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THE CARL AND WINIFRED LEE HONORS COLLEGE

CERTIFICATE OF ORAL EXAMINATION

Sarah Husain, having been admitted to the Carl and Winifred Lee Honors College in Fall 2002 successfully presented the Lee Honors College Thesis on January 12, 2006.

The title of the paper is:

"The Role of Professional Women in Pakistani Society"

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The Role of Professional Women in Pakistani Society

Sarah Husain

Undergraduate Thesis

April 20th, 2006

Thesis Committee:

Dr. Sybil Rhodes, Department of Political Science

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**Lee Honors College
Western Michigan University**

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Introduction

As an American-born female of Pakistani descent, I always had a great interest in learning more about the country of my parents' origin. I was curious to know more about a nation which the media describes as abusive and oppressive towards its female population. The media's portrayal of Pakistani women as being uneducated, unable to modernize, and having little or no influence in society sparked my interest in studying women and the role they play in Pakistani society. I concluded that the best way to learn more about the status of women in that society was to interview them. I had the opportunity to travel to Pakistan in January of 2005 for a three-month study in which I interviewed ten professional women from various regions of the country. I chose to focus on the professional, middle-to-upper-class women because I wanted to get a sense of what women with influence, power and authority were doing, if anything at all, to benefit their society. I believed that their personal experiences and endeavors would give me greater insight into how to improve the lives of females in the nation.

Author Shahla Haeri, whose book *No Shame for the Sun: Lives of Professional Pakistani Women* was one of the inspirations for this project, explains that her motivation for presenting the life experiences of educated professional Pakistani women is that these "women's stories of their struggles reveal their inner strength and moral courage. Professional and educated Pakistani women, and many others in similar situations, have been effective in raising social consciousness and sometimes in transforming the rules themselves."¹ The interviews that I conducted were invaluable in assisting me with my thesis research. They helped me gain first-hand insight into the impact that women are making on the social and economic framework of Pakistani society.

This paper attempts to outline key factors that negatively affect women in Pakistan, including poverty, lack of education, and gender discrimination. First, I will use data that shows

the underlying economic problems prevalent there. I will also use information gathered from the interviews that describes how professional women are advocating for positive change in the social structure of the country. Thirdly, I will discuss the role of NGO's in assisting the plight of Pakistani women. Lastly, I will examine the role of religion and how it affects the values of the general public in regard to women.

Poverty & Education: Pakistan's Crisis

Pakistan is currently one of the most underprivileged nations in the world. According to a report issued by the US State Department in 2001, "Pakistan is a poor country with great extremes in the distribution of wealth. Education, especially for women, is poor; only 33 percent of the population is judged literate, even using a very low standard." ⁱⁱ A more detailed look at figures pertaining to Pakistan's health and economic conditions paints a grim picture of the country's current situation. The World Development Report for 2003 shows the infant mortality rate to be 82/1000 births, the second highest in Asia. Barring Afghanistan, Pakistan has the highest rate of infant mortality in South Asia, surpassing that of India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Bangladesh. ⁱⁱⁱ The maternal death rate at 500 per 100,000 live births is also a cause for serious concern. ^{iv} To make matters worse, Pakistan's health and education system are inadequate to support the fast-growing population.

The worse-off is Pakistan's female population, which currently has one of the lowest literacy rates in Asia. In its 2004 *Pakistan Economic Survey*, the government acknowledges that a "gender disparity exists in low-income countries" ^v such as Pakistan. The Survey goes on to state that in 2004, the literacy rate for both sexes was estimated at 54%. However, the literacy rate is estimated at 66.25% for males and 41.75% for females. The government's goal is to increase the literacy rate in the coming years, especially for women. The report states "under the

Education Sector Reforms, the National Literacy Campaign envisages making 13.5 million people literate to enhance the literacy rate to 60% by 2006.” The authors explain that Pakistan has made “considerable progress in achieving a more equitable distribution of opportunities between women and men.”^{vi} However, the report makes no specific mention of what this “considerable progress” entails; nor does it explain how the government plans to achieve “a more equitable distribution of opportunity” between males and females.

During a February 15th, 2005 conference sponsored by the Customs Public Schools under the aegis of the British Council, Mr. Imran Masood, the Minister of Education for the Province of Punjab, stated “there are currently several areas of improvement that the government of Punjab is working on in order to improve the literacy rate in the region.”^{vii} One of these areas includes a joint venture with the World Bank. Pakistan’s education system will get \$100 million dollars U.S. for the next 10 years through the World Bank. The program will provide free education to children in grades 1-5 (in the rural parts of the province) and 200 rupees per month (approx. \$3 U.S.) to girls in grades 6-8 in order to improve their education and increase the literacy rate among females.^{viii}

According to a 2001 report on social development in Pakistan, Punjab has the highest literacy rate out of the four provinces in the nation, at 51.1%. The female rate is 40% and the male literacy rate is 61.8%.^{ix} Despite having the highest literacy rate in the country, Punjab’s school system is in shambles. Mr. Masood said “there are currently 63,000 public schools in the province; 40,000 of these do not have boundary walls or furniture.”^x The provincial Minister of Education also stated that the government has little money to spend on education and that most of the financing comes from private donations. He explained that the World Bank’s program is designed to involve the local community in an effort to get them to actively participate in the

process. The government's acknowledgement that the education system is in dire need of reform is a step in the right direction. However, the program can only be beneficial if it is implemented properly. The World Bank's aid alone is not sufficient enough to improve the quality of Pakistan's schools, nor can it reduce the gender gap without the government's help in establishing a concrete policy to reform the education system. A massive overhaul of the entire education sector is needed, and simply pumping money into the school system will not eliminate the gender disparity that exists.

In his essay titled "Education in Pakistan: A Survey", Dr. Tariq Rahman examines the *Pakistan Economic Survey* published by the government each year. He critiques the government's report by stating:

"these reports confess that the literacy rate is low, the rate of participation in education at all levels is low and the country is spending too little in this area. Then there are brave promises about the future such as the achievement of 100 percent literacy and increasing the spending on education which has been hovering around 2 percent of the GNP since 1995 to at least 4 percent and so on. Not much is done, though an increase in the number of schools, universities and religious seminaries (madrassas) is recorded. The private education sector mints millions of rupees and thousands of graduates through the market not getting the jobs they aspired to. The field of education is a graveyard for these aspirations."^{xi}

Under these conditions, it is the women in the nation who are suffering the most. The current gender gap in Pakistan stands at 11 percentage points at the primary level and 19 percent at the secondary level.^{xii} Pakistan's ambitions of reform, growth and improvement can only be realized if the government backs up its statements with implementation of these policies.

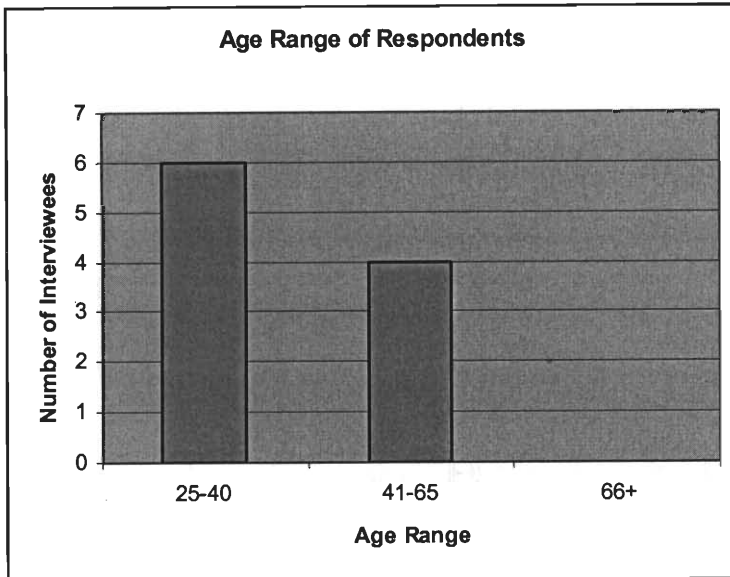
Rhetoric will not solve the nation’s educational and economic woes. Furthermore, the gender gap will continue to increase if young females are not given the opportunity to receive a proper education.

These economic and social concerns are of dire importance to the government as well as the general public of Pakistan. However, since the government’s efforts to improve the status of women have not thus far been fruitful, it is up to the people to make changes and improvements. There is a new phenomenon today in which educated Pakistani women are spearheading the effort to raise the socio-economic status of their own sex. Pakistanis are realizing now, more than ever, that if strides are to be made concerning gender equity, the women especially must speak out against injustices and work to improve their society.

The following dissertation includes excerpts from ten interviews conducted in February and March of 2005. The interviewees range from 25-65 years of age. They reside in Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad, the three largest cities in Pakistan. They have each received at least a Bachelors Degree (equivalent to two years of undergraduate studies in the United States) and many of them have gone on to receive post-graduate degrees in a variety of subjects. For confidentiality purposes, none of the interviewees’ names are given; they are instead referred to by their professions. *Table 1* shows the interviewees’ age range, as well as the number of women in each age range.

Table 1: Age Range of Interviewees

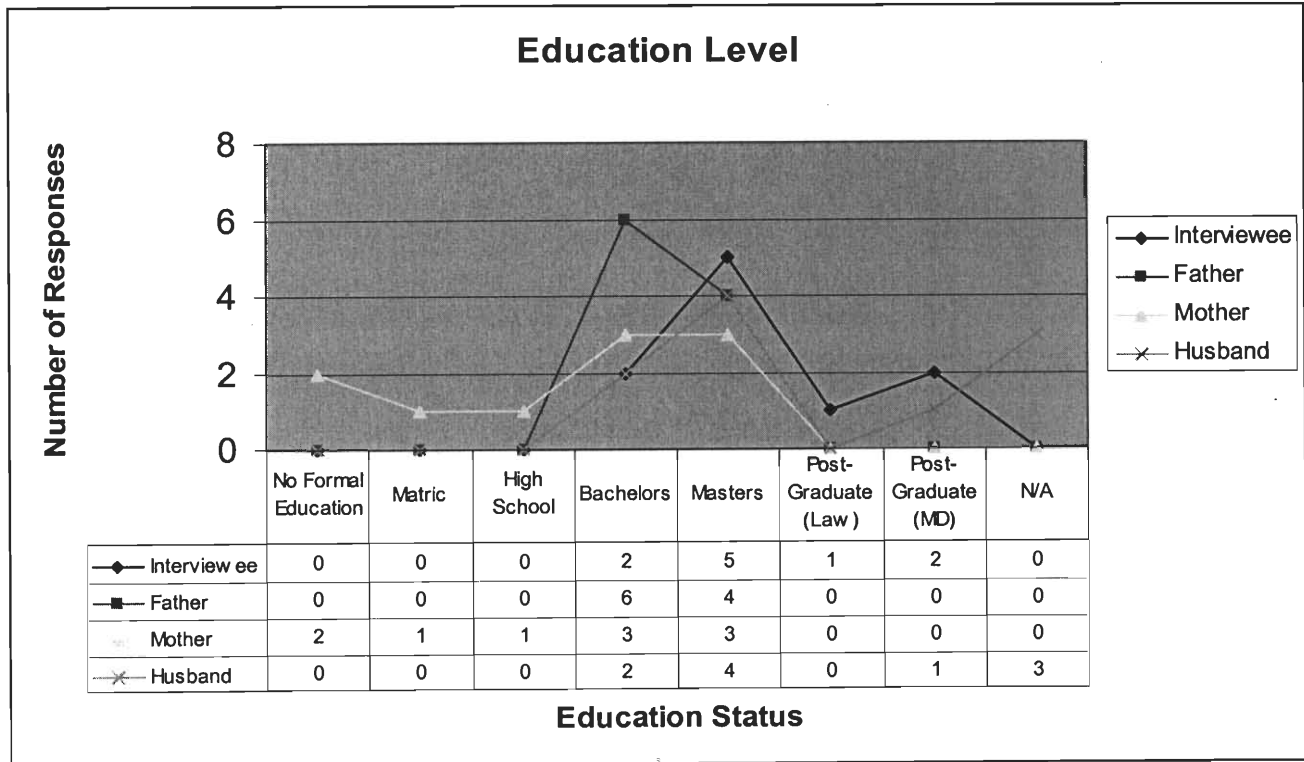
Age Range	Frequency
25-40	6
41-65	4
66+	0



I visited some of these women in their work environments. Each of the ten women was asked a set list of questions regarding their career, family backgrounds and their personal and professional experiences. The common factors noted in the interview questions included: the level of education each woman had attained, her religious background and her socio-economic status. The educational background of the interviewees' families was also documented. In addition to questions about their own educational experiences, interviewees were asked a series of questions regarding the highest level of education acquired by their mothers, fathers, and their spouses (if applicable). *Table 2* includes a chart and graph of the responses given by the women. The education equivalencies as compared to the United States are also included. The data shows that every interviewee had received education beyond high school. Two of the interviewees held Bachelor's degrees, while the other seven all received post-graduate degrees. Similar to their daughters, the interviewees' fathers completed a Bachelor's degree or higher. The spouses of married women also held degrees equivalent to or higher than Bachelor's degrees. The interviewees' mothers had education levels varying from no formal education to Masters Degrees. This data shows that the daughters had a similar trend in education level as compared to

their fathers. The trend also shows that the interviewees who were married had partners who had education levels similar to their own.

Table 2: Education Levels: Interviewee, Father, Mother, and Husband



Education Equivalencies (US)
Matric--10th grade (US)
Bachelors--2 yrs. of College (US)
Masters-- Bachelors Degree (US)

Some of the major issues discussed in the interviews were school segregation based on gender, discrimination in the workplace, and the advantages and disadvantages of being a professional woman in Pakistan. A copy of the interview questionnaires and the consent forms for each interviewee is attached in the appendix.

Gender Discrimination

The Social Development in Pakistan Annual 2002-2003 report, published by the Oxford University Press, shows the disparity between the number of urban females in the workforce to the number of urban males. The urban female labor force participation rate is 10%, while the

male participation rate is 66.9%. The labor force participation rate for females in rural areas is 16.8%, which is significantly higher than in urban areas.^{xiii} The rural rate is higher because women help the male members of their families in the agricultural industry.

Several inferences can be drawn from this report. First, in spite of having similar levels of education, urban women are often unable to compete for jobs with urban males. Second, often the schools that females attend are not of the same standard as the boys' schools. Pakistan's education system, including both public and private schools, are segregated based on gender.

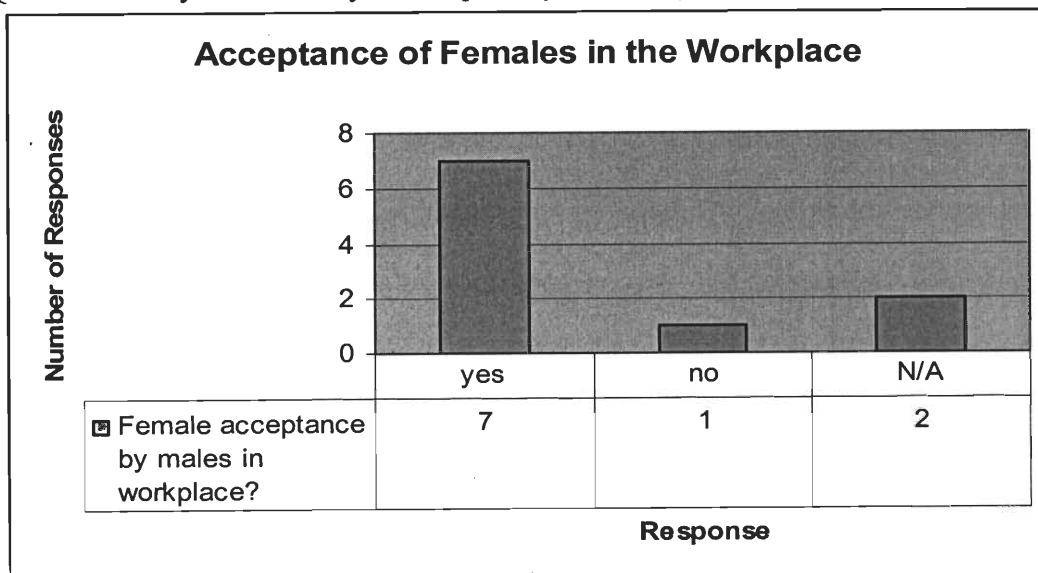
The women interviewed had mixed opinions on whether segregated schools offer an equal standard of education for both male and female students. Some of them shared their own experiences of attending all-girls schools and listed the pros and cons of co-ed versus segregated schooling. The Business Executive from Islamabad explained that she had a positive experience at her all-girls' college because she "felt free to express herself, be more creative, and get involved in extracurricular activities without feeling restricted or inhibited" (Interview #02). Other interviewees agreed that all-girls schooling allowed for better communication with each other and helped build their confidence.

