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The Environment, Attitudes and Activities of Rural Women: A Case Study of A Village in Punjab

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Changing social and economic conditions in Pakistan and throughout the world require an appraisal of the role women play in their environment. Strategies are being proposed to promote integration of women into the development process. In Pakistan there is a particular concern for rural areas where the majority of the population lives. To make such strategies effective, however, we need to have more baseline data about the target group, i.e. the rural women.

Our objective in this study is to report, as accurately and comprehensively as we can, on the nature and kinds of various economic activities in which village women take part. It is common knowledge that women participate at different times of the year in the harvesting and planting of crops, but very little is known about how much time is spent in these tasks and how these activities affect the lives of village women. Beyond work in the fields, rural women are active in producing goods and services, mostly for their families own consumption but also, on a smaller scale, for sale and exchange in the local market. No one has yet calculated the NFP——the net female product of a country, but it is likely to be quite large and in Pakistan the bulk of the NFP is generated in the rural sector[1].

In this paper we will highlight different dimensions of economic activities of rural women and describe the attitudinal and environmental factors which

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[1]Two studies, currently underway at the Institute are trying to measure the contribution of housewives in rural and urban areas to Gross National Product in Pakistan. Valuable information is expected to emerge from these studies.

influence village women's participation in the rural economy. As will be seen the approach is narrative rather than analytical, but on subjects such as rural women where there is relatively little existing research and almost no theoretical models, careful description is a necessary prerequisite to sound analysis.

The intent of our study was to do three things:—

1. Describe the environment and living conditions of rural women in a Pakistani village.

2. Describe the attitudes of these women towards education, marriage, family planning and identify factors leading towards the emergence and the continued existence of such attitudes.

3. Describe in detail the daily and annual activities of rural women.

The hope was to stimulate interest in research on rural women rather than to test hypothesis or to recommend specific policy measures. Therefore, this study should be regarded as a first step towards better understanding of rural women in Pakistan.

I

The Village

Location and Settlement History of the Village

The village, Jhok Sayal,[2] was settled in the Nineteenth Century in an area known as Sandal Bar. There was no vegetation and cultivation was possible only near river banks. To develop the area, the British Government of the day embarked on a planned canalization and colonisation scheme[3]. Settlers or *abadkars*[4] were brought in from other parts of the country when the lower chenab canal was constructed in 1890. In 1897 irrigation water from the Gogera branch canal was available to Sandal Bar. The land in Jhok Sayal was allotted to a landlord from East Punjab who, in turn, brought in tenants, mostly agriculturists of Aarian caste, from his native village to cultivate the lands.

An immediate conflict arose between the local inhabitants, *janglees* and the new settlers, *abadkars*. The local inhabitants were mainly pastoralists who allowed their cattle to roam the countryside[5]. They strongly resisted the settlers who opposed open grazing that destroyed their crops. Law and authority were on the side of the new settlers. The resistance of the *janglees* eventually gave way and the land was brought under cultivation.

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[2]The real name of the village has not been used in order to preserve the anonymity of respondents.

[3]For more details about this area's settlement history, see [3].

[4]"Settlers were drawn from three categories: (1) peasants to whom right of occupancy for 20 years was promised if they resided on and cultivated their grants. (2) the yeomen who were permitted to purchase proprietary rights on favourable terms on the fulfilment of certain conditions including personal residence and (3) capitalists from whom larger payments were realised but were subject to the same privileges as regards acquisition of proprietary rigths"[3].

[5]*Janglees* were cattle-breeders and land owners and did random cultivation with the aid of rain water; see [3].

In the 1940's the problem of salinity arose and by the late 1950's more than three-fourths of the land in Jhok Sayal was put out of cultivation. In the midsixties, under the SCARP (Salinity Control and Reclamation Project scheme, the Government of Pakistan installed tubewells in the area and supplied electricity to the village. All the salinity-affected land has been reclaimed and 663 acres (including the fallow land) of the total area of 690 acres is now being cultivated.

Village Setting

The village boundaries extend to the main Lyallpur-Lahore highway from where a dusty non-metta led road winds its way through the fields to Jhok Sayal. The village grave-yard is situated at the beginning of this road and is tended by a caretaker-cum-grave digger who lives in his *katcha* house opposite the grave-yard. A fifteen minute walk down the road leads to the village itself.

At the entrance to Jhok Sayal there is a tubewell where the village children bathe and play while their mothers wash clothes and dishes. Nearby is a *karrass* in which wheat is ground with the help of oxen. Straight ahead is the village mosque, white-washed, neat, clean and electrified. A two-room house adjacent to the mosque belongs to the *maulvi*. All the houses and the two shops of Jhok Sayal are situated on either side of the 15 foot main *katcha* street.

Population

The 1961 Census of Population reports the combined population of Jhok Sayal and an adjacent village to be 811 people, comprising 445 males and 366 females. The District Reports for the 1972 Population Census are not yet available. However, according to the *patwari* of this area, the present combined population of both these villages is around 1300. The manager of the ration depot for Jhok Sayal had the names of 700 people on his roll. People frequently misreport their family size or leave names of deceased family members on the roll to get larger quantities of rationed commodities. It is certain that the population size as shown in the records of the ration depot is on the high side. It is safe to conclude, however, that the population of the village has shown a considerable increase since it was settled.

There are approximately 105 households in Jhok Sayal, 5 of them Christian and all others Muslim. We interviewed women from 63 households with a total population of 362 (183 men and 179 women).

Age Distribution

Table I[6] shows that 41.7 percent of the population consisted of children under 14 years of age. Only 9.4 percent were 50 years old and above which suggests a short life expectancy. The table shows the sex ratio (males per 100 females) to be 102.2 in the village.

[6]The age distribution of the sample shown in Table I is not precise because most of the people do not know their age; and birth dates are not considered by the villagers to be relevant information to remember. A reference to important events like World War II, Independence in 1947, and the 1965 and 1971 wars with India helped us to get an idea about the ages of the interviewees.

Table I

Age Distribution of the Sample Population

Age Groups	Males	Females	Total	Age-Group Total as Percent of Sample Population
0—4	27	24	51	15.0
5—9	30	27	57	16.7
10—14	10	24	34	10.0
15—19	14	9	23	6.7
20—34	49	40	89	26.1
35—49	29	26	55	16.1
50+	15	17	32	9.4
Total	174	167	341	100

Castes

There are a variety of castes in Jhok Sayal[7]. The major division is between the *abadkars* and the *janglees*. The *janglees* reported only one caste, Lurkay, whereas the *abadkars* reported a variety of castes and sub-castes. [Table II] The Bhatti, Rajput and Aarian constitute a significant majority in the village. The Rajputs are both tenants and landowners. Aarians and Lurkays are mostly tenants. Bhattis are landless labourers (permanent or casual). This pattern may not necessarily repeat itself in other villages of the area.

The *abadkars* live in the village proper while the *janglees* have their houses in the fields at the outskirts of the village. The *janglees* and *abadkars* generally do not intermingle. The *janglees* speak in a different dialect of Punjabi. They also wear a different kind of dress. The *janglees* women generally wear a black *kurta*, *dhoti* and black *chaddar* and their menfolk wear a white *kurta* and *dhoti*. The two communities do not intermarry; nor do they visit each other except on important occasions like marriages and deaths when they do come together socially. With only five families in the village, the *janglees* in Jhok Sayal are in a minority. In other villages of the area, sometimes a reverse pattern is found where the abadkars are in the minority.

Land Ownership and Tenancy Status

The families of three large landowners in the village control 69 9 percent of the cultivated land. Two of the landowners cultivate their own land and the third cultivates 25 acres himself and rents out the rest. The landlords

[7]The word "caste" has not been used here in the sense, usually associated with the Hindu religious beliefs. In Pakistan, the word caste is used to identify a person according to his or her place of birth or occupation. The caste system, as it exists in Pakistan, in no way hinders mobility between occupations.

reside in Lahore. They stay in the village only for short periods of time barely adequate to attend to business. Their households were not included in the sample. A short description of the living conditions for the landlord families is given below because the village economy is highly dependent on them.

Table II

Numbers of Sample Households by Various Castes

Castes	Number of Households
Abadkars	
Bhatti	15
Rajput	11
Aarian	10
Jat	6
Malik	3
Sheikh	2
Gujar	2
Gil*	2
Pathan	1
Mughal	1
Others	3
Sub-total	56
Janglees	
Lurkay	5
Nomads	5
Oad	2
Grand total	63

*The Gils are Christians.

