation of female in rural area of Tehsil Gujrat.

Model of Logistic Regression for Current Study

$$PL = \alpha + \beta (I.V)$$

Where

PL (Participation in labor force) = dependent variable

α = Intercept

β = Coefficient of determination

I.V = Independent variable/ Variables

4. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through SPSS (Statistical Package for social Sciences). For data entry researcher give codes to the questions. For comparison researcher calculated proportion of different characteristics by given formula.

$$\text{Percentage} = F / N (100)$$

Where F denotes frequencies of class and N denotes the total respondents.

Descriptive statistics

Table 1: Demographic Profile of respondents

Age	Category	Frequency	Percentage
	15-25	50	20.0
	26-35	68	27.0
	36-45	81	33.0
	45 & Above	51	20.0
	Total	250	100.0
Enrolled in School	Yes	173	69.0
	No	77	31
	Total	250	100.0
Qualification	Illiterate	77	31.0
	Primary	44	18.0
	Above Primary	67	27.0
	Metric	33	13.0
	Intermediate	17	6.0
	Graduate	9	4.0
	Post Graduate & Above	3	1.0
	Total	250	100.0
Marital Status	Single	59	24.0
	Married	176	70.0
	Divorced/widow	15	6.0
	Total	250	100.0
No.of Children (alive Children only)	0-1	33	13.0
	2-3	67	26.0
	4-5	52	21.0
	6-7	29	12.0
	7 & Above	69	28.0
	Total	250	100.0

The table 1 shows that majority of respondents belonging to age category 36-45 that are about 33%. This indicates that there is more youth population of females in rural areas of Gujrat.

The figures also defined that majority from the rural females of Gujrat enrolled in school. This indicates that in rural Gujrat there is a trend to send their daughters to school.

The above table also described that mostly the females from rural Gujrat drop their studies after metric as mostly females belonging to the category from primary to metric. There is less number of females who completed their graduation or got a degree of post-graduation that is only 5% of total population.

Table shows that mostly the females from my respondents are married (70%) and only few

females are those who are widowed or experienced divorce (6%). The table also described that in rural Gujrat majority of females having greater number of children, more than half population having more than 3 children in rural Gujrat. Its mean fertility rate among rural Gujrat is very high.

Inferential Statistics

Binary Logistic Regression

Table 2: Case Processing Summary

	Un Weighted Cases	N	Percent
Selected Cases	Included in Analysis	250	100.0
	Total	250	100.0
Unselected Cases		0	.0
	Total	250	100.0

Table 3: Encoding of Dependent Variable

Original Value	Internal Value
No	0
Yes	1

This table is actually the start of binary logistic regression. It shows that researcher deals with 250 cases and no any case was missing in the data This table explains that researcher encode the original values of dependent variable that is if

the female not participated in labor force then it coded as 0 and if she participate in labor force then it is coded as 1. (These codes are only used for SPSS).

Table 4: Calculation of Logistic Regression Model (Only Significant reasons given in the table)

Variables	B	S.E	Wald	Df	Sig	Exp(B)
Low qualification	1.874	.274	44.070	1	.000	7.179
Family System	-1.358	.585	4.454	1	.035	.286
Number of care taken	2.220	.553	14.957	1	.000	.110
Male’s decision	.628	.286	4.189	1	.025	1.787
High fertility rate	.577	.176	12.230	1	.000	5.576
Availabilities of Jobs at nearest station	.956	.246	13.547	1	.000	2.628

5. Discussion

Low education is the most important reason behind no or low participation of rural females in labor force. Education influenced the labor force participation of female positively. Workers with the primary or middle education have about 14% higher than females with no education (Khan and Irfan 1985). Higher level of education among females may have smaller quantity household responsibilities; education is positively linked with women's control over income, in terms of retaining and spending, which provide an incentive to paid-work and contribute in household income; and education make the exposure of a woman to the other world and develop aspirations towards better standard of living .this thing give motivation to earn more income and enjoy with higher living standard.

The result of current study is consistent with the findings of Tansel (1994), Kozel and Alderman (1990), Safana (2009), Ercan (2010) and Faridi (2011). They emphasized that higher level of education increases the opportunities for women participate in the labor market. The economic explanation of this positive relationship between higher education and FLFP is that expected market return rises with the higher level of education. This thing motivates the women to work more in the labor market instead of only involving with household activities.

5.1 Family system is also an important social reason behind low or no women participation in

paid economical activities. Family structure is an important variable affecting the women's decision about work (Mcgrattan and Rogerson 2004). The coefficient of family system is positive and highly significant. Nuclear family system has a positive impact on the decision of a female to enter in the labor market (Khan 1979; Shah 1975).

Current study has provides negative relationship between joint family system. Table explains that joint family system is a big reason behind no or low participation of female in labor force especially in rural Gujrat.

5.2 No. of care taken at household is also an important factor behind not working of women in rural Gujrat. It seems true that if a female have more number of people for taking care of them then she has less chance to take a part in labor force. In our rural culture this is the duty of female to look after the children as well as the elder ones. So the female of rural Gujrat have no time to join a paid job.

5.3 Male decision about participating in labor force is also a significant issue among rural areas. Because mostly the rural areas have male dominant societies so female have no power making decision even about their own lives. So they depend on males in scene of taking any decisions this is the main reasons behind their low and no participation in labor force activities because mostly the male want that their female

stayed at home and only engaged in household chores.

5.4 *High fertility rate* among rural females is an important reason behind not working among rural areas of Gujrat. Mostly, the female spoils their health due to rapid births and unable to join any paid economic activity. If her health is good even after too many births then she mostly busy in look after the child and didn't think about economical participation.

5.5 *Unavailability of jobs at nearest station* is also a big reason behind not working of female in rural areas because there is no proper system of transport so females give preference to stayed at home either they go for a job out of the station.

6. Conclusion

This study is an endeavor to discover various demographic, social and cultural reasons behind low participation in labor force by the female side. The researcher identifies different variables who are working behind the less number of participation of female in economic activities in the rural areas of Gujrat, Pakistan. The researcher finds that the family system (nuclear) is a big reason behind it; mostly the females from joint family system more likely to engaged in labor force activities because they have no need to full time child care, old and other family care issues. Low education has also an important reason which lowers the participation of female in economic activities. The other reasons behind no or low participation of female are high fertility

rate, unavailability of jobs at their own village, male dominant society and no. of care taken members at home.

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