However, the Business Executive also explained the negative aspect of segregated schooling. She felt that they do not teach the students how to interact with people in the real world. Similarly, the Principal of Customs Public Schools (girls' branch) in Lahore highlighted what she believed to be a gender bias in the segregated school system. The boys and girls are taught the same curriculum, but in different branches of the same school system. The girls' Principal described how the boys' schools get better equipment. "I believe that all the facilities (like Microsoft computers) are given first to the boys' branch of Customs Public Schools rather than to the girls'. We get the second-rate stuff, and this is totally unfair" (Interview #05). She

complained that she sometimes struggles to get new items for her female students. Both girls and boys deserve the best quality facilities and there should not be any discrimination when it comes to education. “Everyone should be given the resources and opportunities to try to succeed,” she said (Interview #05). Although it is not likely that Pakistan will desegregate its schools in the near future, it is imperative that female students be given equal access to proper equipment, allowing them to receive the same standard of education as male students so they can fairly compete for similar jobs in the workforce.

Another reason for the labor force disparity between men and women is that workplace discrimination may discourage urban females from seeking employment. During the interview, the women were asked questions regarding workplace discrimination. *Table 3* shows how the interviewees responded to the question of “do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?” The response to the question was overwhelmingly “yes”, with only one respondent stating “no.”

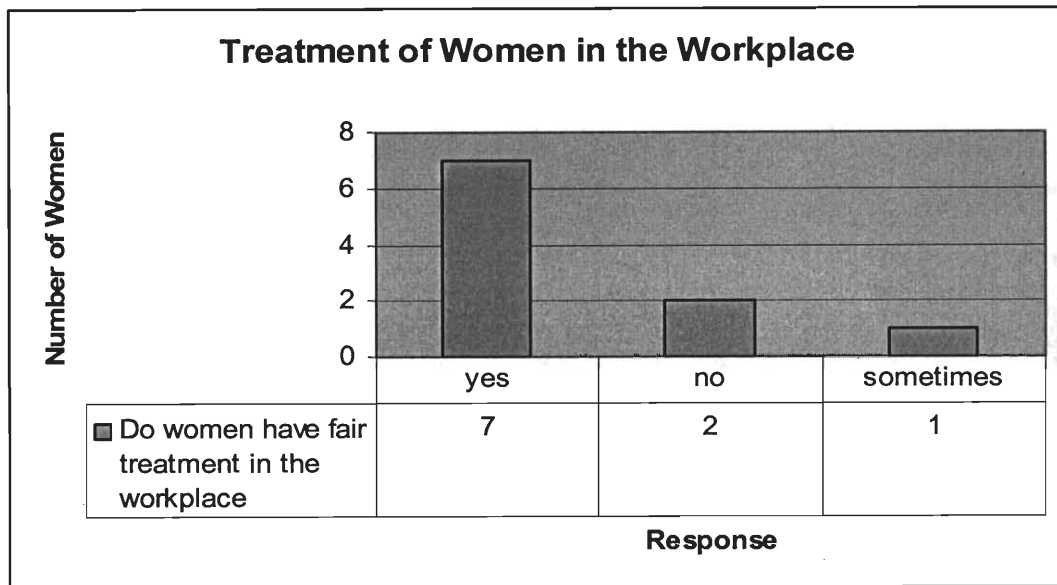
Table 3: Acceptance of Females in the Workplace
 Question: “Do you feel that you accepted by male employees in your organization?”



N/A—respondents who stated that there were no males employees within the organizations for which they were employed.

Similarly, seven out of the ten women interviewed believed that women within their profession were treated fairly compared to their male coworkers. *Table 4* shows the interviewees' responses in detail.

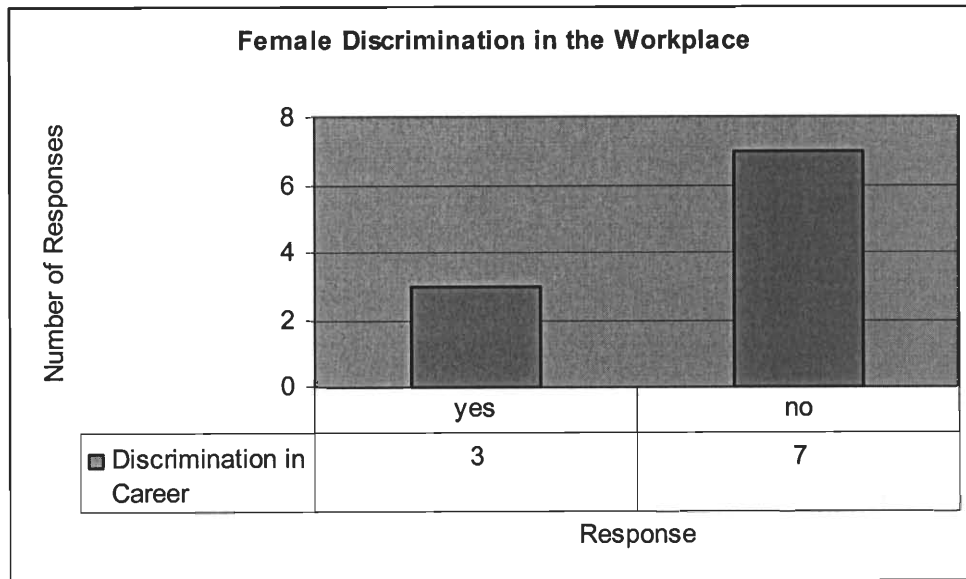
Table 4: Treatment of Women in the Workplace
Question: "Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers?"



Lastly, the women were asked whether they ever felt discriminated against in their career. Out of the ten interviewees, seven responded that, thus far, they had never felt discriminated against. *Table 5* shows the responses given by the women.

Table 5: Female Discrimination in the Workplace

Question: "Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against?"



Data from the above graphs seems to illustrate that professional women in Pakistan generally do not believe that there is major discrimination against females in the workplace. However, it is important to note that, although only a few of the women interviewed described specific instances of deliberate discrimination against women employees within their organizations, several pointed out the blatant gender gap that exists in the workplace.

One cause for the discrimination may be that more females are entering professions that were previously thought of as non-traditional for women, such as financial management and law, which usually require post-graduate education and highly specialized skills. In 2000, the labor force participation rate for urban women was 8%, and it had risen to 10% by 2002. As more women enter the workforce, they encounter more discrimination. Often, men feel threatened because they are not used to having women compete for similar jobs. The Lawyer in Pakistan's Provincial High Court said that there are about thirty to forty female civil judges in the city of Lahore today; but when she started practicing law years ago, there was only one. She believes

that as more women take up a career in law, the discrimination against them will unfortunately increase. “I think that this is why there is a lot of discrimination within the field, because the men are afraid of losing their grip and power over the women” (Interview 07). She explained that the attorneys are often very discriminatory, especially towards young female lawyers. “The reason we have so few female attorneys in Pakistan’s Supreme Court is because most women do not last very long in the profession. They drop out and go into teaching or do something else. The problem is that it is very tough to survive as a woman in this profession. There is a lot of sexual harassment. For a young woman, it is very difficult because she is faced with a lot of criticism...younger females are often jeered at. The working atmosphere is not friendly towards the women, and unfortunately, despite equal pay, they have a much harder time than the men do when it comes to dealing with clients and in court cases where the opposing attorney is male” (Interview 07).

The Doctor (OBGYN) also explained that the negative attitude of male professionals causes discrimination against women in the workplace. “Male doctors often think that female doctors are not qualified. They often have a sense of jealousy...this jealousy and resentment occurs usually when a female doctor receives a promotion or a raise over a male doctor” (Interview 03). Due to Pakistan’s consistently high unemployment rate, there are not enough jobs available for those who are looking for work. The unemployment rate has grown steadily from 3.13% in 1990 to nearly 9% in 2003.^{xiv} The social structure of a traditional Pakistani society does not foster a woman to work outside the home. Men are considered to be the sole providers, so if the female gets a job, it can lead to resentment and discrimination against her.

Even in large, well-established companies, gender discrimination exists to a certain extent. Although it may not be prevalent at the organizational level, a company’s work culture

can be discriminatory towards females. An interesting case is that of the Business Executive who currently works at Mobilink Telecommunications, Pakistan's largest telecom company. During her interview, she compared her job experience at Mobilink with the treatment she received while working at Pakistan Tobacco, one of the nation's most profitable companies. She explained that "women are paid equally and receive a lot of support at the organizational level at Pakistan Tobacco Company. But at the individual level, when it comes to the work environment, the men discriminated against the female workers of the same caliber. They were uncomfortable with the idea of having a woman as their colleague" (Interview #2). She believes that these companies will not change their culture unless pressured by the government to create a positive work environment which will be more gender-friendly towards women.

The experience she had at Mobilink Telecommunications was different from that at Pakistan Tobacco, due to the fact that the work culture is more accepting of women at Mobilink. "Mobilink is a young company and very pro-women...they hire many women (35% of total employees) and several of them are in high managerial positions" (Interview #02). However, even though the organization's culture is positive towards women, the Business Executive explained that at the company level, inequality still exists between men and women. "People at the same level positions do not get the same pay (at Mobilink). For example, men get up to 15% higher salary than women in the same position...unfortunately age and gender do matter" (Interview #02). When asked why she chooses to work at a company that pays lower salaries to its female employees, she explained that at Mobilink are respected by their male colleagues. "I think that the salary discrimination is mostly unintentional...but the human resources department needs to clean up its act. The fact that Mobilink really holds a lot of faith and potential in women is why I like working there," she explained (Interview #02). Having a work environment that is

conducive to female employees is an advantage for any company. But discrimination against women, both at the organizational and individual levels can lead to a high turnover rate among women employees and is a contributing factor to the disparity between men and women.

Another reason for the low female labor force participation rate is that women may choose not to enter in the labor force at all. There are many factors that can influence their decision or that may prevent them from seeking employment. First, many of the women interviewed believe that the biggest disadvantage for a professional woman in Pakistan is that she has “double duty” if she chooses to work outside the home. The College Professor said that the “biggest disadvantage to being a working woman in Pakistan is that time management is often the biggest restraint. It is very difficult to work in a professional setting and then come home and take care of the family” (Interview #06). Pakistani society is generally a male-dominated, patriarchal society in which the husband/father is expected to be the sole provider.

The second reason for women choosing not to participate in the labor force may be due to male family members not wanting the women in their household to have a career. There is often the fear among men in society that women will surpass them in income or will gain power. The Entrepreneur explains that the women she employs are “often being told by their husbands that they shouldn’t do this work. [The husband feels] that the woman is becoming financially independent, often making more than [her] husband” (Interview #04). In Pakistani society, there is a negative stigma or taboo if a woman earns more than her husband or is better educated. There is also often the impression that women are incapable of working as hard as men, and therefore do not belong in the workforce. Dr. Anita Weiss explains in her essay on Pakistani civil society titled ‘*Gender Power Relations: Perpetuation and Renegotiation*’ that the “fear of losing respectability is indisputably the driving force behind men suppressing women’s actions. The

fear of men losing control to a woman's domination is also associated with such male suppression, as such a man becomes the object of social ridicule."^{xv} For these reasons, many women are afraid to enter the workforce.

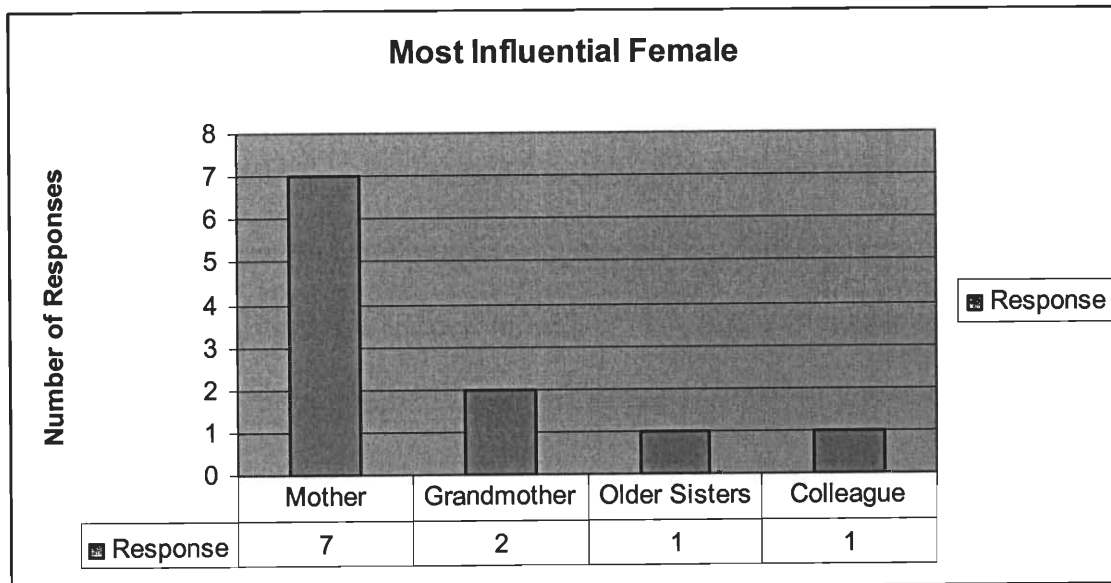
Thirdly, religious practices or beliefs may influence the decision of many women to stay home. According to Islamic tradition, the male is to be solely responsible for the family's economic stability, while the woman's responsibility is primarily to raise the children. Since nearly 96% of Pakistan's population practices Islam, the society adheres to this tradition. Both males and females are required to obtain an education under Islamic guidelines. The woman, however, has the option to stay home or to work. If she chooses to work outside the home, she has the option to retain her own income (and is not required to spend any of it on her household). The male is required to provide for the family, meaning he is expected to have a job which gives adequate income to support the wife and children. This option for a female to choose whether or not to have a career is given under Islamic law. However, it is easily abused by some males in society, who misquote the Quran and claim that women are forbidden from working outside of their homes. In her essay, Dr. Weiss also describes how Pakistani men frequently use their interpretation of Islamic tradition as a basis for preventing women from seeking employment. "People will often refer to Quranic verses for justification (generally cutting the given verse short and therefore not elaborating on the meaning)."^{xvi} Distorting sacred verses to justify male superiority only leads to further discrimination against women.

Despite the many struggles faced by Pakistani women in the workplace, there are numerous advantages of being a female professional. The following advantages were cited by the women interviewed:

- Respect—colleagues, higher-ups, males, and the overall society give prestige to women who are educated professionals.
- Self-Confidence—the College Professor who teaches English at an all-girls college explained that there is a “certain level of social prestige that goes along with being a professional woman. A workingwoman is looked upon as someone who is confident, independent and self-motivated” (Interview #06).
- Ability to earn an income—being able to retain one’s personal income is a confidence booster, especially for Pakistani women, who under Islamic principles are not required to spend their earnings on their children or their husband. Essentially, this income is theirs to retain and spend however they choose. It also gives women greater earning power, raising their status in society as well as increasing the overall growth of the nation’s lagging economy.
- Education empowers women—along with self-confidence and earning the respect of colleagues, having a proper education empowers women to take charge of their lives. Women who have a solid education are more likely to be aware of their rights (both legal as well as within the family) and can stand up for themselves if they feel these rights are being usurped.
- Having a career opens the door for further opportunities and both personal and family growth.
- Women who value education tend to raise educated children—seven out of the ten women interviewed listed their mothers as the most influential females in their lives. Out of the women who did not list their mothers, two listed their grandmothers and another listed her older sisters. This signifies the important role that women play in society. It also stresses the

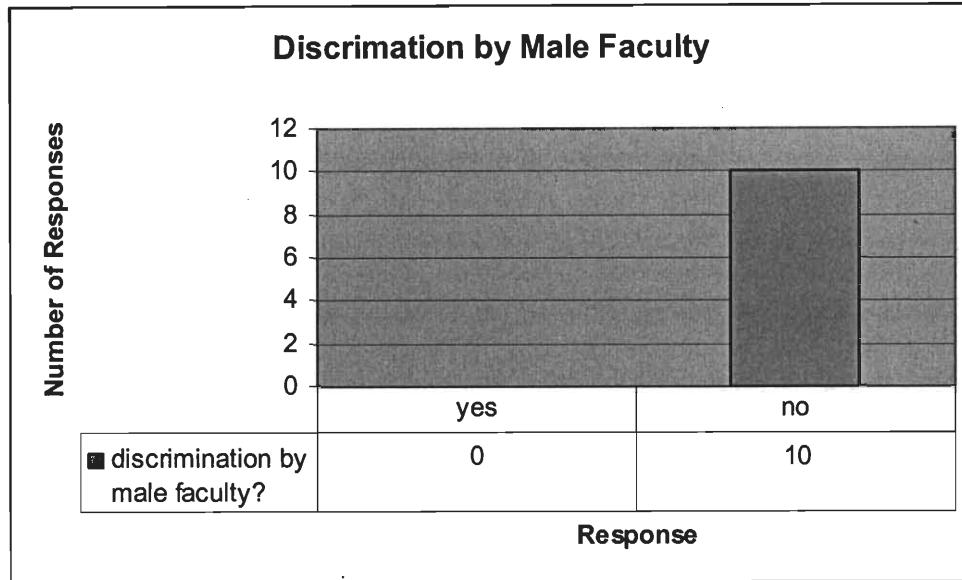
fact that most women tend to look up to their mothers and other close female relatives, especially if these women are educated. These are the women who, based on the interviewees' responses, valued education and wanted their daughters/sisters/granddaughters to have a proper education. In turn, educated mothers (or more importantly, females who place a strong emphasis on education) tend to raise educated children themselves, benefiting the economy and society in general. *Table 6* shows the interviewees' responses.