The three landlords have built *pucca* houses in the village which they occupy continuously during the peak seasons (wheat and sugarcane harvests) but only occasionally in the off-peak periods. By village standards, they live luxuriously. They have electricity (their houses being the only electrified structures in the village apart from the village mosque), hand pumps, bathrooms, and flush toilets. Two of the landlords have refrigerators and one has the only television set in the village. Four families with small landholdings are relatively better-off as compared to tenants and landless labourers. These four families are henceforth referred to as "relatively better-off families".

In order to cultivate the lands the landlords employ permanent labourers on monthly wages. Whenever the need arises some casual labourers are also employed. A permanent labourer is known as a *nowkar* or servant of the landlord. He receives free lodging, two maunds of wheat at no charge, 20

Of the tenants, 73 percent have land holdings of ten acres or less. However, we found that share-holding is common among large families, i.e. three or four tenants pool the land under their tenancies and divide the final output among themselves. So in practice, the size of the farm is more than 10 acres with two or more families sharing the work and produce.

Main Crops Grown

The main crops grown in the village are wheat, sugarcane, cotton, rice, maize, chillies and onions. Wheat, the staple food of the villagers, is grown on a large scale. Wheat output in excess of family use is sold in the market. Other important cash crops of the area are sugarcane, rice and cotton. Since rice has been found to be more profitable than cotton, the harvested area of cotton has been declining and that of rice increasing. Sugarcane is sold to the Jaranwala Sugar Mills and cotton and rice are sold to wholesalers in Jaranwala *mandi.* Chillies and onions are widely grown because they are important food items and also because they bring a good price in the market. Only a small amount of maize is grown.

Livestock and Poultry

Livestock and poultry are important sources of livelihood for the villagers. Fifty-five of the sixty-three households own animals. The composition of the animal population is 35 oxen, 68 buffaloes, 10 cows, 27 goats and 14 donkeys. Some villagers raise sheep (two families had 197 sheep) and sell them in the market where they fetch high prices around the sacrificial time of Eid-ul-Azha. Buffaloes and goats are also very highly prized for their food-producing value. The villagers get milk from these animals, which is then converted into *lassi, ghee* and butter, These milk products are important elements in their diet. The animal waste is used as fuel and manure.

Housing

There are two types of houses in the village—*katcha* and *pucca.* Forty-two houses have only one room each, 19 have two rooms each, 2 have three rooms each and another 2 have four rooms each. Seventeen houses have separate kitchens. The houses are usually poorly ventilated. Most of the rooms have only one door, although a few also have a window or a small ventilator.

Most of the houses are grouped together in clusters around small compounds. There are six big compounds: three of them belong to the landlords and are named after them. The houses have little privacy and only a few are walled. The walled houses belong to the small landowners. Three of the small owner-tenants have houses on their own land. The *janglees,* who are tenants, have their houses in the fields, away from the village.

The houses are scantily decorated. In some, crockery, including glasses, cups and saucers, china bowls and tea trays, line the mantlepiece in a paradigm of symmetry. Colourful straw baskets and old calendars, printed with Quranic Verses, are seen occasionally. Typical furnishings are one or two *peerees,* a wooden or tin box, a few *charpoys* for everyday use, and a *palang.* Only two houses have chairs. The tethering pegs for cattle are usually in the room and in the winter months (November—February) the animals share the room with

the family members for additional warmth. In two-roomed houses, with no separate animal sheds, one of the rooms has tethering pegs for the cattle, while the other room is decorated according to the village standards and family status, and is used for entertaining guests.

The *pucca* houses belong to the tenant of one of the absentee landlords who could evict the occupants at will. They are all in one big compound known as *pucca haata* and are generally neater in appearance than the *katcha* houses. Even the one-room *pucca* houses have doors. The inhabitants of *pucca* houses keep their animals in sheds located in their fields with the result that their compounds or *haatas* are noticeably cleaner. The interior decorations in pucca houses are similar to other houses with one exception these tenants keep copper utensils on the mantlepiece, a sign of affluence.

Health Facilities

There is no health centre in Jhok Sayal. Medical facilities are available in Jaranwala and Bucheki, both eight miles away. The landlords usually have supplies of medicines like quinine and aspirin, which they provide free to the villagers. There is no trained health visitor or nurse so that illnesses are diagnosed by either the patient or the landlord. If the patient is a female, it is usually the male member of the household who approaches the landlord for medicine. The villagers have a wide range of time-honoured home-remedies and nostrums for different ailments e.g. "put oil in head if you have a headache", "drink saltish water for stomach-ache" and "drink tea for a cold" but serious cases are usually taken to the hospital in Jaranwala or the dispensary located in Bucheki.

The people are highly superstitious and believe in super-natural beings. They have great faith in *pirs*. We saw an extremely sick child who appeared to be under-nourished. His mother reported that the child shivered and perspired profusely at intervals. She had taken him to two or three medical doctors but when he was not cured within a week, she took him to a *pir*.

There was, until recently, an *amil* (exorcist) in the village who could scare away the *jinn*.[8] He is now dead and recently there have been no occurrence of a *jinn* disturbing a person. The belief is that the *jinns* live under trees and if someone makes the place dirty, the *jinn* takes revenge by troubling the person in various ways. Under a *jinn's* influence, a person starts behaving oddly, has fits and sometimes goes mad.

There is no proper sewerage system in the village and in one compound dirty water collected near the wall of the latrine. Four or five houses have bath-rooms. Three of these belong to the small land owners and one to the barber. The men bathe at the tubewell while women bathe at home behind a *charpoy*, set up on its side in a corner of the house and covered with a cloth to serve as a screen. Bathing is easy in the houses that have hand pumps in their own courtyards. In other houses, water is brought from hand pumps belonging to others' compounds. The degree of personal cleanliness appears to be related to economic status, as the women from the poorer houses are usually filthy.

[8]The existence of *jinns* has been mentioned in the Holy Quran. The illiterate people have associated *jinns* with evil spirits or ghosts.

In almost all the households a stove has been erected on a raised mud platform in the compound outside the room. Only eight houses have room kitchens and these are used only in winters. The mud stove is portable and the cooking is done in the compound during summers.

The hygienic conditions of the village are very poor. There are two big ponds in the village, which being full of stagnant water, are an excellent breeding ground for mosquitoes. Until recently, these ponds provided drinking water for the animals and laundering facilities to the women of the village. With the introduction of tubewells and hand pumps, however, these ponds have fallen into disuse.

Educational level

Until 1971-72, when a primary school for boys was established, no educational facilities were available for the village children. One reason for this was absenteeism of the landlords who had little interest in having a school opened in the village. The present school owes its establishment partly to the efforts of one of the landlords, who is also planning to establish a handicraft centre for embriodery and sewing.

The primary school for boys is situated in a vast compound surrounded by a wall at the end of the main street. The two *katcha* class rooms occupied by the senior classes (IV and V) are badly in need of repairs. Students of the remaining classes sit on jute mats spread under the big *kikker* tree in the compound. During the winter, they sit in the sun.

At the time of the survey there were 100 boys on the rolls of the school. Six girls were also attending the school regularly but they were not on official rolls. The school has two teachers. The head master is educated up to the 8th grade but holds of a Junior Vernacular[9] diploma. The other teacher is a matriculate but has not earned a diploma in teaching.

According to the teachers the villagers are not interested in educating their daughters partly because they have no appreciation of the value of formal learning and partly because they do not want their daughters to attend a boys' school.

There is a Middle School in a nearby village (about 2-1/2 miles away) where 16 boys of Jhok Sayal are enrolled. Eight Jhok Sayal boys attend a high school in Jaranwala, but as there are no boarding facilities there, they have to travel daily between their own village and the school.

Table V gives the educational level of the total sample population, aged five years and above.

Seventy-nine percent of the population is illiterate. Persons who could recite the Holy Quran but without understanding either Arabic (the language of the Holy Quran) or the translation given therein were not classified as literate.

[9]A diploma in teaching.

Table V

Educational Level of the Sample Population
(5 years and above)

Educational level	Male	Female	Total
None	80	75	155
Quran only	27	63	90
Class 1—2	14	7	21
Class 3—5	17	6	23
Class 6—8	7	4	11
Class 9+	11	—	11
Total	156	155	311

II

The Village Women

Of the 63 women interviewed, 57 were married, five were widows and one was a divorcee. Two of the women were Christians while the rest were all Muslims. Seven unmarried girls, aged 12 to 18, were also interviewed though they were not part of the sample. Their responses have been included in the analysis.

Educational level of Women in the sample

Four women out of sixty-three knew how to read and write, i.e. 93% of the women in the sample were illiterate. Twenty-eight women could recite the Holy Quran, but did not understand Arabic, the language of the Holy Quran. These women are classified to be illiterate[10].

Of the four literates, two literate women belong to the wealthier families, the other two are city girls who came to the village after marriage. One of the city girls who had studied up to 8th class reported that in her family females often went to college. She was married at a young age and had to discontinue her studies. She did not show any desire to study further, but if ever a girls' school were established in the village, she would apply for a teaching post. The other woman was the daughter of a retired school master. All her sisters received only primary education.

Some of the illiterate women do not show any desire to learn reading or writing. One of them said, "I am too old now; what will an old parrot like me learn now". A few younger women do want to learn. However, most wish to acquire skills like sewing and knitting.

A comparison of the educational status of the 57 married couples in the sample (Table VI) showed that ten men (17%) and 4 women (7%) were literate[11].

[10]The literacy rate of both males and females of Jhok Sayal and the adjacent village was 4.8 percent according to the 1961 Census Report.

[11]Children who drop out after one or two grades tend to forget almost everything after a while, and one must, therefore, keep this fact in mind while viewing these percentages.

Table VI

Educational Status of 57 Married Couples

Education	Husbands		Wives	
	Number	No. as Percent of all sample Husbands	Number	No. as Percent of all sample Wives
Illiterate	34	60	28	49
Can recite the Quran only	12	21	25	44
Class 1-2	1	2	—	—
Class 3-5	4	7	3*	5
Class 6-8	3	5	1*	2
Class 9+	3	5	—	—
Total	57	100	57	100

*Could read the Quran also.

Only 12 (21%) males compared to 25 (44%) females could recite the Holy Quran. Varied reasons were given for the neglect of the religious education of males. Several men made the following comments; "Girls have more free time; I could only learn the *namaz* by heart."

Aspirations for Daughter's Education

The women who have school-age daughters were asked if they would like their daughters to finish primary school. For women who have no daughters as yet, the question was altered a bit. The older women were asked about their grand-daughters and the young women about their hypothetical daughters. Table VII reports the responses.

Table VII

Women's attitude towards their Daughter's completion of Primary School Education

	Yes	No	No opinion	Total
Number of respondents	35	27	1	63
No. of respondents as percent of all sample respondents	55.5	43	1.5	100

Twenty-seven (43%) women do not want their daughters to finish primary school. A major reason was lack of school facilities for girls. Some women said that poverty was an obstacle, "My daughter will need decent clothes, a pair of shoes, a bag and books. We hardly cover ourselves." Some women observed that their girls helped them with housework, child care and fodder collecting and they could not be spared. A few reported custom and prestige

to be the main reasons for their reluctance to send their daughters to schools, claiming, "We are *zamindar*. We don't educate our daughters because they are not going to earn a livelihood." A young women told us that she wanted her daughters to learn how to read and write, but her mother-in-law, who strongly believed in old traditions, would not allow them to do so. Family elders often have a very strong hold over all the domestic matters and their authority is not questioned. The nomadic *oads* find it difficult to send their sons and daughters to school because they are constantly on the move. Some women consider religious education to be sufficient for girls. This education consists of learning the *namaz* and a few Quranic verses by heart and learning to recite from the Holy Quran. Such education is imparted to the girls by the wife of the village *maulvi*.

Thirty-five women expressed the desire for their daughters to complete primary school education. Six girls are, at present, attending the boy's school. In a village where the majority of people disapproved of co-education, this was indeed remarkable. Women who favour at least primary education for their daughters gave varied reasons: "education is good"; "my daughter will learn how to write a letter"; "she will become wise with education and will command respect from her husband"; and "her husband will regard her as his equal". The last two observations were emphasized by women favouring primary school, suggesting a hidden desire to upgrade their status, at least in the eyes of their own men.

Table VIII

Mothers' Attitude Towards Their Daughters' Completion of Higher Education

Mothers' Responses	About Daughters' Completion of Secondary Education		About Daughters' Completion of College Education	
	No. of Respondents	No. as Percent of all sample Respondents	No. of Respondents	No. as Percent of all Sample Respondents
Yes	4	11	1	3
No	29	83	32	91
No opinion	2	6	2	6
Total:	35	100	35	100

When the 35 women who wanted their daughters to finish primary school, were asked whether they would like their daughters to complete secondary school, only the 4 literate women responded affirmatively (Table VIII. One of them wants her daughters to obtain a teaching diploma after completing their matriculation. The one from the relatively better-off family wants her daughters to go to college. She said that she had made great sacrifices to provide education to her daughters. Since there is no girls' school in Jhok Sayal, she lives in Jaranwala during the school session for the sole purpose of educating her children. Her mother-in-law stays back in the village to look after the house. Two of her daughters have finished middle school and are receiving training in a sewing school in Jaranwala. These two young girls want to open a sewing

centre in Jhok Sayal on the completion of their training. The youngest daughter wants to go to college and her mother is prepared to send her.

Equal Educational Opportunities for Boys and Girls

Only 6 out of sixty-three women interviewed believe in equal educational opportunities for both sexes. Fifty-three (84%) consider it absurd. Their replies vary like, "Boys have to earn a livelihood for themselves; so they should be educated more". "Boy's education is an investment". "Boys have to tackle the worldly affairs", etc. One of the women remarked, "Girls become bold and outspoken when they are educated". Another said that when girls started reading books they did not tend the animals.

A very poor woman told us that one of her sons was studying in college even though it involved acute financial hardship for her to finance his education. She hoped that when he got a job after his M.A. he would not only bear the expenses of his yonger brother's education but would also not let his mother work so hard then. It was observed that in many instances the parents chose only one son to be educated even when they could afford to educate all of their sons. The under-educated sons help the father in farming. In many cases, however, families could not afford to educate any of their sons.

Among the six women who believe in equal opportunities, three are from relatively better-off families. One of them said, "Education can be helpful in hard days." The literate wife of a tubewell operator wants her daughters to get a job. One of the Christian woman interviewed said that she could not educate her own daughters as there were no school facilities available when her daughters were of school age. Now that education facilities are available she wants her grand-daughters to take full advantage of them.

Our interviews suggest that while poor families try to educate sons as a measure of security for their future, they do not spend their scarce resources on girls' education since girls are married off in other families. Moreover, girls have to help their mothers with house work and other chores. The tubewell operator's wife, who was literate, said that she was willing to teach the village girls informally but complained that the girls' mothers just did not bother to send them to her regularly. When queried about this, the mothers responded that the operator's wife[12] made their daughters do her own housework instead of giving them lessons. It is a social custom in villages that teachers have claims on their pupils' personal services. The women in Jhok Sayal are willing to grant this privilege to the *maulvi's* wife but not to the operator's wife. They disliked the latter because she was an outsider who disapproved of the ways of the village women.

We talked to a few unmarried girls in the absence of their mothers. Most of them were resigned to the prevailing attitude that boys were superior to girls and therefore deserved preferential treatment. They commented, "Boys are sharper than girls and, therfore, it is their right to be educated more." This view is natural to girls in rural areas where they grow up seeing boys being given special treatment by their families and are made to consider it as their duty to make sacrifices for their brothers.

[12] Popularly known as "*Palaterni*".

One girl from a relatively better-off family considers discrimination based on sex as unjust. Her parents, who are both literate, are in favour of educating both sons and daughters; and she will probably have no problem in securing education.

Another young girl of 18 had received instruction up to the level of class 8 from one of her relatives in the city. She wants to become a teacher but girls in her family are not allowed to have jobs. "There are no blessings in a woman's earnings", she quoted her fellow villagers to reflect their attitudes toward employed women. She found this attitude unjust and felt sore that while a woman does earn half the family's share from her work during the harvest with her own efforts, her work was not considered a job, nor the wheat as her earnings.

Mass Media

The four literate women of Jhok Sayal do not read much. One of them reported buying magazines occasionally; another three borrow them from their sons or relatives in the city. One woman reported reading religious books. Some illiterate women reported listening to stories and interesting news from their sons, who read to them from books and magazines borrowed from the school library in Jaranwala. No one reported purchasing a newspaper regularly. In one of the richer households, however, a weekly newspaper is brought regularly by the son from his college library. Some women reported having urdu publications at home, consisting mainly of religious books, novels, and magazines.