Table 6: The Most Influential Female in the Interviewee's Life
The question asks: "Who is the most influential female in your life?"



- Environment conducive to learning will motivate female students to enter into careers—none of the ten women interviewed said they were ever discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty at the schools/colleges/universities they attended. *Table 7* illustrates this data.

Table 7: Discrimination by male faculty members at schools attended.
Question: "Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?"



The Montessori teacher from Islamabad explained that the male faculty who taught her when she was growing up were “refined and polite and treated us female students with respect” (Interview #01). Having a faculty that promotes equal opportunities for both male and female students is critical in preventing discrimination. It is imperative that teachers (both male and female faculty) encourage their female students to excel in their studies.

Women in the Workforce: Raising Awareness & Advocating for Reform

In the past decade, awareness about the plight of females has increased within Pakistani society. In part, this awareness has come through the work of dedicated professional women, including the efforts of many of the interviewees. Some of them are working at the individual level; others are implementing positive change by creating conditions to improve the socio-economic status the poorest segment of the female population.

The Entrepreneur, for example, has started her own fashion merchandise company. She custom-designs apparel for women and trains her employees how to embroider and sew. They are taught to make wedding outfits for special occasions. Special orders come in on a seasonal basis. These women handcraft their creations and spend countless hours perfecting their sewing

abilities. On the surface, this seems like a typical apparel store, which the Entrepreneur operates out of her own home. However, her business is unique because she employs urban, low-income females. It acts a support network which provides income for impoverished women who have little education and virtually no other means of obtaining stable employment. The Entrepreneur employs approximately forty women, who sometimes outsource their work to other women. She creates all the designs for the apparel herself, and purchases all the materials in bulk from vendors, which helps reduce costs.

The Entrepreneur sells these items in the market. The proceeds go to the women who provide the labor. The Entrepreneur describes her business model as being a service for her employees. “It is great for them because it gives them income, which they would not have otherwise” (Interview #04). Her goal is to empower women. “These women badly need jobs, and some of them cannot go out of their houses to work, so they stay home and do the housework, while their husbands earn a living. The women who are with me are doing this job because they can work at their own pace and make additional money to help provide for their families. This is the best opportunity for them, because they may not otherwise be able to work outside the house for whatever reason—social pressures, family responsibilities, lack of education, etc...”(Interview #04).

Often, husbands are concerned that their wives who are employed by the Entrepreneur are becoming too financially independent. The women are often told that they should not do this kind of work. However, most of the women work very hard and are able to reap the benefits. This job “improves their standard of living, and they sometimes end up making more money than their husbands. Also, this job provides them with moral support and counseling” (Interview #04). The team of workers functions as a unit, and when anyone needs help, the women provide each

other with the best care possible. For example, if a woman's child falls ill, the Entrepreneur arranges for a doctor. She also provides assistance if there is an emergency, such as a death in the employee's family or if she is having financial problems. In addition, the Entrepreneur, who also has a post-graduate degree in Psychology, acts as a counselor and a mentor for the women who work for her.

Being a male-dominated society makes it difficult to create a business model similar to that of the Entrepreneur. However, her clothing business has become popular throughout the city of Lahore and she is also receiving orders from other cities. The Entrepreneur believes her company's success will lead other women to follow suit. She explained that NGOs and businesses such as her own in Pakistan are "trying to stress the importance of the role that Pakistani women play in our society. They are trying to bring the struggle of women into the limelight. [We] are trying our best to improve the image of Pakistani women, by showing that we can empower ourselves to become successful people" (Interview #04). This business model can be developed throughout Pakistan in order to give other low income females a chance to become independent.

Similar to the Entrepreneur, the Senior Manager at the Red Cross in Islamabad works with international agencies to improve the condition of women. She is in the finance division of the International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent based in Pakistan. She works directly with the United Nations and their AIDS program, as well as with the World Health Organization. Her job is to monitor, evaluate and observe the programs that are being implemented within the country. One of the biggest issues that she faces is raising awareness of the horrendous poverty and health crisis that is affecting women, both nationally and at the international level. She explained that life in Pakistan is especially tough for women. To reach a professional position in

Pakistani society, a woman must “work two times as hard to be half as good. Women really have to earn their respect in their professions, and it is unfortunate that there is still that stigma attached to being a professional woman” (Interview #08). She also explained that the Red Cross in Pakistan faces a double dilemma concerning the plight of women. They are trying to implement health care and education initiatives for the underprivileged females within Pakistan. Additionally, they also work with refugees from war-torn Afghanistan; refugees who are predominantly women and young children. The influx of the displaced from the political unrest in Afghanistan leads to the depletion of resources that would otherwise be used to improve the plight of the poor within Pakistani society. “We [The Red Cross] work through the national society and try to improve these programs...we first try to help the most vulnerable. We usually go into an area or a region for the long-term—we are currently trying to help the Afghani refugees get jobs and go back home. We are facing the direct consequences of the conflict and instability because we have so many refugees to deal with” (Interview #08). It is estimated that Pakistan currently has between two and three million Afghan refugees. Under such conditions, it is difficult to implement programs to help care for women and provide them the tools they need to become self-sufficient.

However, both the Red Cross Manager and the Entrepreneur believe that society in Pakistan is beginning to change, and that more women will eventually enter the workforce. She also reasons that discrimination against women is due to the perception that women should not work; instead they should stay home and tend to the family. She believes that “this negative, discriminatory mentality needs to change but it can only come if the men in the workplace have an attitude adjustment” (Interview #08). Her role within the Red Cross has taught her that creating awareness of discrimination against women is crucial. She believes the only way that

people will become more proactive against discrimination if they believe they can truly make a difference. When asked what she believes can be done to eliminate the gender gap in Pakistan she responded, “I think that we need to develop our own media and become more proactive...I think that the internet can really help in creating awareness. The silent majority needs to wake up!” (Interview #08).

In addition to providing jobs and housing for the poor, Pakistani professional women are also providing medical services for the female population. The Doctor (OBGYN) explained that due to certain taboos within the society, “most women do prefer to go to female doctors...it is often easier for female patients to discuss problems/treatments with female doctors because they can empathize” with them (Interview #03). Many men do not want their wives to be attended to by male physicians; so many women may not be able to seek any medical care at all. Religious beliefs also may prevent females from being treated by male doctors. Dr. Rubina Saigol, director of ActionAid Pakistan, a community development humanitarian organization, states that in the poorest areas of Pakistan, “a lot of time men didn't want to take their women to see a male doctor and a lot of women [are] denied medical care. This is a highly religious area. The idea of purdah (covering) and the four walls of the house is very strong here. Women have less access to hospitals, because of strong social traditions.”^{xvii} The OBGYN also sees similar trends in the hospitals where she works. She believes that when there are female doctors present at hospitals and healthcare facilities, the number of female patients tends to increase. Being a female physician is an asset in Pakistani society because it allows female patients to feel comfortable asking questions regarding issues related to family planning and their personal healthcare.

The OBGYN is currently the head gynecologist at two hospitals in Lahore. The hospitals charge an hourly rate for their services, and for specific procedures (categorized as major or

minor). There is also an additional fee for certain procedures (depending on the type of procedure). The Doctor also operates a clinic in her own home, providing free or reduced-cost medical services to low-income patients, some of whom come from remote villages. She negotiates with pharmaceutical representatives to try to get low-cost medicines for her clients, and does not charge her neediest patients for the medicines. The nature of her practice is such that she sees predominantly female patients, most of whom are pregnant. In her career, which spans over 42 years, she has delivered thousands of babies. She feels that as a doctor, it is her duty to help her patients deliver healthy babies, without them having to worry about how they will pay for their medical expenses. “The reproductive side of the medical profession is my passion, because I believe that to help someone bring a child into the world, to be able to witness so many births, is a miracle in itself and a blessing from God” (Interview #03). Other female doctors in Pakistan are also providing similar services to their patients.

Another important service that is necessary to improve the status of Pakistan’s female population is free or reduced-cost legal aid. The Lawyer for Pakistan’s Provincial High Court is one of the nation’s pioneers in advocating for women’s rights within the framework of the country’s legal system. She has made it her career objective to try to bring women’s rights to the forefront of the justice system in Pakistan. She, along with the help of some female colleagues and volunteers, created a group called “LAWS”, which stands for Legal Aid Welfare Society. LAWS has three main objectives: to provide Legal Aid, to raise Legal Awareness, and to conduct Legal Research.

LAWS also operates a Legal Aid Center, which provides needy women with free legal advice. The women are only required to pay for the court expenses; the attorneys do not charge the women for their services. “We have a team of women who are practicing lawyers and they

provide this legal aid at no cost for any female who needs it. This has been a blessing for the women who come to us because they are able to fight for their rights in the place where it matters most—a court of law” (Interview #07). Cases sometimes include situations of abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse and violence against women. Often, women’s inheritance and property rights have been usurped by their male family members. Without the help of professional attorneys, many of these women would not be able to fight for their rights in court. Usually the women who need the most help are the ones who cannot afford to pay the expenses incurred in legal cases, so the Legal Aid Center has been pivotal in providing crucial legal services for these women.

The second objective of LAWS is to help create legal awareness in Pakistan. They have a dedicated group of both male and female attorneys who offer basic courses on the legal system throughout the city of Lahore. The group’s goal is to try to make society “accept women as equal counterparts to improve sustainable development” (Interview #07). LAWS uses the Constitution of Pakistan and the Quran to define the role and status of women. The attorneys then go to schools, colleges and universities and hold seminars explaining women’s rights to the students. The Lawyer describes the work of LAWS as “teaching young people and those who are interested about their rights and the ins and outs of the laws of this country, especially the ones that pertain to women” (Interview #07). She acknowledges the fact that abuses and violations against women continue to plague Pakistani society, despite the group’s efforts to educate the population. She believes that the infringements on women’s rights continue to occur because people are not aware of the laws that exist to prevent these violations. “The biggest problem is that there is a lack of awareness in society about these legal rights. If awareness is created, then

the injustices that are done towards women will slowly begin to cease, because women will themselves fight for their rights and others will help them in their noble cause” (Interview #07).

The third objective of LAWS is to conduct legal research, particularly related to the rights that women have under Pakistan’s Constitution. The attorneys who work with LAWS “use rationalization and dialogue to try to appeal to the general public” (Interview #07). The Lawyer and her team are also doing extensive research on CEDAW, which is the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1979, CEDAW was ratified by Pakistan in 1996 under the assumption that it would be implemented in accordance with Pakistan’s Constitution.

Although CEDAW has been adopted by Pakistan’s government, the Lawyer is concerned that “these laws are not being enforced in Pakistan. ...and if people (especially women) gained an awareness that these laws exist, then there would be pressure on governments and society to uphold them” (Interview #07). Her job within the government as a Provincial High Court Lawyer is to advise the government on women’s issues. She is currently the Pakistan government’s resource for legal empowerment and awareness of women (Interview #07). In addition to dedicating her career to improving the status of women in Pakistan, the Lawyer also has won numerous distinctions. She holds a seat on the executive committee of the Supreme Court Bar Association and is a recipient of the Fatima Jinnah award (national recognition) for her contribution of free legal aid services to women. Additionally, she is also a founding member of the Pakistan Women Lawyers Association, Vice President of the All Pakistan Women’s Association, and an honorary editor of the Pakistan Law Journal. ^{xviii}

These professional females have devoted their lives to helping their fellow Pakistani women get the proper services they need. Their work is commendable; it is a model for the rest

of the nation's professional women. Their role in working to improve the status of women will be crucial in not only raising awareness of women's rights, but is also likely to enhance the nation's efforts to eliminate gender discrimination and create women's equality in society.

The Role of NGO's: Assisting Pakistan's Female Population

The work of Non-Governmental Organizations in Pakistan is crucial to the success of elevating the status of women in this impoverished nation. These agencies assist with structural changes, and aid in the areas where the government's efforts are lacking. There are a wide variety of NGO's in Pakistan that are working to fight poverty, improve the literacy rate and eliminate gender discrimination. However, in this dissertation, I will focus on just a few of the pioneering organizations that have the direct involvement of Pakistani female professionals. These are just a few of the agencies that have established programs which have been effective in providing resources for Pakistani women.

The *All Pakistan Women's Association (APWA)* is a non-profit and non-political organization whose main goal is to improve the moral, social and economic welfare of the women and children. For the past several decades, APWA has been an extremely active humanitarian organization. It currently has branches in 56 districts throughout the country. It is a major player in advocating for women's rights. The organization also helps sponsor the celebration of international events, such as United Nations Day, International Women's Day and UNICEF Day. APWA's humanitarian work is funded solely through donors, entrepreneurs and in-kind donations from philanthropists. The organization has received numerous international awards for its services, including the UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Adult Literacy Prize in 1974 for its efforts in raising the literacy rate among Pakistani women, as well as the Peace Messenger Certificate, awarded by the UN

Secretary-General in 1987.^{xix} Several of the women I interviewed, including the Lawyer and the Artist, are active members of APWA.

APWA also operates a women's college based in Lahore. The College Professor I interviewed is an English teacher at the College. It employs approximately fifty teachers, all of whom are female. The Professor explained that "we have all female teachers here because we want the young ladies to understand that women can do just as well (education and career wise) as men can" (Interview #06).

APWA was founded in 1949 by Begum Ra'ana Liaquat Ali Khan, the wife of the first Prime Minister of Pakistan. Her goal in forming the organization was the social, educational and cultural uplift of women. In addition to forming APWA, Mrs. Khan (who held a Master's degree in Economics) was a leading activist for women's rights after the partition of Pakistan and India. Soon after the new state was born in 1947, she took the lead in starting the women's voluntary service. She formed the Pakistan Women's National Guard and the Pakistan Women Naval Reserve. She was the first Muslim woman to win the United Nations Human Rights Award, the Jane Adams Medal and the Woman of Achievement Medal. She was also the first Muslim woman delegate to the UN.^{xx}

Another organization with objectives similar to those of APWA is the *Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation (Aurat Foundation)*, established in Lahore in 1986. The Foundation operates in 85 of the country's 113 districts, as well as 17 of the tribal and northern areas. It is a "civil society organization working for women's greater control over knowledge, resources and institutions, through the production and dissemination of information. Aurat Foundation believes that this will lead to women's participation in governance at all levels. The Foundation also works with civil society organizations at different levels to develop an enabling

environment for women's empowerment through strengthening participatory democracy and good governance in Pakistan.”^{xxi}

Aurat Foundation has created a network of information for both rural and urban women in approximately 1000 communities throughout the country. The organization continues to create programs that will be beneficial for women's greater economic and political power in society.

The Foundation has five main advocacy areas, which are:

- To pick up key issues and run campaigns for these at all levels.
- To organize conferences for rural women to enable them to share experiences and hold dialogues with policy makers, planners and political representatives to influence government programs.
- To meet regularly and build systematic contacts within the legislatures and bureaucracy so as to provide them timely information and to assist them in making interventions in the interests of women in legislation and development programs.
- To conduct gender awareness meetings and workshops to better sensitize decision-makers.
- To set up "watch" mechanisms to systematically monitor decisions which affect women. This will generate information which will feed into other advocacy activities.

Aurat Foundation receives donations from private groups and individuals, and also through special project grants funded by international organizations, including the United Nations Fund for Women's Development (UNIFEM), Royal Netherlands Embassy in Pakistan, Norwegian Agency for Development (NORAD), and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).^{xxii}

Upon the advice of the Business Executive and also the School Principal whom I interviewed, I visited the Aurat Foundation's Head Office in Lahore, Pakistan. It had a library as

well as four staff members who offered to assist with any research that I needed to conduct for my dissertation. The library had books, articles and publications from various journals on nearly any topic related to women. The Foundation offered its services, including photocopies of the library's reference materials, free of charge. The resources available through the Foundation to anyone interested in obtaining information about women in Pakistan (as well as internationally) were innumerable.

The Pakistan Society for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled (PSRD) is a non-profit organization that was established in 1957 in Lahore, Pakistan. The PSRD runs a hospital for people with disabilities, mostly those that come from low-income families throughout the city of Lahore and surrounding communities. The majority of the patients are young children, most of whom have disabilities caused by birth defects, polio or cerebral palsy. Although the organization does not cater specifically to women, the hospital's fundraising coordinator as well as most of its volunteers are female. The PSRD also operates a school for children who require use of its rehabilitation programs.

The Entrepreneur I interviewed is a volunteer at the PSRD and she recommended that I meet with the fundraising coordinator, Begum Shirazi. Mrs. Shirazi has been with the organization since 1960. She is an educated professional who became involved with the Society in order to give back to the community. To meet the basic needs of the hospital, she used to go door-to-door to collect donations. Today, approximately 90% of the funding for the hospital comes from money raised by the Society; the rest comes from loans and some private donations. The government sometimes allocates funds to the hospital and school, but Mrs. Shirazi described the process of acquiring government funding as "difficult". The Society has doctors and psychologists who volunteer their time to treat patients. The hospital also has a full-time social

worker, who is a female professional. She conducts patient assessments, and determines what each patient can pay, taking into account their financial status and cost of the treatment. Funds are available for patients who have high need (30% of the patients are classified under the free treatment plan), and nearly all patients get some form of reduced-cost treatment benefits.