Radio is the only mass communication medium available to most of the villagers. Twenty of the 63 households in the survey own a radio set and 52 women reported listening to it. Only 29% of the total women listened daily to the radio and 53% listened rarely.

Some of these women said that their husbands did not let them listen to the radio because they considered it bad. "I am a father of four grown-up daughters. I do not want them to listen to love songs", said one of the villagers. (However, he himself listened to these songs while working in the fields). Another woman said that she was not allowed to touch the radio for fear she would break something. Clearly, men often decide whether it is good or bad for women to listen to the radio. They have convinced many of the women that listening to the radio led to immorality. However, the women readily agreed that the quality of the religious and farming programmes was good, and some of them reported listening to the *Qawwali*, *Hamd* and *Naat* programmes on Fridays. In general religious programmes were preferred by old women although a very old christian woman reported listening principally to the Punjabi music programmes. The younger girls and women, when interviewed separately, said they liked songs, although in the presence of their elders they did not admit their interest in music. Most of the women said that they could understand only the Punjabi programmes, and, therefore, did not pay attention to the Urdu programmes. Only a few women know the days and times of the programme they like best.

In general the village women are oblivious of the happenings in their country and the world. The women of the relatively rich families and a few

younger girls had some idea of the important news stories of the week. Radio seems to be an important source of disseminating information among the village women.

Purdah

The basic dress of the village women consists of *shalwar* and *kameez*. The grown-up girls, however, also cover their heads and shoulders with a big *dopatta* or a *chaddar*. This is both a sign of modesty and a reflection of their concept of *purdah*. The two city girls married in the village cover themselves with black *burqas* when they go out of their homes. *Burqas* are also worn by women of the richer families when they go for shopping in Jaranwala. It was observed that the observance of *purdah* increased with the economic and social-well-being of the women. As such *purdah* is considered to be a symbol of affluence. The majority of the Jhok Sayal women are poor and have to work physically outside their houses. They cannot, therefore, afford the luxury of *purdah*. Since the more prosperous women of the village observe *purdah* and also wish their daughters to be adequately educated, no negative correlation seems to exist between women's own *purdah* observance and their desire for their daughter's education.

Marriage

Because of old customs, girls in the village usually get married at an early age despite the 1961 Muslim Family Laws that sets the age of marriage at 16 for females and 18 for males. By early marriage, the women avoid degrading remarks which are common if daughters remain unmarried after attaining puberty. Another reason for early marriage is the custom of *watta* in marriage, according to which a brother may ask for the hand of his sister's daughter for his son and give his own daughter in marriage to the sister's son. Marriage within the family and the *baradari* (kin) is preferred. However, when *watta* is not possible within a family or *baradari*, an outside family is approached. While we were in the village a marriage based on *watta* took place. The bride was 12 years of age and had come in exchange for her brother. Her husband was 35 and it was his second marriage. He had recently divorced his first wife, blaming her for having loose character, a fact corroborated by the village women. Another villager told us that he got a wife with the promise of giving in marriage his six months old niece (when she comes of age) to his brother-in law, who is already eighteen. The betrothal pledge is a word of honour and, if broken, can lead to disputes and even murders in villages.

Table IX

Expected Age at Marriage of the Village Girls as Perceived by Mothers

Expected Age of Girls at Marriage (Years)	No. of Respondents	No. of Percentage of all Sample Mothers
12—14	24	38
15—17	15	24
18—20	13	20
21+	3	5
Age undetermined	8	13
Total	63	100

Thirty-eight percent of the women reported that they expected their daughter to marry between the ages of 12 and 14 (Table IX). Many of them reported marrying off their daughters two months after the first menstruation (i.e. around 11 or 12 years). The three respondents who expected the marriage age to be 21 may have responded defensively because they had unmarried daughters of age 21 years or even older. Poverty and lack of suitable bride-grooms due to the unavailability of *watta* were given as reasons for the delay in their marriages. Several village women told us that some people (mostly tenants) arrange for their daughters' marriages at a relatively late age because they are considered an economic asset to the household. However, no distinct pattern is discernible. Some tenants marry off their daughters early, others very late. The same applies to landless labourers.

The *janglees* tend to marry off their daughters late, usually between the ages of 18 and 25. Bhattis and Aarians marry very young, a month or two after puberty. "Girls are just a burden", one of them remarked. To rid themselves of the burden, some families marry off their daughters even before puberty. In the two Christian families of the village the girls were at least 18 and the boys 20 years of age at the time of their marriage.

Family Planning

There is no family planning centre in the village. Nurses and Lady Health Visitors (LHV) come to Jhok Sayal from the clinic located in a nearby village to provide information about family planning practices. The village *dai*, the field motivator, receives Rs. 15 per month from the family planning centre. She also receives Rs. 2.50 for each woman she sends to the clinic. The LHV supplies contraceptives to the *dai* and gets a report from her, but she herself seldom visits the women in their houses.

The attitude of the village women towards the LHVs is generally quite hostile. A few approve of them and of family planning but complained that the LHVs visited irregularly and that they did not keep them supplied with contraceptives. A few of them accused the *dai* of not being interested in birth control practices because such practices affected her earnings as a midwife adversely. The *dai* received Rs. 10 for delivering a boy and Rs. 5 for delivering a girl. Sometimes she also receives sugar and wheat. In addition to that she gets paid for pre-nated and post-nated care of the mother. Thus her earnings in cash and kind far exceed the monthly pay she gets from the family planning authorities, and it is unlikely that she would whole-heartedly support a programme whose success could lower her income. However, the *dai* denied any laxity on her part and attributed the villagers' lack of interest in family planning to their desire for a large number of sons whom they considered economic assets.

Fifty (79%) women had heard about family planning (see table X). Awareness of family planning methods does not seem to be correlated with age or education, although the four literate women had all heard and approve of the practices.

The sources of women's information about family planning methods were varied (see table XI). As will be noted from the table some women benefited from more than one source of information.

Table X

Women's Knowledge of Family Planning

	Women who had heard of Family Planning	Women who had not heard of family planning	No Response	Total
No. of Respondents	50	6	7	63
No. as percentage of total women in sample	79	10	11	100

Table XI

Sources of Women's Information about Family Planning in Jhok Sayal

Source of Family Planning Information	No. of Women Benefiting from the source
Radio only	13
Neighbour only	11
Radio and Neighbour	5
Village *Dai*	11
Radio and *Dai* (both)	4
LHV	10
Magazine	1

The subject of family planning made the women laugh and giggle with embarrassment, and it was difficult to extract answers from them because they were not serious about the subject.

Of the total of 50 women who had heard about family planning only 19 women (38%) approved of family planning, 27 (54%) did not approve and 4 (8%) would not reply.

Some of the women who did not approve of family planning were either old or pregnant. Two of them had recently lost a child which could be a cause of their negative reply. The non-respondents included a divorcee, a young widow and a young bride who hid her face out of modesty and embarrassment and refused to discuss the subject.

When asked whether they would ever practice family planning, 50 percent replied negatively and 18 percent did not reply. The non-respondents consisted mostly of the older women who were not in the child-bearing age group. However, one of them said that she approved of family planning for her daughter. The 30 percent who approved of family planning included women who had already been practising birth control.

Table XII

Women's Attitudes towards Family Planning Practices

	No. of respondents	No. as percentage of women with knowledge of family planning
Women who approved family planning (F.P.)	19	38
Women who disapproved of family planning	27	54
No response	4	8
Total	50	100
Plan to adopt family planning	15	30
Do not plan to adopt	26	52
No response	9	18
Total	50	100

It was not possible for us to measure the effectiveness of contraceptive use among the acceptors. However, our impression was that the use is marginal due, in part, to a lack of follow-up by the family planning personnel.

Women who do not want to practice family planning include a few who expressed their preference for sons. "I have four daughters and one son; I want another son", said one of the women. Asked about the possibility of having another four daughters in the process of having an additional son, she replied, "I will not stop till I get a son". Many women regard birth control as a sin, claiming "It is interfering with God's work", "stopping the souls from coming into the world is murder and against the will of God"; "God provides for every soul".

In a few cases the women who were questioned were satisfied with their family size but their in-laws were not. For instance, the *maulvi's* wife has two children, a boy and girl. She told us that she does not want any more children but her sister-in-law sitting nearby intervened by saying "No; she will have at least two more sons". Social pressure is severe.

Fear of family planning is another reason for the unwillingness to practise it. A few women who did practice it became sick or the devices were defective, and their experiences affected the attitudes of other women.

Skills

The village women know a variety of skills, the most common being spinning, pickle-making, straw work, weaving of tapes, embroidering and crocheting. (see Table XIII).

Table XIII

Women who Knew Different Skills

Skill	No. of Women	Percentage of Total
Spinning	59	94
Pickle making	61	97
Straw work	55	37
Embroidering	36	57
Crocheting	37	59
Weaving Tapes	42	67
Sewing	21	33
Knitting	17	27
Paranda making	8	13
Clay pottery	6	10
Other*	9	14

*Includes *Dari* making, *Salma Sitara*, making *bann*.

Young married daughters, or young daughters-in-law practiced the skills while the middle aged women usually did not. An exception was spinning that is done mostly by the elderly women. Many old women who are not needed for housework spin yarn all the day long. Twenty-four households have spinning wheels and several women said that they could borrow one from their neighbours or relatives any time.

In many poor families pickles are a substitute for curry or vegetables and an important part of the diet. Sixty-one out of sixty-three women reported making pickles from chillies, mango, *lassora*[13] and *dayla*.[14]

The village women also make baskets and *chabba* from straw. *Chabbas* are used to decorate the walls in most houses in addition to their functional purpose of storing *roti*.

Embroidering and crocheting are other popular skills. Young girls embroider small coverlets for mantlepieces and tables. They also make bedcovers and table cloths for their dowries. Some women make beautiful corchet bags, closely knitted with three or four different colours which would easily sell for Rs. 50 a piece in a handicraft shop in Lahore or Islamabad. They also make hand-fan covers fringed with crochet laces.

[13]No english equivalent is available.
[14]A fruit which grows on thorny bushes.

The majority of women in the village wear *shalwar* using tape as a belt. Sixty-seven percent reported making their own tapes from coloured thread on a make-shift loom. Silk tapes are often given to the daughters as a part of their dowries.

Sixteen women reported owning sewing machines. Twenty-one women know how to stitch clothes, but only four reported sewing for wages. The others reported stitching clothes for their family use only. Sometimes they also stitch clothes for friends and relatives free of charge.

Eight women reported making *parandas*, a type of thick tape made of black thread which is woven into the hair to form a plait. Coloured beads and golden thread sometimes cover the tape. *Paranda* made of silk threads are customarily worn by brides at their wedding. They are also worn by women on other festive occasions.

The 17 women who knit belong to the relatively well-off families. Some poor women know how to knit but did not because the yarn was expensive. They buy second-hand winter garments rather than knit new clothing.

Some women make clay plates for decoration. They soak paper in mud or clay for a few days, mix it with *sareesh* (glue) and form a plate which they decorate with coloured flowers. They also make *parolas* in which they store grain.

The majority of women (71.9%) learn their skills from their families. There is no handicraft centre in the village, but there are plans for one to open very soon. Women are anxious for their daughters to learn skills, particularly embroidery and sewing, from the school. When asked about learning more skills themselves, they said, "We have passed our time. It is time for our daughters to learn things. "I do not have much time but I will send my daughter to the sewing school".

The women generally disapprove of selling something made with their own hands. When asked the reason for this the women replied, "We do not sell our skills", or "People who sell their skills are *kammies*.[15] Some women do sell their work for cash. Some of them tried to hide this fact, others did not. The *dai*, for example, reported working for cash. Delivery charges are Rs. 5 for a girl and Rs. 10 for a boy. A boy often brings additional payment in sugar or wheat. The two female *machhans* in the village bake *roties* and take one *roti* for every ten they bake as commission. They also take handful of corn for making popcorn. Four women reported sewing clothes for cash, the price being determined by their skill level as well as by what people were willing to pay.

It was observed that women had clearly demarcated "Not-for-sale" and "for-sale" skills. They could not think of earning a livelihood by selling *chhabas, parolas*, or crochet bags, but they did not hesitate to spin yarn for others for cash.

[15]Low Caste.

III

Daily and Annual Activities of Village Women

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Almost all women get up before dawn. The darkness facilitates their use of fields as latrines. They come back and wash their hands and face. Most of them say the *Fajar Namaz* and recite from the Holy Quran.

After the prayers they churn the milk that had been boiled the previous day. In households, where mother-in-law and daughter-in-law live together churning is usualy done by the latter. In some cases, however, it is done exclusively by the mother-in-law.

The next task is milking the animals. Animals are usually kept in the house though sometimes they are kept in separate sheds in the fields, in which case the women go to the fields to milk them. This trip is more than half a mile in some cases. In many instances the men who sleep near the sheds milk the animals and bring the milk home. Milking is considered to be basically a women's job with men helping them occasionally. In the *janglees* community, however, women are not allowed to milk because it is considered improper for a woman to touch the cow's teats. The *janglee* women milk the animals only when the male members are away or not well. Among the *janglees* the dung is also removed by men; however, the women make dung cakes.

Milk is put in big *chattees*, and dishes left over from the previous night are washed along with the milk utensils. Some of the women do not like leaving utensils dirty over night and wash them after dinner. Water for the washing of utensils is brought from the tubewell or the hand pump. If the hand pump is within the house or in the common courtyard dishes are washed there. A few women reported washing dishes at the tubewell.

Tending the animals is mainly a woman's job. Eighty seven percent of the households owned cattle. Women from the poorer families work very hard to keep these animals. They usually get very little help from the male members of the family. One household has a servant to tend the animals but here also the women supervise him. The young boys who take lessons in the Holy Quran from the *maulvi sahib* take care of his animals and fetch water and fuel for him[16]. In the morning the animals are fed the fodder which had been prepared the evening before. Sometimes an extra feed of grass and fodder is given to get richer milk.

After feeding the animals in the morning, the women boil the milk over stoves specially made for the purpose. A small round pit is dug into the ground, mud walls are raised on three sides of it and then it is roofed. The stove burns cow dung cakes. Milk is kept in earthern-ware *chattee* and boiled on a low heat. The roof of the stove protects the milk from dirt. This stove has to be remade every fortnight. The milk stays on the stove until noon to

[16]A person who teaches Holy Quran commands great respect and students consider it a privilege to work for him.

make it thicker and produce a better quality of butter and *lassi*. The *janglees* women boil it for a much longer time till it is pink in colour. They say this increases the richness of the *lassi*.

When the children wake up the mother or elder sister washes their hands and face before serving breakfast to them. In the poorer households breakfast consists of the leftovers of the previous night, usually *roti*, which is taken in the morning with butter, yoghurt and *gur*. The *roties* are wrapped in a *dastar-khwan* to keep them soft, and put in *chabbah*. Some women reported that their husbands go to work without eating anything. However, the relatively rich households prepare a proper breakfast and sometimes tea. Tea drinking is not very common in the village and is usually made when someone is suffering from cold or fever. They also reported making *paratha* which is taken with tea.

Women knead flour before or after milking the animals. They let it stay for some time so that it becomes fluffy. In the meantime they clean the house, collect the bedding, bring them down from the roof where they sleep in summer, and put them in special big boxes. In summers they also bring down the *charpoys* from the roof or from the courtyard and put them in a shady place.

During summers the women take the kneaded flour to the *tandoor* where the *maachhan* bakes *roties* for them. For every ten *roties* she takes one as her wage. During winter the *roties* are baked at home because the fuel is damp and cannot be used in the *tandoor*, and also it is cosy sitting near the stove. Some people, especially *janglees* community, have *tandoors* in their own houses also. They bake exceptionally large *roties* of about 10 inch to 12 inch diameter. The hot plate (*tawa*), which is used in winters is of about 18 inch diameter.

The breakfast cum lunch is taken between 8.30 to 9.30 a.m. This varies according to the economic status. The poorer families eat *roties* with onion, *gur*, or chillies and drink *lassi* with it, some of them cannot even afford to eat *achar*. Relatively rich families cook vegetables but also reported eating chillies which is a favourite food of the villagers. Green or red chillies with salt are ground in a special stone grinder. These are eaten with *lassi* and *roti*. Meat and fish are eaten only once or twice a year by the poor, but at least once or twice a week by the wealthy families.

The food is prepared on a *chulah* that is different from the one used for boiling milk. This, too, has to be remade at least twice a month. Dry cotton sticks, leaves, tree branches and sometimes cow dung cakes are used as fuel.

After preparing the food, women feed the children. Then the school children walk to school, leaving the others to roam about and play or help mothers in grass cutting and animal care. Grown-up daughters help their mothers, not only in cleaning the house but also in cooking, and in looking after younger brothers and sisters. Girls of about 7 to 10 years of age were seen carrying their brothers or sisters and playing in the street while their mothers worked. Some of the women reported eating with their children and mothers-in-law; others said they eat along with their husbands in the fields. They wrap the *roties* in a cloth, put *lassi* in an *earthenware* pot and take along a glass or a bowl. *Achar*, chillies or *gur* are also taken. They place a round *beenoo* on their heads to balance the *chattee* and other accessories. Then they carry the food to the fields where their husbands eat under a shady tree. In

a few cases men come home to eat. Almost all the women, regardless of their economic status reported doing this job. Usually it falls to the daughter-in-law of the family. In April (when the sun rises at 5.00 a.m. or even earlier) they return by 9.30 a.m. to 10.00 a.m.

Most of the women reported cleaning the house and removing animal dung before taking the meals to the field. Others did it after they come back. They collected the dung, made dung cakes, and put them on the wall for drying. A woman owning one buffalo makes about 12 dung cakes per day. The cakes dry in a day or two in summer and three to four days in winter. Dung cakes are stored or sold. All dried dung cakes are heaped in a circular formation, (*gaheera*), which becomes smaller and smaller at the top and is protected from the rain by mud plaster.

After cleaning house women take animals out to the tubewells for drinking water or bring water to the house for them. Then they tie them in a shady place in summer or in the sun in winter. Then all the women from one compound get together and along with their daughters and young boys go for fodder cutting.

The wives of the servants go to work in the fields which belong to their employers. They cut grass and other weeds which grow in the sugarcane fields (in April) and put it in their *chaddars* which are tied around their heads. When the *chaddar* is full they empty it in a shady place and fill it again. During the rainy season when there is plenty of grass the women collect extra fodder to use during autumn shortage. Usually the number of cattle they keep is directly linked with the amount of fodder they can collect.

When the sugarcane crop is harvested, women remove green leaves on the top of the sugarcane, tie the sugar-cane in bundles and carry it to a trolley. The green tops or *aag* which makes good fodder are the wage for loading the sugarcane.

At noon all the collected grass is tied in one or two big bundles and carried to the house. This is an extremely difficult task because the bundles are heavy. Two pregnant women were seen participating in this work. They said "This period is not regarded as unusual by our people. My man pities me but then I have to feed the animals, for our livelihood depends on them. We have to take more care of our animals than our children".

The petty landlord's wives do not cut or carry fodder. The son, father-in-law or husband does that instead. These landlords had a small boy as servant who was responsible for this job. These men considered the job too undignified for their wives, who observed *purdah* and were not supposed to venture beyond their own fields.

It is usually 1.30 p.m. by the time the women reach home. If it is a washing day, they then take clothes to the tubewells. After soaping the clothes they beat them with a round wooden stick. When the clothes are very dirty they boil them in some soda. Some of the poor women wash clothes infrequently to keep them from wearing out. The servants' wives sometimes washed clothes for the landlord's families when they come to live in the village. They usually do it free of charge.

The life of a village woman is a continual struggle, the intensity of the struggle increases as we go down the social ladder. The status of a woman is determined by the economic and social status of her husband. When a man becomes relatively well-off, his first act is to confine the woman to the house. A woman whose husband is working in a mill in Lyallpur, earning Rs. 300/- per month, no longer collects fodder or helps with the harvest.

Table XIV gives the daily workload of a typical woman, 25-35 years old and wife of a tenant. The day is normal in the sense that it is outside the hectic harvesting season. While the exact amount of time spent on activities is not the same for each household, the tasks performed by women are similar in nature and intensity.

Table XIV

Work Load of a Woman on a Normal Day

	Activity	Hours	Min.	Percentage
1.	Animal care	1	45	11.67
2.	Collecting, carrying and preparing fodder	3	45	25.00
3.	House cleaning and making dung cakes	0	45	5.00
4.	Cooking	1	45	8.33
5.	Carrying food to fields, feeding children	1	30	10.00
6.	Carrying water	0	30	3.33
7.	Milking and churning	1	00	6.67
8.	Child care	0	30	3.33
9.	Other domestic chores	3	00	20.00
10.	Afternoon rest	1	00	6.67
		15	00	100.00

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES

Chet (March 14—April 12)

Festivities and Preparation for Hard Work

Chet is the first month of the calendar followed by the people in rural areas. It marks the beginning of a busy season and both men and women prepare for it. A five-day *mela* is held in the last week of the month around a nearby shrine. This is a big event for women for whom one day is exclusively reserved in the *mela*. Dressed in their best clothes they first pay their respects at the shrine and they buy clothes, bangles, sweetmeats and toys for children. Some of them reported buying meat at the *mela*, one of the special occasions when the poor eat meat. Music is heard throughout the day and in the evenings the mobile cinemas, especially brought to the mela, show Punjabi movies. The women, however, are not allowed to see movies because men feel they are a bad influence. Every woman talked enthusiastically about the *mela* because this is

their only entertainment. They also claim that the *mela* stimulates them for the hard work ahead.

House repairs are done in this month. Since 87% of the houses in the village are *katcha*, they have to be renovated twice a year. All the utensils, boxes, and *palangs* are taken out of the rooms and the mud with straw is plastered by hands on the walls and the floor. When it gets dry straw and fresh cow-dung are mixed with the mud and a thin final coating is done. The rooms are plastered first, then the outer walls, roof and the courtyard. In order to give the room a smooth look, the walls and the floor are rubbed with a metal plate. The mantlepiece in the house is also renovated and often decorated with painted flowers. In a few houses women had white washed the inner walls. All the utensils are cleaned and the winter beddings are also washed.

Mud plastering is a very tedious job and is done exclusively by women whose hands become coarse and blistered. The women were, however, very skilled at plastering. Young girls were seen helping their mothers. Some women reported doing this job for others and were paid in kind.

In *chet* women also make large mud drums (*Parola*) for storing grain. A parola has a round, flat base on which mud walls are raised three to six feet high. The bottom and the neck are narrow, but the middle portion is wide. A small hole near the base to let the grain flow out is plugged with some cloth. When the *parola* is filled with grain, the top is closed. A *parola* lasts many years if it is annually renovated. The women also make small flat mud containers for grain known as *kothi*. They also make *khurlees* (mangers) for animals and cages for the fowl in this season.

Sugarcane planting continues from the previous month. The servants' and tenants' wives help with sugarcane sowing. A few women also reported harvesting barley, which is dried and husked at home. A favourite drink *satto* is prepared from ground barley.

Baisakh (April 13—May 13)

Wheat Harvesting Begins

In *Baisakh* wheat is ripe for harvesting. During this season women work very hard. The tenants' wives participate fully in harvesting. The wives of the landowners, however, do not.

During this month one can hardly find a woman or child in the village. They leave for the wheat fields before the *Aazan* in the morning and work until dark. Women have to cook three times a day. They come from the fields about 7.30 a.m.; prepare a lot of *roties*, grind chillies, a little curry or *dal* and a big *matka* (pitcher) of *lassi*, and hurry back to the fields. They then tend to the animals. Around 12.30 a.m. or 1.00 p.m. another round of food is prepared and taken to the fields. Dinner is prepared around 5.00 p.m. After dinner the animals must be fed and other household chores are attended to. By the time they get to bed, they are totally exhausted.

After the wheat is harvested and stacks prepared some women have less work to do. The wives of the servants, however, help their men in winn-

owing the landlord's wheat. Threshing is done by the men with the help of oxen. Their own share of the standing crop is still not touched. Wives of the other landless labourers collect their share of wheat and process it with the help of the men.

These women work hard and fast. They try to cut as much as possible to get a maximum share. They wear old clothes for harvesting because clothes tear easily when soaked with sweat and dust.

Jeth (May 14—June 14)

Wheat is processed and stored

During this month the servants cut their own share of wheat. It is then husked and winnowed with the help of the women. The grain is collected and stored in the *parolas* and *kothies* prepared during *chet*. The tenant's wives also reported working very hard during these two months.

Most of the women reported that they collect enough wheat for nine to ten months. However, some of them stated that since they exchange wheat for day to day necessities little is left. They also reported buying wheat in this month from the landlord against the advance pay of their husbands (in the case of servant) or as a loan which they must pay back gradually during the year.

Very few reported going to city for their monthly shopping. It was usually the husband or the son who brought staples from the city. A few women reported that their sons who go to the high school in Jaranwala buy the necessities. The local shopkeepers (two in number) usually have most goods which they trade for grain. A few women also reported making *achar* (pickles) of *dayla* and *lassora* in this month.

Asarh (June 15—July 16)

After the two hectic months of harvesting, the work load lessens. Women make mango *achar* which is eaten throughout the year. They cut green mangoes into four pieces with a sharp *toka*, add red chillies, salt and other spices and keep in the sun for two or three days. Mustard oil is added for preservation.

Since this month is very hot and there is not much work in the fields, women practice skills like embroidery and crochet. A few women who know how to sew, make clothes for others.

Rains start at the end of the month, bringing some relief from the oppressive heat. Men begin the preparations for paddy sowing. Two women reported putting the rice seed in the ground and covering it with a thin layer of fertilizer, after which the area is irrigated by the men.

Sawan (July 17—August 16)

Paddy-sowing and straw baskets

This is the rainy month. There is plenty of grass and weeds in the fields so it is easy to collect fodder. When it is raining women stay indoors

and make *changairs*. The straw obtained from the hollow reed of wheat becomes flexible in the damp air and is easy to work with. Women are very adept in this skill. They dip the straw in different colours and then make beautiful designs in *chhabas*.

Jullians are also made in this month. All the worn-out clothes of the house are collected and stitched together to make a 3 ft. x 6 ft. pad, which is covered in relatively better cloth and quilted. Since only needle work is required, almost every women can do this. Coloured crocheted lace is put all around the *Julli*. These *Jullians* often are a part of the daughter's dowry, and are used as matting. Thus the old clothes do not go waste.

Paddy transplanting begins in this month. Most of the wives of the *janglee* tenants reported taking active part in it. The women take the seedlings from the nursery and make bundles. The bundles are carried in a basket to the fields where they are sown. Men help them transport the bundles, but it is usually the women who take out the seedlings.

The wives of servants and other landless labourers reported getting Rs. 20 per acre they sow. The tenants' wives get Rs. 10 per acre because the landlord pays only half of the expenses incurred. The other half is paid by the tenant. Thus their work is partly family help and partly for wages.

Paddy-sowing is a very difficult job. The seedling is transplanted in the fields in ankle-deep water and one has to bend forward all the time. Most of the women said that in the evening the back ached and the legs muscles are palsied. But the *janglees* women, who work the hardest, said that since they did it every year they are used to it. They looked down upon the women who said that paddy sowing was difficult.

The *janglee* women also participate in corn sowing. They follow the plough and scatter seeds in furrows. The *janglees* men proudly confirm that their women have to share the burden equally. A few other women also reported helping their husbands in corn sowing.

Bhadon (August 17—September 16)

During this month the rains slow down but it is very humid. The women continue to collect grass in this oppressive weather. They also practice skills like straw-work and weaving tapes. Paddy-sowing may continue in this month.

To save wheat from worms and pests, it is taken out of the *parolas* and *kothies* and put in the sun for a week or so. Plenty of salt is mixed with it before it is stored again. Some women reported cleaning grain to remove small stones and other particles that get mixed up with it during processing.

Women visit their relatives and friends in this season and take along the straw baskets they have made.

Asuj (September 17—October 16)

House Repairs, Rice Harvesting

In *Asuj* the rains are over and women once again repair their houses damaged in the rainy season. Mud plastering is once again in full swing. The houses are renovated and every one is active.

Women and children go out in the corn fields to guard them from birds and animals. They sit all day long for *rakhi* and scare away the birds by beating a tin-can with a stick. Only the wives of the landless labourers do not do this job.

By the end of the month rice sown in *Sawan* is ready for harvesting. After collecting the paddy the women carry it home where they separate the stalks for cattle feeds. Men help women with this job. The paddy is then spread out to dry during the day and collected in the evening for about two weeks. During the day a child or a woman stays near it to guard it against the birds. When dry, the grain is put into deep stone jars (*Askhal*) and pounded with wooden sticks (*Mola*) to remove the husk from the rice. This is done both by men and women. It is then pruned with a *Chaj* (winnowing fan) to separate the rice and husk. Rice is stored in pitchers after cleaning. The servant's and labourer's wives reported processing their share themselves. However, the tenants with large crops took it to rice milling machine. Some of them reported processing a part of it at home.

Kartak (October 17—November 15)

Rice harvesting continues throughout this month. Corn is also ready for harvest. The tenant's wives reported picking corn ears and bringing them home. The leaves and stalks serve as a good fodder. The corn is dried in the sun and then separated from the dried cob by beating with wooden sticks. Then some of it is converted into flour on the *karass*. Sometimes it is also ground on the stone grinder *chaki*. The dried cobs serve as fuel. The corn is also stored in pitchers stacked one upon another.

Chillies are also picked by women. This activity starts in *Karatak* and continues till *phagan*. Women take keen interest in this activity because they are paid Rs. 2.50 per maund and are allowed to keep 1/20th of the total chillies they pick.

Magher (November 16—December 15)

Cotton Picking and Quilt Making

Cotton picking is the main activity of this month. In Jhok Sayal all women, irrespective of the economic status, reported picking cotton. The land-owners wives picked it in their own land. The wages are Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3.00 per maund in cash or 2 to 2-1/2 seers per maund of cotton picked.

After picking, the cotton is separated from its seed. The servants reported selling the seed or feeding it to the animals. The servants' wives separated the seeds from the cotton the landlord wanted to keep. The wives of the tenants reported keeping some for their own use and selling the surplus. The cleaned

cotton is then spun, and taken to the weaver who makes cloth and *khes*. Some of the cloth is used to make new quilts.

Wheat sowing starts by the middle of this month. The tenants' wives reported scattering the seed after the plough. Servants' wives reported this to be a man's job.

Sugarcane is the main crop of this area. Its harvesting starts in this month. Women did not report taking part in the harvesting of sugarcane.

Chillies are also picked in this month. As explained above, this is exclusively a woman's job.

Poh (December 16—January 17)

Poh is one of the coldest month of the year. There is no grass in the fields for fodder. The wives of the servants and landless labourers reported that they peel the tops from the sugarcane (*aag*) to use for fodder. However, this *aag* is not free of cost. They make bundles of sugarcane and carry it to the trolley or the truck which transports the cane to the sugar mill in Jaranwala.

Wheat sowing continues in this month. Some women reported picking chillies. Cotton processing and spinning cotinues. Four women reported picking corn in this month.

Magh (January 18—February 11)

This is a very cold month with short days. So the activities of women outside their houses are quite limited. However, collecting *aag* for the animals continues. The older women reported sitting in the sun and spinning all day long.

Achar of chillies is made in *Magh*. The corn picked and dried in the earlier month is beaten with wooden sticks and the corn is ground to make corn-flour. Since there is plenty of *saag* (spinach) in this month. it is cooked and eaten with a roti made of corn-flour. Corn is also popped occasionally by the *maachhan* in a furnace. The popcorns can be stored for a long time but are very tasty when warm, so the women get them made only when needed.

Paghan (February 12—March 13)

Sugarcane sowing starts in *Paghan*. The tenants' wives reported helping with sowing. The others described it as a relatively quiet month. Since there is not much work to do they visit their parents and other relatives. Going to parents' and brothers' house is regarded as a special occasion. Women buy gifts for their near and dear ones, make new clothes for themselves and their children. In the very poor families the visitors take an active part in all the housework. They even collect fodder. In a few houses special attention is given to the married daughters who are allowed to relax in their parents' home and are given gifts.

Preparations for house repairs also begin in this month. Mud is brought from the ponds and stored. A few women reported starting house repairs by the end of *Paghan*.

IV

Conclusion

The approach of this study has been narrative and descriptive rather than analytical. We have not produced general policy recommendations nor have any major new hypotheses concerning the role of rural women in Pakistan emerged from our study. Pakistan is still at the rudimentary stage in research on women and neither existing data nor the analytical models can generate policy recommendations at this time. To bring research in women to a policy relevant stage, it is necessary to start with basic data collection so that existing hypotheses can be tested against case study and sample survey data.

In their well known article, "A Model of An Agrarian Economy with Non-agricultural Activities",[1] Hymer and Resnick distinguish between agricultural activities and a set of non-agricultural activities which produce, what they call, Z goods. Z goods are essentially home products such as processing of food and fuel, spinning, weaving, manufacturing and repair of tools and implements, pottery and metal working as well as housebuilding, fence repairing and services such as recreation, protection, transport, distribution etc. Their principal hypothesis is, "A major substitution that occurs in the process of development is not the replacement of leisure and idleness by work, but rather the shift from inferior methods of home production to superior methods based on specialization and exchange." Therefore they argue, "A rise in the price of food or an improvement in technology would provide a rural surplus of food or labour to the extent that manufactured goods were highly desired by the rural areas as substitutes for subsistence consumption of goods or food."

Our study can throw some light on Hymer-Resnick hypothesis and hopefully produce some useful refinements appropriate to existing conditions in Pakistan. For example, inspite of increased yields and increased prices of agricultural goods during the 1965-75 decade, there has been no noticeable change in rural women's work. What Hymer and Resnick's hypotheses suggests is that as income and prices rise the workload of women, through a decrease in their participation in Z activities, would decline. Therefore their hypotheses is essentially an inversely proportional relation between income and women's work (Z activities). From what we have observed in our field study in Jhok Sayal, there is no recollection of a decline in women's work. So one hypothesis for further study about rural women in Pakistan is whether their workload is inversely proportional to income or whether it is characterized by a "threshold effect" i.e. workload remains constant as income increases but at a certain income level (i.e. threshold) there is a noticeable decline in workload. It would be interesting to find out at what income level this "threshold effect" becomes operative. For countries like Pakistan this threshold might be very high, may be twice of what the level of real income is now.

Hymer and Resnick have not taken into account different groups of the rural population. In the production of Z goods a distinction has to be made between what is produced by women of the landless and the landed families. For the women in tenant or small farming families increased agricultural output could generate surplus food. This in turn could be exchanged for manufactured goods thereby reducing the production of Z goods and lessening their workload.

At the same time increased output could mean more work in the fields. Unless some of the increased output (i.e. additional income) is used for hired labour[17] improvement in technology might mean an increase rather than a decrease in the workload of women in small farming and tenants families.

The landless may not get enough benefits of technology. Increased yields of wheat, rice and sugarcane might mean more to be harvested and more wages in cash and kind but also more intensive work for females in all aspects of agricultural production. Moreover, rising food prices are not accompanied by relative rise in wages. Therefore Z activities might become important for landless women as a means of generating income. Our study vividly underlines the need to distinguish between Z activities of the landed and the landless.

We can also consider the well known set of hypothesis on modernity suggested by Inkeles and Smith in their recently published book, *Becoming Modern*[2]. They discuss "underdevelopment" and negative attitudes as being a state of mind, but a state that is capable of change.

In our study we observed that women, in general, have a low self-image. Women have been and still continue to be an under-privileged, oppressed group. Consequently, not only have they developed negative attitudes towards many positive aspects of life but have also built up an inferior self-image.

Inkeles and Smith tested many variables of modernity including the influence of co-operatives. They found that villagers associated with the famous Comilla Cooperative Project in East Pakistan were more modern in outlook and more amenable to change in their environment.

Pakistan is still some way off from introducing a Comilla type of cooperative experiment on a large scale basis. It would, however, be an interesting hypothesis to test whether less rigorous forms of cooperatives for women in rural areas can help to enhance women's personal estimation of their own value.

Hypotheses like those mentioned above and numerous others are comming out from sociological and economic theories and studies. Village studies have to fill in many gaps in helping test and refine these hypotheses by providing baseline data of the actual activities and productive work of women. Comparative village studies in different parts of Pakistan could generate a framework for defining behaviour, attitudes, distribution. production and participation. They will provide a deeper understanding of the problems of rural women and will not only help in formulating general policy recommendations but also enable social planners to effectively implement the programmes aimed at improving the conditions of life for rural women and integrating them more fully into the process of national development.

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[17]In our study we observed that female (family labour is used by tenants and small farmers to save on hired labour).

Glossary

Aag	The greentop of the sugarcane plant used as a fodder for animal.
Amil	Exorcist.
Aazan	Call for prayers.
Abadkar	Literally settlers; Here the term has been used for people from other parts of the country who settled in the parts of Punjab before partition, to develop the area.
Achar	Pickles.
Baan	A rope or string made of twisted reeds or grass.
Baradari	Literally brotherhood. Kin.
Beeno	A round base made of stuffed cloth sewn into a pad.
Burqa	A light outer cloak covering the whole body from head to foot with provision made for breathing and seeing.
Chaddar	A sheet of cloth used by women to cover their heads and by men to wrap around the shoulders.
Chaj	A winnowing fan made of reeds.
Chakee	A stone-grinder. It consists of two big mill stones. The upper mill stone has a handle on one side and a hole in the middle. Grain is poured into the hole and the upper stone is revolved to grind the grain which passes out from a hole at the bottom of the stone.
Changair	A straw-basket used for keeping *roties* warm. The villagers also use it for decorating the walls.
Charpoy	A bedstead with a wooden frame supported on four legs and strung with twisted coir or rope.
Chattee	A flat-based clay pot used for churning the milk.
Chabba	Same as *Changair*.
Chuhla	A mud-stove or hearth. A fire place. A cooking place.
Dai	Midwife.
Dari	A small rough cotton carpet.
Dastarkhawn	A table cloth; a piece of cloth spread on the ground on which meal is served.
Dayla	A local fruit used for making pickle.
Deeva	A small oil lamp made of tin or earth.
Dhoti	A wrap around sheet.
Dopatta	A piece of cloth thrown loosely over the head and shoulders by women.
Fajar	Before dawn.
Gaheera	A mound of cow-dung cakes plastered with clay for long term storage.
Ghee	Butter Oil; clarified butter.
Gur	Raw-sugar, unclarified sugar made by cooling boiled sugar-cane-juice.

Haata	Housing compound usually enclosed by a mud wall.
Hamd	Poems written in praise of God.
Huqqa	A smoking pipe: a water pipe.
Isha	Last of the five daily prayers, said a couple of hours after sunset.
Janglee	The local inhabitants of the study area. Literally it means forest dweller.
Jhullian	A patchwork quilt used as comfortable mattress for use in winter.
Jinn	One of the genii; a sprit; and elf.
Katcha	Unbaked. Made of unbaked bricks.
Kammies	Workmen. In villages the people in the lower economic and social status are considered to be the kammies or workers of the landlord and other people in the higher strata.
Karrass	It is a machine powered by animals to grind flour. This process of grinding is comparatively easy and less labour intensive than the hand grinding machine called *chakee*.
Khes	A kind of coarse cloth used either as covering for human body for protection against cold and dust.
Khurlee	A manger.
Kikker	An umbriferous acacia tree widely scattered in the Punjab plains.
Kothie	Grain store-house. In order to store wheat people build small store houses of clay giving them various shapes. The one which is given the shape of house is called kothie.
Kurta	A loose shirt worn by men and women.
Lasoora	A glutionus fruit.
Lassi	Diluted milk. Butter milk.
Machhan	A woman who makes popcorn and bakes *roti*.
Maghrib	Sunset.
Mandi	A market.
Matka	A pitcher.
Maulvi	A learned man. A religous instructor.
Mela	A fair.
Mola	A rod used for grinding rice or chillies etc.
Namaz	Prayer.
Naat	Praise of Holy Prophet (Peace be upon him).
Nowkar	Servant.
Oad	Wanderers; Nomads.
Paranda	A three-stranded tape made of cotton or silken thread to tie the hair into a plait.

Palang	Same as charpoy but usually bigger in size and with a headstand.
Paratha	Loaf of bread baked with *ghee.*
Parola	A storage bin for wheat made of clay with round base and narrow neck.
Patwari	A village registrar; a keeper of records and accounts of lands.
Peeree	A *baan*-woven stool or chair with short legs.
Pir	A saint.
Pucca	Made of bricks and cement.
Purdah	To wear a veil.
Qawali	Singing in chorus.
Rakhi	To look after.
Roti	Bread.
Saag	Spinach.
Salan	Meat, fish or vegetable curry.
Salma-Sitara	A kind of embroidery consisting of small stars between embroidered bands.
Sareesh	Glue; starch.
Saitoo	Barely parched, ground and made into a paste drink.
Shalwar	Baggy trousers.
Tandoor	An oven, a stove.
Tawa	Hot plate.
Toka	A sharp edged knife with iron blade and wooden or iron handle.
Watta	Exchange in marriage e.g. One brother might ask for the hand of his sister's daughters for his son and give his daughter in marriage to the sister's son.
Zamindar	Landlord.

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