Although the hospital operates efficiently, the model for others to follow is PSRD's school. The Society's school has 250 students, all of whom receive treatment and an education at the same time. The school enrolls students from kindergarten through high school, and currently has a 90% college placement rate. The students get scholarships to attend the school, which is adjacent to the hospital, so they can also undergo treatment for their disabilities throughout their school day. The school also has a partnership with a local university which gives the students two years of free tuition if they are admitted. Part of the school's educational program is to empower its female students to succeed. Female patients, whether in the hospital or at the society's school, are always treated with the utmost respect and "we all push for their success", explained Mrs. Shirazi.

Many of the children are abandoned or shunned because of their disabilities, and the hospital will do whatever it can to accommodate them. It even offers a micro credit program for patients who hope to start their own business. The goal, Mrs. Shirazi states, "is to help people get on their feet." The PSRD's school is a model to follow for both the government of Pakistan, as well as other agencies that work to implement educational opportunities in Pakistan. The government and NGO's can use PSRD as an example for how to run schools that cater to female children from low-income families, giving young girls the opportunity to obtain a proper education. Just like PSRD provides free and reduced-cost education for children with disabilities,

organizations that work in Pakistan's education sector can help provide low-cost education for the nation's poorest female children. ^{xxiii}

The *First Women Bank, Ltd. (FWBL)* is a corporation that was created in 1989. As its name implies, the bank was the first of its kind in Pakistan; designed to give women the opportunity have their own income base and allow them to have access to secure financial services. The Bank's objective is to economically empower women, particularly those from the lower and middle classes, by providing opportunities for both their professional and social development. In addition to offering traditional services, the Bank also offers special programs for females who use its services, including:

- Entrepreneurial skills development training programs, allowing women to update their marketing, behavioral, and managerial skills.
- Product marketing and development programs—the Bank markets its client's products through display counters/windows at its various branch locations.
- Identifying market outlets—the Bank arranges exhibitions of the products created/developed by its clients. Through its sponsorship, the Bank encourages and supports its clients, giving them the opportunity to display their products throughout Pakistan, as well as internationally.
- Promoting computer literacy among women—the Bank hopes to equip female entrepreneurs as well as women from all walks of life with the computer skills needed to help them meet the challenges of the 21st Century.

The First Women Bank's managerial functions are coordinated solely by women. The Bank operates out of big cities in Pakistan, but has eleven mobile credit officers and special credit disbursement programs which are offered to women in rural parts of the country.

The FWBL was recommended to me by the Entrepreneur, School Principal and also the Montessori School Teacher. Each of these women believes the Bank’s services are exceptional and is a pioneer in Pakistan’s banking industry in regards to both the financial and career services it offers to its female clients.^{xxiv}

The Role of Religion: Female Empowerment through Islamic Teachings

Religion plays a significant role in the discussion on gender-related issues in Pakistan. As noted previously, Pakistan’s population is approximately 96% Muslim. All ten of the women interviewed said that they followed the Islamic faith. During the interview, nine out of the ten women considered themselves to be “religious.” They were each also asked to classify their self-described level of religiosity. *Table 8* and *Table 9* both show the women’s responses to the questions regarding their religious beliefs.

Table 8: Religiosity
Question: “Do you consider yourself to be a religious person?”

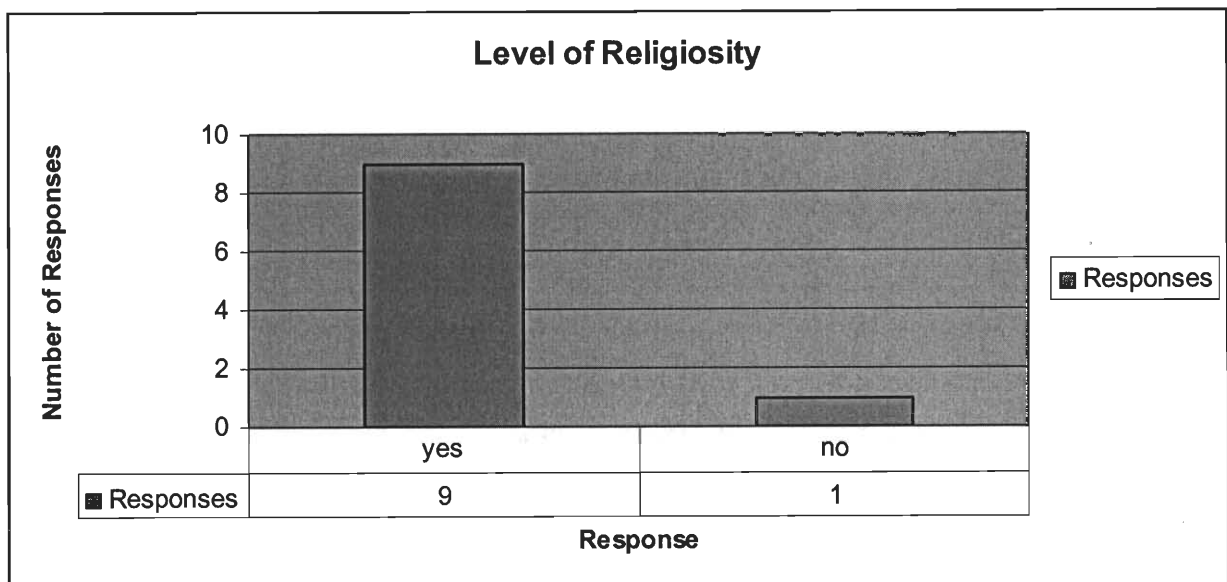
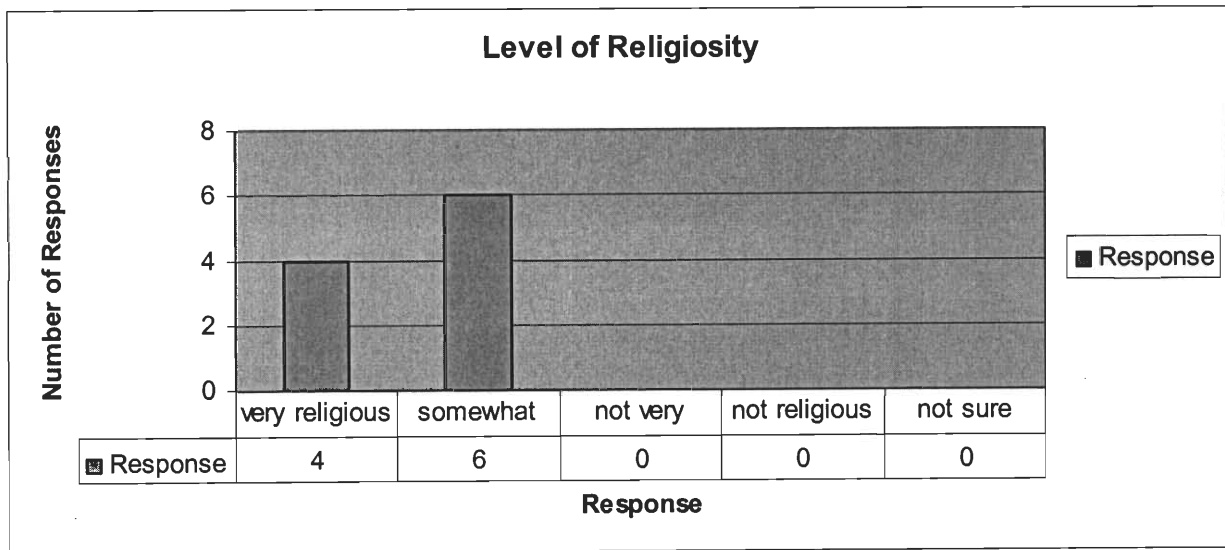


Table 9 illustrates the role that religion plays in the interviewees’ lives. All of the ten women considered themselves to be either “somewhat” or “very religious.” This shows that many

professional women continue to uphold religious principles and values, as part of the country's traditional culture.

Table 9: Level of Religiosity
Question: How would you describe your level of religiosity?



As illustrated in *Tables 8 and 9*, there is an emerging trend of professional women who are reverting to the practice of Islamic law. They are using the Quran to elucidate the status of women in society. This trend of women's social empowerment through religious teachings is gaining strength among the educated middle-class females. Islam accorded women the right to own and inherit property as well as the opportunity to participate in political affairs. Through various educational programs, these women are rapidly disseminating this information throughout the country.

The largest and perhaps the most powerful of these religious groups is the Al-Huda International Welfare Foundation, founded in 1994 by a physician, Dr. Farhat Hashmi. It is a non-political, non-governmental organization that is actively involved in the promotion of Islamic education and the service of mankind. The organization's objectives include promoting

Islamic values based on “sound knowledge and research, free from all kinds of bias and sectarianism.”^{xxv} Al-Huda also encourages its members to participate in charitable works to improve the conditions of the poor within society.

The Foundation’s core focus is in the area of training and development, pertaining to the education of women. Al-Huda has created an Institute of Islamic Education for Women which, according to the organization’s objectives, “has been established for the promotion of Islamic education...special emphasis is laid on character building and practical application of Islamic tenets.”^{xxvi} The Institute operates under the guidance of Dr. Hashmi, who travels throughout the country, conducting free seminars on the practical application of Islamic principles. Her special clinics are tremendously popular; drawing women from far and wide. These women participate in weekly Quran-study sessions, called ‘dars.’ They take place in the home of one of the women. Seminars are usually led by a graduate of the Al-Huda Institute. In some cases, the groups have become so large that they take place in five-star hotels in order to accommodate the women in attendance.

On February 21st, 2005, I had the opportunity to attend an Al-Huda conference at a hotel in Lahore, in which Dr. Hashmi was the keynote speaker. There were over 800 women present. The conference included full-text commentary of the Quran. The reason that the group focuses on religious education is because it believes that if women are aware of their rights accorded under Islamic law, they will be able to improve their status in society. At the seminar, Dr. Hashmi stated that Al-Huda hopes to “teach Muslim women how to lead better lives and to empower them to incorporate mainstream practical Islamic teachings into their daily lives.”^{xxvii} She began by reading a few verses from the Quran along with their English and Urdu translation. The commentary and explanation of the Quran used by Al-Huda is the most basic and the

simplest; yet it is one of the most moderate of all the interpretations of the holy book. Dr. Hashmi described how she believes in the importance of self-study and especially motivating women “to read the Quran and understand it themselves rather than have others translate it.”^{xxviii} At the end of her lecture, which had a question-and-answer format to keep the audience involved, Dr. Hashmi gave attendees the following advice: “Don’t follow any religious leaders (or anyone for that matter) blindly. Think for yourself; understand for yourself. God has given humans the ability to reason and to use rationale, so make your own educated decisions regarding religious matters.”^{xxix}

The conference also included topics such as: volunteering within the community, assisting the poor/needy through charitable donations, and education. One of the organizing members told me that the “Al-Huda school has flourished in the past few years due to its simple and universal message for women—‘you are your own connection to God, the more you understand for yourself, the closer to Him you will be.’^{xxx} The importance of the “woman” is stressed because it is the females in society who have influence on their families, especially their children. The conference attendees included women from a wide age range, from teenagers to the elderly. When asked why they are in attendance, some of the ladies told me they came out of curiosity; others because their friends and neighbors had invited them. Word-of mouth seems to be the main mode of advertising for this event.

Al-Huda is a prime example of how an individual person can bring about a revolutionary change in society. Dr. Hashmi’s organization is now internationally recognized. Today, chapters of Al-Huda exist all over the world, including Canada, Europe, and even the United States. The organization uses the latest technology to spread its message. It offers online Islamic courses. Al-Huda offers CDs and DVDs on a variety of topics, including a full-text English translation and

commentary of the Quran by women. Its message of education and empowerment continues to attract Pakistani women at the grass-roots level. The organization is fast becoming a key player in helping to solve some of the nation's gender issues.

Conclusion

The situation of Pakistan's impoverished women is grim. High birth rates, coupled with high infant mortality rates and low literacy rates plague the nation, with women being the worst-off in society. Gender discrimination in schools and in the workplace also puts limitations on women to achieve success and gain independence. In short, the three main factors which negatively affect Pakistani women are poverty, lack of education, and gender discrimination.

The government of Pakistan falls short in its efforts to ameliorate the lives of impoverished, uneducated females. Since the government does not provide adequate resources to improve the plight of the poorest segment of Pakistan's population, it is up to the educated, professional women to compensate where the government cannot. The ten women I interviewed are prime examples of professional females who are making strides in improving the status of women. Whether at the local, provincial, national, or international level, these women are impacting Pakistani society for the betterment of their gender, thereby improving their communities as a whole. NGOs, many of which are run by and catered towards women, are striving to provide resources such as healthcare, legal aid, educational services and women's rights initiatives.

Although gender discrimination does exist, the professional women interviewed for this dissertation remain optimistic that positive changes can be made. For there to be any lasting impact, educated women must be at the forefront of the movement towards a societal revolution. These women have paved the way for other females to take a more proactive role in raising

awareness of the dire conditions that exist. This awareness can come only through education, of both religious and secular nature. Also, efforts should be made to conduct educational outreach for both men and women, so they understand with women's rights issues, as well as the laws that exist to prevent violations from occurring. The government needs to implement female education initiatives and enforce existing laws that regulate gender discrimination and prosecute women's rights abuses. But ultimately, educated females must play a proactive role in elevating the status of all Pakistani women.

ⁱ Haeri, Shahla. No Shame for the Sun: Lives of Professional Pakistani Women. Syracuse University Press, 2002. P. XXIX.

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ⁱⁱⁱ *Pakistan Economic Survey 2003-2004*. Government of Pakistan, Finance Division, Economic Adviser's Wing, Islamabad, Pakistan. 2004. p.123

^{iv} "Maternal and Infant Mortality" Daily Times (Islamabad). Sunday March 6th, 2005.

^v *Pakistan Economic Survey 2003-2004*. Government of Pakistan, Finance Division, Economic Adviser's Wing, Islamabad, Pakistan. 2004. p.123

^{vi} *Pakistan Economic Survey 2003-2004*. Government of Pakistan, Finance Division, Economic Adviser's Wing, Islamabad, Pakistan. 2004. p.123

^{vii} Seminar on Drug Abuse: Sponsored by Customs Public Schools under the aegis of the British Council of Pakistan. February 15th, 2005.

^{viii} Seminar on Drug Abuse: Sponsored by Customs Public Schools under the aegis of the British Council of Pakistan. February 15th, 2005.

^{ix} *Social Development in Pakistan: Growth, Inequality & Poverty, Annual Report 2002-2003*: Oxford University Press, 2003.

^x Seminar on Drug Abuse: Sponsored by Customs Public Schools under the aegis of the British Council of Pakistan. February 15th, 2005.

^{xi} "Baxter, Craig. Pakistan on the Brink: Politics, Economics and Society. "Education in Pakistan: A Survey" by Tariq Rahman. Lexington Books, 2004.

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Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? *25-40 yrs.*
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved?
Bachelors in Home Economics from Punjab University
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved?
Masters in Geology from Austria and Karachi
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved?
Bachelors in Psychology
5. What is your profession?
I teach at a Montessori School in Islamabad
6. Are you married? *I just got engaged.*
7. How many children do you have? *N/A*
a. male: _____ b. female: _____
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband (fiancé) has achieved? *MBA*
9. What is your husband's profession? *Managerial consultant for an oil company, works with Malaysian dignitaries and deals with foreign investments in Pakistan.*
10. How many siblings do you have?
a. male: 1 b. female: 1
11. Would you describe yourself a religious person? *Yes*
12. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
a) Very religious _____
b) **Somewhat religious** X
d) Not very religious _____
e) Not religious at all _____
f) Not sure _____

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

13. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mom played a pivotal role in our family. Her efforts always revolved around character building. She has always been extremely religious, very devout and pious. She is loving, but at the same time, she has been meticulous about following Islamic principles (accurately) and getting her children to do the same. Knowledge (Islamic and otherwise) is very important to her, and she has always taught me about religion and life and how to apply the practical religious teachings to one's daily life. Even though she is a very devout Muslim and wants others (especially her children) to be the same way, she always taught us that balance and moderation is the key. I learned from her that it is important to have a well-rounded education, not just in the religious perspective, but also knowledge of the literature, arts, and sciences is important and that's the best way to be a well-rounded person. It has helped me in my career as a teacher, because I try to teach my students all of these things and the goal is to become a better person so I can eventually teach others the same. I learned this from my mother.
14. Who is the most influential female in your life?
My mother is the most influential person in my life. She has taught me the value of time management. When I was a little girl in elementary school, I had very low confidence and low self-esteem. I was shy and cried a lot in school because I was insecure. I would often stand alone

in assemblies and would go looking for my older brother's class (he was in the same school as me) because I was scared to socialize with my own peers. I was scared of the kids in my class. During this time, my mom was very patient with me. She also spent a lot of time with me outside of school because she knew that I needed special attention and care. Although she was very busy with work (as a schoolteacher) and my younger sister, who was just a baby, she would set aside time out of her busy schedule to talk to me and to try to boost my self-esteem. This was very helpful for me and I have come to appreciate and cherish that time that I spent with her. Her soothing, gentle words always made me feel better, and thanks to her, I believe that I have grown up to be a thoughtful, intelligent and self-confident person. Initially, my mom stayed home with the kids when we were young. When my youngest sister started school, then my mom went to work. She wanted to be at home with us for the first few years of our lives so she could make sure we were loved and cared for. She also wanted us to have the best education possible, because knowledge was very important to her, as I mentioned before. She taught both Islamiyat (Islamic Studies) and Urdu at a private school in Islamabad. She became a great influence for her students as well, who also try to live by her example and teachings. We still have students come to our house who had her as a teacher when they were young, and they often tell how she inspired them to become better people. This makes me very proud of my mom, and that is why she has had the best and biggest influence on my life.

15. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)?

I have many family members that have emigrated abroad. My dad went to Austria to study, but then he came back. My brother went to Australia and after graduating, he also returned to Pakistan. I currently have several cousins, aunts and uncles who live in America and Canada.

16. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional).

I wanted to do my Masters at the National College of Arts in Lahore. But at the time, I was living in Islamabad, and my mom was concerned that I would be living alone and away from home. At the time, I was very upset that she did not let me go, but now I realize that it was probably for the better. I ended up staying in Islamabad and completing my degree there. We are a very tight-knit family, and my mom wanted to keep all of us together, and I respect her for that. I think that this is common in Pakistan, both for girls and boys to stay close to home for their university/higher studies. I believe this is because parents generally want their children close to them, the family unit is very important in Pakistani society, although it is often difficult to keep everyone together, since the children want their freedom. But now, more and more, I am seeing that both male and female students are leaving home and studying elsewhere (in another city in Pakistan, or another country). I have many friends (in my age group who are 20-30 years old) who are studying abroad with their parents' full blessings. I think it is a good idea to let children study abroad, especially girls, but the most important thing is to get them educated, wherever it may be.

17. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?

There was a student in my preschool class who did not speak at all. He was four years old, and never spoke. He was a slow learner and did not even talk at home with his parents. I spent extra time with him after school, teaching him how to read and trying to coax him into saying a few words at a time. Slowly, he began to repeat words and sentences after me, and within a few weeks, he was talking! His mother came to see me at school and she was so thrilled that he had started talking that she baked me a cake! This was a big accomplishment for me, not because of the cake, but because my hard work with this student paid off and I helped to make a difference in his and his family's lives.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Educational Background

18. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.
A positive experience that I had while in college was that I went to a women's jail on a field trip from my sociology class. We interviewed the female inmates at this jail and some of these women had been in prison for more than five years. It was heartbreaking because some of these women had young children. The majority of them were in jail because of drug-related crimes and sex scandals. But the biggest problem was that some had never even had a hearing, and they were waiting to be tried in a court of law for many years but had never been given a fair trial. I also learned that some of the drugs are supplied to these women by the police, and it is their way of earning a living to help their families. This was very sad, and I think that we in Pakistan need to do something about the courts because justice is not being served, especially not to these women. They need another outlet, a way for their families to earn a living legally without having to sell drugs or go into prostitution. This was an eye opener for me, and I'm glad I had this experience in college. I don't think I had any negative experiences in college, I really enjoyed my classes.
19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?
No. I actually went to an all girls' university so I never had any male faculty. There were some male faculty teaching at the school, but they were very well educated, refined and polite and treated us with respect. I never had any problems with discrimination.
20. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?
Never in college or university, but I remember an instance in elementary school when one boy said something inappropriate to me, he was teasing all the girls in our class, and I got mad, and slugged him really hard. He never gave me a hard time after that. I think that discrimination should not be tolerated by anyone, in any shape or form. I, personally, have never felt that I was discriminated against by fellow students of the opposite sex, but if I did, I would definitely report it and try to make sure the student was punished for their behavior.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

21. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?
Montessori Schoolteacher, 3-5 year old students
22. How many employees are there in your organization? *32 employees in my Montessori branch*
23. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization? *Just one male, all the rest are females.*
24. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?
Yes. The senior branch has more males since they need more male faculty to teach the high school classes. However, they are paid the same as the other employees in the organization.
25. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career. *I don't think that I faced any problems in becoming a teacher. The school was looking for younger teachers, those who have just graduated, and I needed the work experience, so I had no problem in getting this job. I really like teaching the students and being an influence on their lives at such a young age. I believe I am helping to mold them into who they will become as adults, therefore, my job as an educator is very important, and I do my best to fulfill it to the best of my ability.*
26. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession? *Teaching is a very respectable profession for women. It is probably one of the main professions in Pakistan that is saturated by females.*

27. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible.
When hiring, the employers in the field of education mostly look at the educational background of the applicant and whether you have the patience and can interact well with the kid; they do not look at whether an applicant is male or female. Men and women both receive the same pay. They look at job qualifications and the applicant's ability, rather than his/her gender.
28. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail.
No, I think seniority in the profession is important, so people who have worked for maybe 10 years will get paid more than someone who has been teaching at the school for 3-4 years. But otherwise, there is really no discrimination.
29. Do you plan to continue to work after marriage?
No, not because anyone told me not to, but because I want to stay home with my family and be able to spend time with my kids. I think I will work for a year or two and then settle down, start a family. My husband does not mind if I want to stay home, he thinks it is my decision, but he says that if I want to work, he'd be more than happy if I did so. Most of my friends who have gotten married continue to work after marriage, but my personal preference is to stay home. After marriage, I'll be staying with my in-laws. This is very common for a girl in Pakistan, even today, to move in with her husband's family after marriage. My husband has his own separate quarters in their house, so we will have some privacy and at the same time I won't have to do all the cooking and cleaning, so I'm looking forward to that!

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

30. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society?
The advantages of being a female professional in Pakistan are that you have a lot of exposure and interaction with other professionals—both male and female. The main problem with being a teacher is that we have low salaries in general compared to other professions. If you are a teacher, and you are the sole provider in your family (the primary worker) then you will most likely have difficulty making ends meet. Other than that, teaching is a great profession, especially for women because there are plenty of jobs available at all different levels.
31. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women?
No. Not at all! I believe that this is because most of them (Americans, Westerners) think that Pakistani women are kitchen utilities and are locked within the premises and are not given an equal chance to contribute to society. This is definitely not the case, and we should all (Pakistanis, wherever they may live) try to dispel these misconceptions. The truth is that women are given chances to do work other than outside their homes, even in the rural villages. In all the bigger cities, women are educated and the ones who work hard go to the finest institutions for higher learning.
32. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)?
The media plays an absolutely biased role in the portrayal of Pakistani women. It seems like people in the media do not want others to know that there are very educated people in Pakistan and that these women lead a normal life. Information feeders in the media portray specific instances (exceptions) in order to justify the foreign policy of western nations (namely, the United States) towards countries like Pakistan.

33. What do you think can be done to improve the image of Pakistani women in the media?
I think that the Pakistanis who are living abroad in western countries should work hard to try to educate their country's populations about Pakistan and its people. It is very important to educate people, because ignorance only creates fear, which leads to hatred. I think that once people start to understand that we are all human beings living on this earth, they will have a better perception of those who are different from them, whether it is in religion, race or culture.

Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? *25-40 yrs.*
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved? *MBA from Lahore University of Management & Sciences (LUMS)*
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved? *Masters in Economics*
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved? *Masters in Social Work*
5. What is your profession? *Business Executive*
6. Are you married? *No*
7. How many children do you have? *N/A*
a. male: _____ b. female: _____
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband has achieved? *N/A*
9. What is your husband's profession? *N/A.*
10. How many siblings do you have?
a. male: 2 b. female: _____
11. Would you describe yourself a religious person? *No*
12. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
 - a) Very religious _____
 - b) **Somewhat religious** X
 - c) Not very religious _____
 - d) Not religious at all _____
 - e) Not sure _____

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

13. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mother was the nucleus of the family. She did not work after she got married, but she instead stayed home to take care of my two brothers and me. Education was always a priority for her, and she wanted us to have the best possible education. She was the backbone of our family. She passed away from cancer two years ago and even while undergoing painful treatment; she did not give up hope and continued to be a strong influence and role model in our (my family's) life.
14. Who is the most influential female in your life?
My mother was again the most influential female in my life. She was the key decision- maker in the family, but she also gave us kids the freedom to do whatever we wanted to do. She was very much open to letting me (the only female child) do whatever I wanted to do in terms of a career. This was not very common in my family, since just about all of my cousins were expected to do medicine and become physicians. My mother and my father both supported my decision to go to LUMS and study business and they both wholeheartedly agreed to send me out of town to grad school. I had the opportunity to live on my own in hostels while in grad school in Lahore. My mom was a very strong supporter of educating all of her kids at the best of schools, but she especially wanted me to get a good education because I was the only girl.

15. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)?

2 members of my family, my uncle and aunt, as well as my brother who went to study in America but came back to Pakistan after completing his degree in computer science..

16. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional).

Professionally—I worked for Pakistan Tobacco after I completed my MBA at LUMS. It was the first job that I had, but I did not enjoy it very much.. For a woman to work in a Pakistani environment, it is important that the other people with whom she works in that organization understand that the woman is most likely a very qualified, capable woman. I felt that it was a very uncomfortable working environment for a woman to be in. I have a friend who is there right now, and she has the same problems that I had working there nearly 10 years ago. The culture there has not changed at all. Women are paid equally and receive a lot of support at the organizational level at Pakistan Tobacco Company. But at the individual level, when it comes to the work culture and atmosphere, the individuals (men) discriminated against the female workers of the same caliber. Pakistan Tobacco Company was uncomfortable with the idea of having women working there and the men were uncomfortable with the idea of having a woman as their colleague.

I was part of the first batch hired after twelve years of a hiring freeze in that company. They had only about 30 females (almost all secretaries) out of 2500 employees total at the time. Old habits die hard and it is difficult to change the culture since the company is more than eighty years old. I think that more and more pressure from the international front is needed to create a positive work environment, which is comfortable for women.

I had a very different experience in Mobilink, where I currently work (started at Mobilink 7 years ago). The experience at Mobilink is opposite of that at Pakistan Tobacco. Mobilink is a young company and very pro-women. The work culture is very accepting of women in high professional positions. They hire many women (35% of total employees) and several of them are in high managerial positions. However, because it is a new and growing organization in the local telecommunications industry, the hours required are very long and are extremely difficult for anyone (especially women) to raise a family and lead a high profile life with a hectic work schedule. This is why there are few women in the highest managerial positions in the company.

Unfortunately, even though the work culture is very positive, at the organization level, there is a lot of inequality. People in the same level positions do not get the same pay. For example, men get up to 15% higher (in general) salary than women in the same position. The same can be said for tenure (you get paid more if you are older than if you are younger). You can be more qualified for a particular position, but the person who is older will get the raise/promotion regardless of any other factor. Unfortunately, age and gender do matter. Women usually (including myself) play the “woman card” because being a woman in Mobilink, the upper management says that women can have certain entitlements just for being female (drivers to take them to the airport, someone to take them to and from the hotel, maternity leave, etc..) Even though I know that this is reverse discrimination, I prefer this to the situation in Pakistan Tobacco in which the women were not respected by their male colleagues, and this created a very negative work culture. In Pakistan Tobacco Company, if you did not have a car, they expected you to get a cab (man or a woman). However, at Mobilink, they (the management) would have a heart attack if a woman took a cab by herself. They will have drivers pick the women up at the expense of the company. I believe that Mobilink is doing very well as a company because they have women in key positions. The Brand Manager of Jazz (Mobilink’s major promotional service), Human Resource compensation/hiring/management head, and the Finance Manager (myself) are all females. As the Financial Manager of the company, I run the treasury in the department and the company’s growth is heavily dependent on the work that I do. The fact that Mobilink really holds a lot of faith and potential in women is why I like working there. I think the

salary discrimination is mostly unintentional, but it is just that the HR department needs to clean up its act.

17. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?

My biggest accomplishment so far is currently under works. The current deal I am working on through Mobilink is worth about \$300 million U.S dollars. My department is working on borrowing money from three government banks and we are hoping to get some funding from 'export-create agencies', which support the government of those countries. France, UK and Germany are the countries we are currently working with to try to bring in some foreign investment into Pakistan. If this deal goes through, this will be the first time that these countries will lend money to a private sector company in Pakistan since 1998. This is actually likely to be the largest private sector project that these governments have ever supported in Pakistan. It will have major repercussions for Pakistan's economic growth and foreign investments within the country. We have opened the door for other companies to do the same with the country. This accomplishment is still a sort of work in process, but we are all hoping that the hard work we've put into it will pay off.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Educational Background

18. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.

I had a lot of positive experiences in my school. I studied in a segregated environment (went to an all-girls' college till Bachelors). This is not that common anymore, but I liked it. I felt free to express myself, be more creative, and get involved in extracurricular activities without feeling restricted or inhibited. Men tend to put a structure on things—when they are around, they tend to put limits or restrictions on things. I went to Kinnaird College, which is a prestigious, private all-female college in Lahore. We had a lot of fun at an all-girls' school. There was a negative aspect however. Although attending a non-coed school gives you a lot of confidence, it does not teach you how to interact with people in the real world. In reality, you have to learn how to deal with and set your behaviors in accordance with other people (especially with those of the opposite sex). That was the negative aspect about my schooling.

19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?

I never once felt discriminated against. In fact, girls in my school were encouraged to speak out about whatever topics interested them. I had a male professor once at the university level, who gave all the girls in his class the highest marks (there were only 5 of us out of 50 total students). All five of us got the highest grade in the class, and it is still the joke at our University reunions because it was totally reverse discrimination. That incident highlights the fact that teachers were extremely supportive of all of us female students.

20. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?

No, we had a great experience. The guys in all my classes at the university were very respectful and professional.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

21. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?

Financial Manager, Mobilink Telecommunications

22. How many employees are there in your organization? *2500 total employees*

23. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization? *35% of the employees are female*
24. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?
Yes, but the men (especially upper management) are very protective of the women who work there. My boss is especially protective—but you have to understand, at the end of the day, most women in Pakistan work because they want to work and not because they have to. At the end of the day, men and women are different. For a woman to have a relationship with another female at work and not be at the same level, it's very difficult. In other words, a subordinate/supervisor relationship is very difficult when there are two women, one in each position. They often start competing against each other, and it causes problems within the department. This happens frequently in Pakistan, because women often are not used to being in control or in managerial positions.
25. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career. *It is difficult to make colleagues understand that the jumps and promotions I had in my career were justified. I started out in the company when I was young, but I had prior experience and the educational background necessary to complete the job successfully. However, since seniority is still important in most work cultures, many of my peers were upset that I received a promotion before them, even though I was younger than many of them. However, my bosses were extremely supportive and I did not have any major problems.*
26. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession? *I think that the attitude depends on the culture adopted by the organization—both at the individual and upper levels. I think that it is important to try to make the culture more conducive to female employees so that the overall workplace morale will improve.*
27. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible.
Again, it depends on the company and what its policies are. Sometimes, the organization has laws against discrimination, but these laws are not enforced. The human resource departments in most companies are not fulfilling their jobs properly. They need to take a more proactive approach to improving the conditions in the work environment.
28. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail.
Please refer to question #16.
29. Do you plan to continue to work after marriage?
I would not want to work in this same position after I get married. The hunger (the drive) wouldn't be there because I would definitely want some time to relax and enjoy life with my family. I enjoy it now, but I think after I get married, I'd eventually want to move on to a less stressful setup.

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

30. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society?
The advantage is that people give you a lot more respect in general if you are a workingwoman in Pakistan. For example, if I want to meet with a business executive, even at the highest level,

usually it is easier for a female professional to get a meeting with them. I think this is because women in such high positions are rare, and they will take notice of you and give you preference.

31. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women?
I know that the West does not have a positive image of Pakistani women. I travel frequently for my job, and on my trips to Europe, the people there are often shocked that the women who come there from Pakistan are professionally dressed in business suits and speak fluent English. The media feeds conceptions of oppression and hypocrisy in Pakistani society. Women have a much easier time when it comes to pursuing an education and professional careers than the media would have us believe. But, this changes once women are married. They usually choose not to work at high-stress jobs because it is difficult with a family. People don't understand that in Pakistan, women do not sit and do chores at home if they are not working. They have servants and drivers and nannies so they go out and get pampered and don't need to work if they do not want to. They make their husbands work instead. This is true not only for the upper class, but for the middle class here as well.
32. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)?
The only things that make the news in America and Europe are the rapes, honor killings and the oppression of women. I think they show only these things because it sells. People are interested in this since drama is exciting. Unfortunately, people do not know about the fact that Pakistan had women involved in its political history from its creation in 1947. Fatima Jinnah and Benazir Bhutto are two of the most famous Pakistani leaders.
33. What do you think can be done to improve the image of Pakistani women in the media?
I think that education is most important. It is true, that in the villages, especially in the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP), the women are not given the same rights as those in the cities. However, these women, like I mentioned before, are the exception, and we cannot take the exception and make it the rule. The events that happen in the small villages are not reflective of the entire country, and it is unfair for the media to make this claim and to try to create a negative image of Pakistan and its people in the process.

Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? *41-65 yrs.*
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved?
FRCOG—Fellowship of Royal College of OBGYN from London, England
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved? *BA*
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved? *She was home schooled. She studied Urdu, Pharsi, and Arabic with my grandfather.*
5. What is your profession? *Gynecologist*
6. Are you married? *Yes*
7. How many children do you have? *3*
a. male: 3 b. female:
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband has achieved? *FICP—Fellowship of the International College of Pediatricians*
9. What is your husband's profession? *Pediatrician*
10. How many siblings do you have?
a. male: 1 b. female: 1
11. Would you describe yourself a religious person? *Yes*
12. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
 - a. **Very religious** X
 - b. Somewhat religious
 - c. Not very religious
 - d. Not religious at all
 - e. Not sure

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

13. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mom had a lot of influence in the family. She was always there for us kids with her moral support. She didn't have any formal education herself, but she always wanted her kids to have the best education possible.
14. Who is the most influential female in your life?
My mom was the most influential person in my life. She was honest, straightforward, determined, very direct, and was an excellent disciplinarian. When we were younger, my siblings and I did not appreciate the fact that she was strict, but I've learned to appreciate that now with my own kids. She taught us how to take care of ourselves and how to be good, model citizens, with excellent manners and etiquette.
15. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)?
My older brother is a business professional in Canada. My older sister is in America, where she stays with her kids. And two of my sons study at American schools in the US.
16. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional).

The Partition of India was a very difficult time in my life and that of my family. We left all of our belongings in India and faced many financial hardships upon migrating west into Pakistan. I am the first female doctor in my entire family. Many members of my family (aunts, uncles, other relatives) were against my going to medical school. They gave my parents a hard time about how they could let me go on my own and spend that much money on a female's education. My parents did not pay any attention to them, thankfully, and my mother especially was firm in letting me go for my educational pursuits. I did my DGO (Diploma in Gynecology and Obstetrics) in Ireland. Then, I went to England and left my children at home with my husband (my youngest son was at the time only 6 months old). This was a big sacrifice for the family, but they all believed (and so did I) that it was worth it in order to pursue the degree. The driving force that motivated me during this difficult time was another female gynecologist with whom I worked. She said to me, "If you can do it, you should go for it, you're very capable." She became my mentor, and due to her words of encouragement, I decided to complete my medical degree. After I got married, my husband was very supportive and encouraged me to finish my practical training even with the kids. He stayed home and took care of the kids (although he was a doctor himself) while I went to England to study.

17. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?

The life-saving surgeries I perform are the biggest accomplishment in my career. The reproductive side of the medical profession is my passion, because I believe that to help someone bring a child into the world, to be able to witness so many births, is a miracle in itself and a blessing from God. I once was able to help a woman who was thought by the other doctors to be barren, and I helped her and her husband to give birth to a healthy baby. My career in the medical profession spans 42 years, and during this time, I have delivered thousands of babies. In 1966, I went to Saudi Arabia to practice medicine. It was my outlet out of Pakistan, because in my youth, like most youngsters, I wanted to go far away from home. This was even before I got married. I ended up being the first female doctor in the whole gynecology department at the hospital I was stationed in. I was often on call 24 hours a day, especially in the first few months of my rotations. I once was on call (and stayed up) for 72 hours straight because we had a large number of patients and I was the only doctor to be on call during that time. I was also one of the private doctors for the Saudi Royal family while I was there, and delivered many of the family's babies.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Educational Background

18. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.

The positives—In spite of all the hurdles I had to overcome, and the sacrifices I made in order to attend medical school, I did not give up on my education. I was not a privileged person, but I was not able to be at the top because I did not have the facilities—I had both financial hardships as well as family responsibilities. During my school and college days, I learned a great deal about how to work hard. This was a positive that came out of all of the negatives.

19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?

I never felt that the faculty treated me inappropriately. Even in Saudi Arabia. Often, male teachers would take the female students for granted, but I did not let anyone take advantage of me. I was resolved to receive the respect and acknowledgement that I (and all females) deserved. I never let anyone tell me that a woman could not become a doctor, even when, at that time, it was not common for a woman to pursue a medical degree, especially in gynecology.

20. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?

No, but even if they ever did discriminate, I was bold and let my work speak for itself. I've learned never to let other people bring you down, especially if they hold stereotypes based on gender or any other prejudice they may have. You have to lead by your example, and others will usually follow. I proved many of the male students wrong by topping them in my studies.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

21. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?

Head Gynecologist at 2 hospitals—Cavalry and Rasheed Hospitals in Lahore. I was also the head doctor at Shalimar hospital and had 17 doctors working under me in my department.

22. How many employees are there in your organization? *11 doctors total*

23. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization? *We currently have no male gynecologists at either hospital. All the doctors in my department are females and they are very well respected in the field.*

24. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?

Yes, I often have male doctors work under me in the various hospital departments, and I do my best to keep them satisfied and try to do a good job. I think if I work hard and treat them with respect, then they are usually respectful and they try to work hard as well.

25. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career. *I had an easier job climbing to the top of my profession than many other doctors because I was experienced, educated and qualified in the field. After moving back to Pakistan from Saudi Arabia, I found that there were few, if any, doctors and virtually no females who had the capabilities and experience in the field that I had already had. So, I was able to rise to the top quickly and did my best to excel in the OBGYN field. My hard work and sacrifices to put myself through medical school paid off in the end.*

26. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession?

Male doctors often think that female doctors are not qualified. They often have a sense of jealousy. They usually will not come right out and say it, but one can often sense the feeling of resentment in their attitude and behavior. This jealousy and resentment occurs usually when a female doctor receives a promotion or a raise over a male doctor. I think that females, in general, are more conscientious, hard working and determined than males, especially in the medical field. I'm saying this based on my own experiences as a doctor for over four decades.

27. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible.

Female doctors are paid the same as male doctors, and women get the same chances academically, professionally, etc..., it does not matter whether it is a public or a private hospital. I think that the hospitals understand that female doctors are crucial to their business, especially in the OBGYN field.

28. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail.

I have never felt discriminated against. Some of my female patients often believe that men make better surgeons. They have often asked, before surgery, if a male doctor could operate on them

instead. I explain to them that this is not the case and often, female doctors are more patient and intelligent than the male doctors. I explain to my patients who feel this way that females are made from two eggs. Hence, we are more intelligent, patient, etc...granted, physically men are stronger, but women have better organization, planning and anticipation skills, generally speaking of course. One should look at the doctor's qualifications and experience, not their gender, when determining whether they will be capable of performing the procedure.

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

29. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society?

There are certain taboos in society. Most women do prefer to go to female doctors and this is a big advantage for female doctors because they get more patients. It is often easier for female patients to discuss problems/treatments with female doctors because they can sympathize. The disadvantages are that women sometimes have trouble driving at night and being out alone. They will usually have a driver or male family member accompany them so as to be safe at night. Safety is very important, and doctors (especially females) should be especially concerned about their safety because they travel late at night to and from the hospital when they are on call. Pakistan is not the safest place in the world, and just like any other country, it is not a good idea to be out on the road alone at 3am.

30. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women? *No, they don't really know anything about Pakistani women; they can't think for themselves. They do not have any knowledge about our capabilities and what we (women in Pakistan) do here. I think this is very sad, because people in the west consider themselves to be more modern than the rest of the "underdeveloped" world, so one would assume that they would be more informed and better educated about the societies and cultures of other countries, such as Pakistan.*

31. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)? *The Media does not play an effective role in portraying a positive image of Pakistani women. Usually these women are portrayed to be uneducated and people are surprised when they see that I'm a doctor (in Pakistan) and manage a whole department in the hospital. The West seems to have the view that women in Pakistan are only capable of raising (and producing) kids and cleaning the house. That is a myth, and we are all-rounded people. We can work, raise kids and make delicious meals. For us Pakistani women, it's all in a days work.*

32. As a doctor, do you see patients who have been abused (sexually, physically, etc..)? *Yes, but not frequently. It is not as common in our society as people might assume. Many people (especially Western-American media) seem to think that the abuse of females is a regular occurrence. I think that it happens more in other countries, like the US, but not here. I cannot speak personally for the villages, because I have worked mostly in the cities, but I do know that it is not as common as the American media makes it out to be.*

Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? *25-40 yrs.*
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved?
MSC in Applied Psychology from Punjab University
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved? *Mechanical Engineering from the University of Lahore*
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved? *Matric (Equivalent to tenth grade)*
5. What is your profession? *Entrepreneur, I have my own clothing business. I guess you could call me a fashion designer.*
6. Are you married? *yes.*
7. How many children do you have?
a. male: 1 b. female: 2
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband has achieved? *Chartered Accountant (CPA)*
9. What is your husband's profession? *Accounting/Finance manager*
10. How many siblings do you have?
a. male: 2 b. female: 3
11. Would you describe yourself a religious person? *Yes*
12. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
 - a. Very religious _____
 - b. **Somewhat religious** X
 - c. Not very religious _____
 - d. Not religious at all _____
 - e. Not sure _____

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

13. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mother's role in the family was extremely important. My father was always out on business trips to other countries and so my mother spent all her time with us kids, taking care of the house as well as all other arrangements. She was only matric pass, but she definitely stressed the importance of education for us.
14. Who is the most influential female in your life?
Since my dad was hardly ever home, my mom brought us (my siblings and me) up. Since my dad was making decent money abroad, we had a big house in Lahore and my mom would take care of it. I look back on that now and I am very impressed because this was not an easy task. My older sister had Cerebral Palsy; so she needed extra care, and my mother would do her best to provide all of us with the best care she could possibly give to us.
15. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)?
No one in my immediate family. Everyone is in Pakistan.

16. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional).

I had to adjust to raising a family and trying to balance my work schedule with that. I'm a perfectionist, so everything has to be perfect; each outfit is different from the other. I try to focus on quality, design, color, style, etc...but there is a lot of competition in the fashion industry, so it is very important for me to stay innovative and at the same time provide excellent quality clothing for my customers.

17. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?

I've sold everything that I've made to date, and that is a big accomplishment. I think that in order to compete in an industry such as fashion design, you have to stay one step ahead of everyone else. I also am a strong businesswoman and believe that customer satisfaction is important. Not a lot of fashion designers in Pakistan will custom tailor their designs to fit the customer needs, but I try to match whatever order people give so that they will leave happy.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Educational Background

18. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.

I went to a small, private, all-girls school. We had all female teachers, but they were very discriminatory, very biased towards those who were better students. Those who were better at English were always the favorites of the teachers in my high school. I always thought this was extremely unfair, even though I myself was good in English.

19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?
- No, in Punjab University, the faculty was excellent, and I never had or heard of any incidents of discrimination. In fact, teachers (both male and female) encouraged the girls to speak out whenever there was an opportunity to do so. We had organized tournaments for different sports, and the girls would participate and the coaches would be totally, 100% supportive.*

20. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?
- No, the boys were always nice to the girls at my University. I think they knew that they had to be because we wouldn't let them copy our homework or study with us otherwise. But joking aside, we (my friends and I), never had any problems.*

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

21. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?

Entrepreneur—Fashion Designer

22. How many employees are there in your organization? *I employ around 40 women, and those women outsource their work to other women. I give the work to the poor/low income ladies. I get the designs and get the thread (all the materials). Then these women come to my house to take the designs and work on them at home. Sometimes they will give them to their neighbors or other family members to complete. We then sell all of the clothing that is made. The proceeds from these clothes go to the women who provide the labor. It is great for them because it gives them income, which they would not have otherwise.*

23. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization? *All of the employees are females. My goal is to empower women; to give them the opportunity to earn their own income and to be successful.*
24. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?
I don't have any male employees. I'm always in favor of supporting the needs of women.
25. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career. *The employees are sometimes quite unpredictable. It is hard to maintain quality control, especially since many of these women are uneducated. I have to train each one individually. Last month, one employee's mother passed away; so I trained her sister. These women badly need jobs, and some of them cannot go out of their houses to work, so they stay home and do the housework, while their husbands earn a living. The women who are with me are doing this job because they can work at their own pace and make additional money to help provide for their families. They make wedding outfits and outfits for special occasions as well as everyday attire. The perks of this job are that the women can look after their kids, cook and clean and when they have time to sew, they can do that in the comfort of their own home. This is the best opportunity for them, because they may not otherwise be able to work outside the house for whatever reason—social pressures, family responsibilities, lack of education, etc...*
26. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession?
The women (my employees) are often being told by their husbands and families that they shouldn't do this work. They say this because they see that the woman is becoming financially independent. Most of these women work so hard that they are able to reap the benefits—it improves their standard of living, and they often end up making more money than their husbands. Also, this job provides them with moral support and counseling. We function as a unit, and when anyone needs help, we try to provide the best care possible. One woman's child got sick and she came to me and we took him to a doctor. This happens frequently. The hardest part is to train the women how to stitch and sew, especially since all the work we do is hand-made and handcrafted. I also provide as much assistance I possibly can especially when they need it most. For example, if their roofs leak, they come to me to get them fixed. All of this requires a great deal of patience, training and creativity, because I have to do all the color combinations and designs. I'm too much of a perfectionist I think.
27. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible.
I think in general, women usually do not work as tailors. They have to sit in small, cramped quarters in most fashion design companies and work for long hours. This is very difficult; so few women work in the business. It is saturated mostly by males. However, since I employ only women, we are very flexible and allow the women to work at their own pace, in the comfort of their own home, as long as they get the finished product to me on time to deliver to the customer. I pay them very well for their services, and I think this is a win-win situation, because they keep coming back for more orders to sew and stitch.
28. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail.
I think for a woman to be in this business is very difficult. Men often think you are not capable if you are a woman entrepreneur in Pakistan. The men are usually the tailors, and they almost always do machine embroidery, not by hand. They usually think that a woman cannot compete in this business, because you have to be tough. I'm trying to change that perception, and so far, I've been pretty successful at it.

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

29. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society?
The advantages of being a professional woman in Pakistan and having your own business are that you don't have to stand in cue of a man; you can stand on your own two feet. Being a woman with an all-female workforce is definitely a bonus for me because the women relate to each other better than if it were a mixture of both males and females. Also, men don't understand that sometimes women just need to get out of the house and enjoy the company of other women. The disadvantages are that Pakistan is a male-oriented society; men stare at women and they are often shocked to see that women are perfectly capable of performing the same job duties as they are. There is still a lot of discrimination, but we (professional women, entrepreneurs) are working hard to overcome this problem. Also, you have to have a lot of stamina to stay competitive in any industry, especially in the fashion industry. The industry itself is constantly changing and it takes a lot of hard work and innovative ideas to keep up.
30. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women?
No, I think they have a lot of prejudice towards Pakistani women. They think that Pakistani women are oppressed and are not able to work or are totally uneducated. This is not usually the case, however, and I can give you examples of many, hard-working women who are trying their best to get an education and provide for their children and families. Just like in America or in any other country.
31. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)?
The media is to blame for all of the negative images of Pakistani women seen on television and in the news. They are playing up the negatives of our society and are using religion as a scapegoat to say that all Muslims are bad.
32. What do you think can be done to improve the image of Pakistani women in the media?
I think that NGO's in this country are really trying to stress the importance of the role that Pakistani women play in our society. They are trying to bring the struggle of women into the limelight. They, including my company, are trying our best to improve the image of Pakistani women, by showing that we can empower ourselves to become successful people.

Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? *25-40 yrs.*
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved?
Masters in Botany from Punjab University. Special papers in microbiology and mycology and freshwater hyphomycetes.
 - b. What made you decide to go into teaching?
It was my passion—I was a teacher first, and then I was selected to be the principal by the school administration from among all of the teachers. I became principal in 2000.
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved?
He has a BA, and was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Ordinance Department of the Army
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved?
Masters in Urdu Language, but she is a homemaker.
5. What is your profession?
I am the Principal of Customs Public School—Girls Branch in Lahore
6. Are you married? *no*
7. How many children do you have? *N/A*
 - a. male: _____
 - b. female: _____
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband has achieved? *N/A*
9. What is your husband's profession?
N/A
10. Would you describe yourself a religious person?
Yes, I have always been religious, but I started covering my head after I became the principal. Our school starts with recitation from the Muslim holy book, the Quran. We also begin our assemblies and each day with prayers, but no student is forced to participate.
11. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
 - a. **Very religious** X
 - b. Somewhat religious _____
 - c. Not very religious _____
 - d. Not religious at all _____
 - e. Not sure _____

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

12. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mother's role in my family was extremely important. My father passed away when I was four, so the credit for my upbringing goes to my mother. She raised three successful children. All three of us were always the top students in our class. My brother is a doctor in the army, and my sister is a doctor living in Atlanta, in America.
13. Who is the most influential female in your life?
My mother and grandfather were the two most influential people in my life. I don't know how my mom raised three children by herself, but she did a superb job, and all the credit goes to her because she did her best, and we turned out all right in the end.

14. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)?

My sister moved to the US after getting married. She's practicing medicine there right now.

15. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional).

After becoming principal, I had more pressures and responsibilities than I had while I was teaching. I had to adjust to pressure from parents, teachers and the higher ups in the administration. I've taken these challenges head on, and done the best job I can possibly do. It's a difficult balance to try to please everyone and at the same time keep a certain level of authority in order to maintain order.

16. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?

I think becoming principal is my biggest accomplishment thus far. I had only had 10 years of teaching experience before I was appointed to this position, and I think that my hard work, commitment and sincerity were very helpful in getting me to where I am today in my career.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Educational Background

17. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.

I went to the University of Punjab. When I did my Masters, I had the best interview skills out of everyone in my graduating class. In college, I was class representative. I've always been a very social person; I used to arrange all the activities and programs in my school and was part of the Old Students Botanical Association. I think staying involved in school activities helped me to have a very positive experience.

18. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?

No, not at all. They were always rather impressed by me, I think. We had more females than males in the botany department so us girls were always dominating everything.

19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?

No, again the girls were the majority, so we really had no problems from the boys. They gave us the respect we deserved.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

20. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?

Principal, Customs Public School

21. How many employees are there in your organization? *There are 28 teachers total at the school.*

22. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization? *We have only one male, all the rest are females.*

23. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?

Yes, but I suppose our one male staff member doesn't have the choice not to accept us.

24. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career. *I was very blessed to not have had any problems at all in reaching the position I*

currently hold. In fact, the administration practically forced me to become principal. They appointed me directly.

25. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession?
As principal, I now get to see the inside story. I believe that all the facilities (like the Microsoft Computers) are given first to the boys branch of Custom Public Schools rather than to the girls. We get the second rate stuff, and this is totally unfair. I think that this is mostly due to society's thinking—we live in a male-dominated society, and it gives preference to the boys.
26. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible
I think that the women are generally respected. Teaching is an excellent profession, and as a principal I receive the utmost respect from everyone. But I also respect others. It is definitely a give-and-take relationship.
27. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail.
No, but I sometimes feel like I have to be very firm about trying to get the best stuff for my students. Girls deserve the best quality education, just as the boys do. There should be no gender discrimination in anything, but especially when it comes to education. Everyone should be given the resources and opportunities to try to succeed.

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

28. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society?
The disadvantage of being a professional woman in Pakistani society is that as a woman, you are basically working two jobs—you have six hours of hectic duty at school or at your workplace, and then most of the women have families of their own, so they have to go home and cook and clean and take care of the kids. This becomes very difficult when we have special projects going on, where the teachers are managing functions outside of school, like field trips. It is difficult to do all that at once, and often the men don't take the women administrators seriously. Otherwise, teaching is a great profession for women, especially in Pakistan because you get a lot of respect from the students and their parents, and it is very rewarding to be a part of the lives of these children.
29. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women?
No, I don't think so. They think that women are being tortured and discriminated against and have no rights. This is certainly not the case.
30. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)?
The media is definitely contributing to this negative image. 70-80% of Pakistan's population is rural. The media makes it seem like everyone has no rights, but the problem is a lack of education on both sides.
31. What do you think can be done to improve the image of Pakistani women in the media?
I think that educating the rural population of Pakistan is the best way to improve the image of Pakistani women. I think that this will help them know and understand their rights, which will thus help to improve the literacy rate. All of these factors are directly improved if the level of education is increased.

Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? *25-40 yrs.*
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved?
Masters in English, Diploma in TEFL (teaching English as a First Language) from Lahore College
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved? *Masters in Islamiyat from Punjab University, Lahore.*
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved? *BA in Banking*
5. What is your profession? *I teach English Literature at APPWA Women's College in Lahore.*
6. Are you married? *No.*
7. How many children do you have? *N/A*
a. male: _____ b. female: _____
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband has achieved? *N/A*
9. What is your husband's profession? *N/A*
10. How many siblings do you have?
a. male: 2 b. female: 1
11. Would you describe yourself a religious person? *Yes*
12. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
a. **Very religious** X
b. Somewhat religious _____
c. Not very religious _____
d. Not religious at all _____
e. Not sure _____

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

13. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mother was a very constructive person—she inspired her children (my brothers and sister, and me) to seek an education. She was not a "typical housewife" but she instead chose to work as a headmistress in a local community school in Lahore. She wanted her children to be successful and to work hard. She never let us get away with not doing our schoolwork or missing class or misbehaving. She was strict, but at the same time she gave us whatever resources we needed to achieve our goals. Her role in the family was that of a manager, in a way.
14. Who is the most influential female in your life?
The most influential female in my life was Dr. Nazarat. She taught English and Greek Tragedy (drama) to me when I was a student at Lahore College . She influenced me through her teachings. Her classes were always my favorite, because she had a passion for teaching and had a vast knowledge of literature from all over the world. She was very eloquent, inspiring and very critical. She was truly a visionary and had a flair for the subject (English and Greek Tragedies). Unfortunately, she passed away in a car accident recently at the age of 35. She was a budding PHD, and a close friend and colleague of mine. She was a great mentor and someone I could always look to for advice on personal issues as well as about my career. It has been difficult for me since her passing...and I hope that I can one day become an amazing professor like her. Her flair for teaching was superb, and her students will always remember her for her charismatic personality. She was an inspiration to all of her students.

15. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)?
My younger brother is the only member of my family who has traveled to the United States. He visited the US through a program called "Seeds of Peace." He traveled to NYC and several other cities in America and presented a program with other students from Pakistan and other nations. The rest of my family lives in Pakistan. However, I grew up in Kuwait, so in a way, I guess you could say that my family "emigrated abroad" because we lived there for ten years. I had much of my schooling there (grade school). Kuwait is an Arab country with deep Islamic orientation. But Kuwait is definitely more liberal than other Arab countries. We had the freedom there to do whatever we wanted. I enjoyed my years there, but I really do love living in Pakistan and teaching here.
16. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional).
I was very blessed by God not to have any major hurdles in my professional career. Teaching has always been a passion of mine, and so has English literature, so these two passions are intertwined in my work at the College. I can do the two things that I love the most at the same time. My major barrier or hurdle is that I always feel as if there is something more I can teach my students, a new, more innovative way to make them understand and love the works (plays, sonnets, books, etc..) as much as I do. This is a constant struggle for me, because it means that I have to improve my knowledge base as well as learn more effective methods of teaching it to my students. I want to instill in them the same passion I have for the subject that I teach.
17. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?
The biggest accomplishment in my career is that I have become a teacher. I love teaching my students and I want them to enjoy the subject. Teaching requires a lot of mental exercise and skill. A lot of girls at the College are not familiar with Western literature and philosophy. I want them to understand so they can learn to relate better to things that might be different from their own culture and what they are used to. I love to read books, magazines, anything at all. The reason I think that teaching is my biggest accomplishment is because I firmly believe that a teacher is a beacon of light for his/her students. Unfortunately, teachers often have a lot of knowledge but are not able to convey the message to their students.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Educational Background

18. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.
Lahore College is an all-female college. It is a very interesting place and I enjoyed it very much. It had a positive atmosphere. I spent most of my time at the library. Being an all-female school, we had good communication with each other. We also had the opportunity to study under some of the greatest minds (all female professors). Some of my favorite subjects were history, current affairs, humanities, cultural confrontation and, of course, literature from around the world.
19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?
No, because I went to an all-girls school, so I never had any male faculty.
20. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?
I never had any problems with discrimination. In fact, I had a professor who was handicapped from the waste down and she was in a wheelchair. She had polio as a child, but her disability did not faze her out at all. She was always an inspiration to me as well as my fellow students because she had an amazing personality and a lot of confidence in herself. We always admired her for that and I've used her as an example of how not to let others discriminate against me.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

21. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?
English Teacher
22. How many employees are there in your organization? *Approximately 50 teachers, all of whom are female because it is an all-girl's school. We have all female teachers here because we want the young ladies to understand that women can do just as well (education and career-wise) as men can.*
23. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization? *There are no male teachers at the College.*
24. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?
We only have some males who work at the College. Most are maintenance and cleaning services personnel. They are very polite and helpful and I don't think the school has ever had any problems with them. We are accepting of them, and vice versa.
25. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career.
I had to work really hard at Lahore College to earn my degree. I think that since the teachers were so spectacular, they wanted to challenge all their students and so I had to study a lot in order to complete my education. Even though it was tough, I had an amazing University experience. I was involved in a lot of activities such as debates. We often had British dignitaries visit our College and we got to have dialogue sessions with them. I used to participate in dialogue sessions with these foreign delegates and we had discussions about British and Pakistani culture. I think these experiences really helped prepare me for teaching students at college level, because we have these types of discussions in my class. Because I think that my college education prepared me well, I do not recall having many problems in reaching the position I currently hold in my career and I hope and pray that I don't have any in the future, either.
26. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession? *I think female professors are very respected in their profession. We are usually considered to be the cream of the crop and our students tend to look up to us. Many of the girls I teach have told me they want to become English professors themselves because they are inspired by my class and I really appreciate that. I think that the impact we have on students is apparent, and when they give us positive feedback, it is the best feeling in the world to know that you made a difference in someone's life. The overall attitude is very positive. Women in the profession are especially respected, because so few women choose to pursue a doctorate and go into teaching at the college or university level. I think that pursuing a post-graduate degree is a challenge for both men and women, but especially for women because they often have to raise a family as well as attend to their education. This makes their schedules doubly hectic. For this reason, most women choose not to pursue a doctorate or even a Master's degree.*
27. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible.
Yes, but I cannot say for my school since we are all females. The pay at my school is based on merit, not on gender or other non-professional related issues. The pay is fair, and I'm glad they do not discriminate, because what kind of a message would we be sending to our students if they (school administration) promoted inequality and discrimination?

28. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail.

No, not in the least. The administration of the College has been very good about providing for its employees. We have a lot of influence within the school administration, and they usually listen to our ideas carefully. I have enjoyed teaching at the College and since I am still quite young, and I plan to teach for several more years here.

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

29. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society?

The advantages of being a female professional in Pakistan are that the woman has her own source of income when she is working. She can earn a living and not have to worry about having a husband to provide for her. In other words, she can be financially independent, and this is a big deal in Pakistan because not all women choose to work outside the home. I can understand this personally, because I have a small daughter. I currently live with my parents, but since I am teaching, I have the ability to provide for my little girl without having to worry about where the money will come from. This also eases the financial burden on my parents and gives me the satisfaction of being the sole provider of my child.

Another positive aspect is that there is a certain level of social prestige that goes along with being a professional woman. A workingwoman is looked upon as someone who is confident, independent and self-motivated. In Pakistan, professional women (especially those in the field of education) are regarded very highly in society.

The major disadvantage of being a professional, workingwoman in Pakistan is that time management is often the biggest restraint. Women in Pakistani society are generally expected to stay home and take care of the family (her children, etc.). However, Pakistan does offer maternity leave to women. It is very difficult work in a professional setting and then to come home and take care of the family. Giving time to one's family and trying to achieve professional goals at the same time is very tough, and I admire the Pakistani women who choose to work as professionals. I myself can relate to their plight, but at the same time, I love my job and my family and am willing to do both. I think that other women feel the same way as me, or they would not be working outside their homes in a professional setting.

30. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women?

No, they have a very negative image of Pakistani women. The perception is that Pakistani women are backwards, that the entire society is backwards. The image is that Muslims in Pakistan perform "honor killings" and these are the images projected, they don't actually show the positive trends that are present. For example, Pakistan has had a female Prime Minister, while many Western nations have not. Pakistan's government has also spoken out strongly against honor killings and human rights violations and there are many organizations that are working hard to stop any and all abuses from occurring in this country. We have very positive, great activities going on in this country, but the media only pays attention to the small, negative aspects of our society. This gives us a bad image throughout the world.

31. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)?

The media has a negative image of the women in Pakistan. Unfortunately, in the rural villages, the image is real. Pakistan has a very high illiteracy rate, which leads to ignorance and often cruelty towards women. Men are sometimes more chauvinistic than in other, developed societies, and they are very protective of their women. They often have a tribal mode of thinking, i.e. they don't want to establish schools in their towns, especially for women. They have the fear that women will become better educated and know their rights. I am, however, optimistic that conditions are improving and will continue to improve. Today, more and more changes are coming into society. Through human

rights organizations and the work that professional Pakistani women are doing, more and more women in the villages are able to get a first-rate education. This gives them the opportunity for empowerment; the chance to take control of their own lives and to stand up for their rights. They have a stronger knowledge base from which to build off and these women then go on to educate their own children. They are breaking the cycle, and slowly working to improve their own lives as well as those of their families. This change will come gradually, but it is definitely a big step in the right direction.

32. What do you think can be done to improve the image of Pakistani women in the media?

I think that the Pakistani media is doing a better job (than it had previously) of giving more coverage and credit to women. There are several new TV shows on Pakistani channels that are a breakthrough because they have female hosts and invite famous Pakistani women (prominent professionals) to talk about their experiences. This gives the feminist cause a lot more media exposure than before. The private channels (those that are not owned by the government) are giving the most exposure to women. Practical issues that were once considered social taboos in society are now discussed freely on Pakistani television. I think that by showing more and more of these types of programming, and having the media depict reality, rather than fiction, is one way of improving the image of Pakistani women. If the TV and other media have open debates and forums, they can get a dialogue going and that will help educate more people about the women of Pakistan.

Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? *41-65 yrs.*
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved?
LLB—Bachelors of Law from S.M. Law College in Karachi, Pakistan.
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved? *Masters in Economics—Gold Medalist in his field of study.*
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved? *A Levels (Equivalent to High School diploma). She got married at the age of 18.*
5. What is your profession? *Lawyer for the Provincial High Court of Pakistan*
6. Are you married? *Yes*
7. How many children do you have?
a. male: 1 b. female: 2
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband has achieved? *Masters in Engineering, Specializing in Aircraft Engineering*
9. What is your husband's profession? *Engineer for Pakistan International Airlines*
10. How many siblings do you have?
a. male: 1 b. female: 2
11. Would you describe yourself a religious person? *Yes*
12. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
a. **Very religious** X
b. Somewhat religious
c. Not very religious
d. Not religious at all
e. Not sure

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

13. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mother was an extremely well mannered, soft-spoken woman. She was very friendly and social with everyone. She was not strict, but ethics were very important to her and she always disciplined her kids. She was never harsh, but she always wanted her children to do the right thing. And when we misbehaved, she took us to task—ethics, honesty, and family values were important to her until she passed away. She made every effort to mold her children into model citizens.
14. Who is the most influential female in your life?
My grandmother was the most influential female in my life. My father's family was extremely well off and very well educated. But, no one was more impressive than my maternal grandmother. Although she was illiterate and uneducated, she was completely emancipated. She taught herself how to read the newspaper but she did not know how to write. Growing up, my siblings and I always thought she was the most dignified person in our household. She always dressed beautifully and elegantly, but at the same time, she knew how to cook and clean better than anyone. I was always fascinated by her persona as a child.

15. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)? *One of my daughters is in the emigration process to Canada. My other daughter spent many months doing medical research in Washington DC. She was there on a special seminar/tour of the US through her University in Pakistan.*
16. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional). *I'm very lucky that I did not have any major obstacles or barriers to overcome. As a child, I had very solid background and education. My parents gave us children everything that they could. My married life was good, and my husband treated me well. Moving to Karachi to study law and leaving my hometown (Lahore) was very difficult. I was already married when I decided to pursue a law degree, and my husband was very supportive and encouraged me in that direction. My father's family was well off in Lahore, so I was accustomed to the best aspects of life. However, when I got to Karachi, I was on my own and did not have nearly the same facilities or resources as I had in Lahore. That was a rough period of time for me, because I had graduated from one of the best colleges in the nation, and I didn't know what I really wanted to do with my life. I had two kids one after another, but I still wanted to do more with my life; especially education and career-wise. Thankfully, my husband and my parents supported me and I decided to attend law school when my eldest son was in high school. It was one of the best decisions I ever made, because I loved law school and I love my career.*
17. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career? *I have been fortunate to have many accomplishments in my career. When I first decided that I wanted to go to law school and practice law, I was most interested in learning all about the legal system. I was very much of the opinion that a lot of injustice was being done to women (in Pakistan) in the name of Islam. When I started law school, I had to learn (relearn) my faith of Islam, and teach myself the basics before I could explain it to or teach others. I began reading books on Islam and read the Quran for my own understanding. Now, I work to improve society in general, and especially the plight of women. My biggest accomplishment, in my opinion is that I, along with a few other dedicated women, have created a "Legal Aid Center" in which we do work on three fronts:*
- 1. Legal Aid. We provide women with free legal advice. They only pay for the court expenses, but not for our services. We have a team of women who are practicing lawyers and they provide this legal aid at no cost for any female who needs it. This has been a blessing for the women who come to us because they are able to fight for their rights in the place where it matters most—a court of law.*
 - 2. Legal Awareness. I helped to start a group called "LAWS" which is the Legal Aid Welfare Society. It is a very low-key group, with lots of volunteers. We have a group of lady lawyers, and some men too. We have think tanks and we are basically teaching young people and those who are interested about their rights and ins and outs of the laws of this country, especially the ones that pertain to women. We are offering courses all over the city of Lahore; in schools, colleges and universities. Through this program, we are teaching people about women's rights and our goal is to try to make society "accept women as equal counterparts to improve sustainable development." I am currently the chief resource person for the Government of Punjab on this front. I have done extensive research on the United Nations Convention known as CEDAW. This convention is an attempt to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. I am the Pakistani government's resource for legal empowerment and awareness of women. We (the LAWS group) use the Pakistani Constitution and the Quran to define the women's role and status in Islam. We then go out and educate the students in schools and colleges and hold seminars explaining these basic rights. The biggest problem is that there is a lack of awareness in society about these legal rights. If awareness is created, then the injustices that are done towards women will slowly begin to cease, because women will themselves fight for their rights and others will help them in their noble cause.*
 - 3. Legal Research. I have written a book called "Quran and Society" and I am continuously conducting research on bringing about positive change in the status of women. We (those involved in*

LAWS) use rationalization and dialogue to try to appeal to the general public. I'm very hopeful that we will eventually be able to bring about positive change in this society. I believe that no one can force religion on anyone—not even parents on their children—religion is a very personal and sacred thing and no one can force it on others. We need to try to improve the conditions that women in Pakistan (and in other countries, too) are subjected to. But this can only happen once people start recognizing the role of women in Islam and the due rights granted to them under Islamic Law. These laws are not being enforced in Pakistan and in other Muslim majority nations, and I think that if people (especially women) gained an awareness that these laws exist, then there would be pressure on governments and society to uphold them.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Educational Background

18. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.

I went to some of the best institutions in Lahore for my schooling. I did not have any negative experiences. I went to a convent school in Lahore and I was taught by French Catholic Nuns from Belgium. They were very strict with us, but now that I am a grown-up, I realize that their discipline was helpful and made us into better people. I had a really good experience throughout school and college and look back on those days with great fondness.

19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?

Never had any problems with male faculty. The Law College in Karachi had excellent faculty and staff and they always encouraged their students to participate in all kinds of activities, both social and academic. There were not a lot of females studying law at that time, but even then, they encouraged me to participate in the extra-curricular activities. I think the professors had the vision that more and more women should go into law in order to make their situation better. I really appreciated all of their support since I was away from my home and family.

20. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?

Sometimes I felt that my peers in law school (the males) believed that women couldn't make good lawyers. They often had an aura of superiority about them, and I think that they were a little bit miffed that these women were coming to law school and they were going to be competing with them for jobs. I didn't let that phase me, however, because I wanted to stick to my goals of changing these types of stereotypical perceptions.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

21. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?

Advocate of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, Attorney of Law

22. How many employees are there in your organization?

There are 3000 total attorneys in the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

23. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization? *Out of the 3000 members of the Supreme Court that I just mentioned, there are only 12 females.*

24. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?

Many male colleagues, like the students at the Law College where I studied, have this block—that women cannot be good attorneys. The attorneys are often very discriminatory, especially with the

young female lawyers. The reason that we have so few female attorneys in Pakistan's Supreme Court is because most women do not last very long in the profession. A lot of the young girls who begin practicing law do not stay. They drop out and go into teaching or do something else. The problem is that it is very tough to survive as a woman in this profession. There is a lot of sexual harassment from male co-workers (other lawyers). For a young girl, it is very difficult, because she is faced with a lot of criticism. I was lucky because I was older than most of the attorneys (male or female) when I started practicing law, so I was like their mom, not someone they could easily make negative comments about. However, the younger females attorneys are often jeered at and they are still very young and inexperienced, so they do not know how to deal with those kinds of pressures. My fellow female colleagues and I, who have been practicing law for many years, try our best to mentor these girls, but it is a very brutal profession. Not only do these young ladies have to work long hours (we all do), but the negative comments from their fellow male peers just shatters their confidence.

25. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career.

For me, it was very difficult, but I was resilient. I had a lot of very influential women in my family, who were not afraid to deal with men. You have to have confidence in yourself. Don't ever let anyone faze you. There are about 30-40 female civil judges in Lahore now, and when I started out in the profession, there was only one. There is more scope now, and women are at least entering the profession, despite the harassment they often face. I think that this is why there is a lot of discrimination within the field, because the men are afraid of losing their grip and power over the women.

26. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession? *The attitude towards female attorneys is unfortunately very negative, especially from other lawyers. This is not the case with everyone, but there are enough male lawyers who are discriminating against the women for it to be a big problem. It is definitely a male-dominated profession, and many women are afraid to enter it because of the sexual harassment they often are faced with. I had a family who supported me, and I was also a lot older, so I didn't have as many problems as these young girls now have.*

27. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible. *For family and civil court cases, the women attorneys are paid the same. They cannot discriminate on the basis of pay. But the working atmosphere is not friendly towards the women, and unfortunately, despite equal pay, they have a much harder time than the men do when it comes to dealing with clients and in court cases especially where the opposing attorney is a male.*

28. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail. *Yes, to a certain extent, but I was (and still am) confident and did not let negative comments from coworkers (other lawyers) hinder me. I did not allow their comments to stop me from practicing law and now I try to mentor the young, budding female lawyers and show them the ropes. The women who survive in this profession are tough, and they have a passion for what they are doing, especially championing the cause for women's rights within the justice system. The ones who are most passionate and self-confident are the ones who are successful.*

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

29. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society? *The advantages of being a professional woman in Pakistan are many. It is important, however, to choose a profession that you like—it gives the woman the opportunity to become economically*

empowered. It is important to stand up for yourself. Women who are professionals are usually doing something else to benefit their society. They go out and get to know the world and their surroundings. Women who are forced to stay home—it is a big injustice to them and to Pakistani women in general. The major disadvantage of being a professional woman in any society, but especially in Pakistan is that workingwomen are forced to become better housewives. They have double the responsibilities because they not only are working, but they also would like to spend time with their families at home. I believe though, that workingwomen become better moms. They are better guides for their children because they are educated and know how the real world works. They have a very difficult time because they have to raise the kids and take care of the family, and at the same time go to work and take on all of those responsibilities as well. It is difficult to do both, but more and more women are choosing to do so, and I salute them.

30. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women?
No, not at all. The image that they portray is the opposite—it is a very negative image. Some of what is shown in the media is true, but it is still very lopsided towards the negative. The image is that there is a lot of domestic violence in Pakistani society, a lot of sexual harassment, etc...but these are common in every society, and especially in American and Western society. However, in Pakistan, the difference is that it is not as common among the educated population. The work still needs to be done to improve women's rights in the villages. We (female lawyers, LAWS) are trying to empower women to stand up for their rights, so that these violations stop occurring.
31. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)?
The international media is very biased. One negative incident against human rights gets played in the media over and over again. The truth is that even in Pakistan's rural villages, society is not segregated; it is very mixed even in the smallest of towns and communities. The media contributes a great deal to the negative stereotypes against Pakistan's women.
32. What do you think can be done to improve the image of Pakistani women in the media?
How can the image in America and the west improve? They seem to think that all that happens in Pakistan is domestic violence and sexual harassment. The media needs to understand (or be made to understand) that Islam has a lot of scope for women; and these women are struggling for women's rights and their civil liberties. It is wrong to say that Pakistan has problems because of Islam. The issues prevalent in Pakistani society pertaining to women are because of poverty and illiteracy, not because of the teachings of Islam. I think the media needs to make that distinction very clear in its portrayal of Pakistani women. The main issues that need to be dealt with are poverty, the low literacy rate, and the West's apathy towards third world countries. These are the biggest problems, and without working to solve them first, we cannot improve the status of women in Pakistan.

Profession : Senior Manager, International Federation of the Red Cross
Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? *25-40 yrs.*
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved?
Masters in French Language and Literature
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved?
Bachelors of Science
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved?
Bachelors of Arts
5. What is your profession? *Humanitarian worker, senior manager/finance administrator for the Red Cross/Red Crescent Society of Pakistan*
6. Are you married? *Yes*
7. How many children do you have?
a. male: 2 b. female: _____
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband has achieved?
MBA
9. What is your husband's profession? *Corporate Businessman, in telecommunications*
10. How many siblings do you have?
a. male: 1 b. female: 2
11. Would you describe yourself a religious person? *Yes*
12. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
a. Very religious _____
b. **Somewhat religious** X
c. Not very religious _____
d. Not religious at all _____
e. Not sure _____

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

13. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mother's role in our family was and is very important. She wanted all three of her daughters to get an education. She used the term "economic security" whenever she referred to school and work because she wanted us to be able to live independently on our feet. She never believed in relying on the spouse (especially the husband) for being the sole provider for the family. She believed that if something were to happen to the husband (like him not being able to provide for the family) then the woman should be able to handle it because she would/should be educated. She wanted us to be able to stand on our own two feet, and I admired her. She was our "molding framework" in the family, especially for us kids.
14. Who is the most influential female in your life?
My mother, for the reasons I explained in the previous question. I am who I am today because of my mother. She is a strong role model for her kids and she has taught us to be independent and self-sufficient. She also reminds us (still, at this age) to have faith in God and to follow the teachings of Islam. She also believes in moderation, that one extreme is not good over another. The key is balance. Her words of wisdom have and always will be a big influence on me.

15. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)?
Both of my sisters are living in the United States. They both moved there after marriage. My parents did not mind if we (the children) moved away to America or Europe to study but I think they miss having my sisters and their families close by because we hardly ever see them. They try to come every couple of years with their kids and we try to visit them too but America is so far away and with the kids in school, we don't get out much.
16. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional).
Alhumdulillah (All praises & thanks to God), none. I wanted to do architecture, but my mom didn't want to send me to LCA (Lahore Arts College) because it did not have a good reputation. She did not mind me going to another school, even if it was away from home, but she did not want me to be subjected to harassment or anything inappropriate, especially if I were going to a school with a not-so-great reputation. She made me understand that and I accepted it and went on with life anyways.
17. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?
Getting the position that I currently hold at my job, because it had always been held by a man prior to me. This was a big accomplishment for me because I broke down the stereotype that a woman cannot do a "man's job."

Questions Related to Interviewee's Educational Background

18. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.
*I went to a Convent school until I began university. It was a great experience for me, especially academically. Unfortunately, many people had a negative view of Christian institutions. I think that because Pakistan is predominantly a Muslim country, it is difficult for people to understand that the Christian schools and other institutions do an excellent job of preparing their students for university and beyond. I had a great time, and I think that it helped me because it was an all-girls school, so I felt at ease and very comfortable with my peers.
 My university was co-ed but I was prepared, thanks to my excellent schooling. My elementary through high school training gave me the confidence I needed to be assertive in my university and get involved in many extra-curricular activities. My educational experiences have also given me the strength to work hard and try to get ahead in my career as well. I cannot say that I had any really negative experience. I actually am quite a social person, so I always had fun in school, and still do at my job. I'm always up for Dunkin Donuts if anyone would like to go with me for some cappuccino!*
19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?
No, the professors I had were mostly Frenchmen, and they loved the women in our classes. They really enjoyed teaching us, and we enjoyed learning from them. I never felt like we were mistreated by any of the faculty.
20. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?
No, not while I was in the university. However, when I graduated, I taught French for six months in a school. The students were extremely rude and very rowdy. It was my first job, and I had a rough time disciplining them and trying to keep control of the class. I eventually gained enough confidence to be strict with them, but it took me several months before I finally took care of it. This was really the only discrimination that I've faced in my career.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

21. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?
Senior Manager, finance division of International Federation of the Red Cross/Red Crescent. I work directly with the United Nations and their AIDS program, as well as the WHO. We are partners in their polio campaign. We have partnerships in many global programs. We monitor, evaluate and observe the programs that are being implemented. We work through the national society and try to improve these programs. Right now, we have a lot of refugees from Afghanistan. They are all ages, but we first try to help the most vulnerable. We usually go into an area or a region for the long-term—we are currently trying to help the Afghani refugees get jobs and then go back home. It is a very difficult task that often seems impossible due to the growing political unrest in that country. We are facing the direct consequences of the conflict and instability because we have so many refugees to deal with.
22. How many employees are there in your organization?
8 employees
23. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization? *3 females, 5 males.*
24. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?
Yes, but women have to work 2 times as hard to be ½ as good. Being young and female is tough. Women really have to earn their respect in most professions, and it is unfortunate that there is still that stigma attached to being a professional woman. I did not have too much trouble because my coworkers are sympathetic (and also the women outnumber the males), but women usually have to work much harder than their male counterparts.
25. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career.
None. I know I am very lucky and I thank God for it. I have been blessed.
26. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession?
Since we are an NGO, we always have to be extra careful with issues such as sexual harassment and discrimination. The attitude towards females here in our office is much better than in other organizations. We work directly with refugees and other relief agencies, so we are always in the spotlight, both locally and internationally and it is very difficult to get away with anything. We try to be a good model for others to follow, but I think that until the work culture changes and more women enter into workforce, stereotypes and discrimination will continue.
27. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible.
I think that the women in our office are treated very fairly when it comes to pay and other rights. However, my profession is the exception because we are an international organization that is expected to adhere strictly to internationally set guidelines and standards. Many women in other companies do not have the same pay or equal status as we do in our office. We also have a very positive atmosphere in our office here at the Red Cross. All of the men and women get along brilliantly with one another, with the occasional scuffles of course. But we all enjoy working here and treat each other with respect. I have never had any problems with my male coworkers, and usually, it is us women who make sure they are doing their jobs.

28. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail.

No.

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

29. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society?

The advantages are that women get more respect and people are more considerate if women are working outside their homes. I think that the society is beginning to change and that more and more women will enter the workforce as time passes. The disadvantages are that there is still a lot of discrimination within society. It is not necessarily at the organization level, but more from the workforce. Many men still have the perception that women should not be working and should stay home. The ones who are working are often treated like, "Oh, what do you know? You are just a girl." This negative, discriminatory mentality needs to change but it can only come if the men in the workplace have an attitude adjustment.

30. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women?

No, the image is not positive at all. The image is horrible. I get all the news channels that they have in America because I have satellite at home, so I can watch all the TV channels like CNN and FOX news. And I have to say this, because I seriously feel like it is true: "if I die of a heart attack, it'll be because of FOX news."

31. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)?

There is a lot of negative publicity and propaganda in the American and other Western media towards Pakistan and other Muslim countries, in particular, the Middle East. I think that the media needs to change its portrayal of our women and at least make an attempt to tell the truth about what really goes on, because I think that people will be surprised once they see that we all not all barbaric and inhumane and that our women do have rights.

32. What do you think can be done to improve the image of Pakistani women in the media?

I think that we need to develop our own media and become more proactive. We need to get more private channels on our television. I think that the Internet can really help in creating awareness. The problem is that people do not know that Pakistanis are generally speaking, good people. I think that the majority of Muslims are good people, but they are very quiet and do not come forth when they should speak up and let everyone know about their true beliefs. The silent majority needs to wake up!

Profession : Colonel (Retired) Pakistan Army—Medical Doctor
Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? 65 yrs.
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved?
BSC & M BBS (BSC from Alligarh University and MBBS from Dhaka Medical College)
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved?
BA-General Arts Degree
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved?
No formal education. She was home schooled. In the early 1900's, women in India did not go to school. My mom was not illiterate though. She learned how to read and write at home because her dad taught her.
5. What is your profession? *Medical Doctor, General and Internal Medicine*
6. Are you married? *Yes*
7. How many children do you have?
a. male: 3 b. female: _____
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband has achieved?
BA in Arts—Liberal Arts
9. What is your husband's profession?
Army Officer, Colonel, ISI (Pakistan's Inter-services Intelligence)
10. How many siblings do you have?
a. male: 2 b. female: 3
11. Would you describe yourself a religious person? *Yes*
12. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
 - a. Very religious _____
 - b. Somewhat religious X (**I pray, I follow regular Islamic practices, but I'm not an extremist.**)
 - c. Not very religious _____
 - d. Not religious at all _____
 - e. Not sure _____

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

13. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mother was a housewife, but she had full influence on the family in every respect. She was our caretaker and disciplinarian. She wanted all of her kids to go to school and become professionals, even if the girls ended up being housewives; she wanted us to be educated. She was very much a part of our lives and took great care to lead by her own positive example.
14. Who is the most influential female in your life?
My older sisters and my father. My older sisters used to guide me in every walk of my life. One of my sisters was a double MA and had a diploma in teaching. My other older sister was also MA. My father really wanted me to go to medical school, and that is how I developed an interest in attending medical college and becoming a doctor. I joined the army after I got married and retired from there as a Lt. Colonel. My husband was also in the army, and it was a respectable line, so I also wanted to join. At that time, very few lady doctors went into the army. Not more than 30 women were in the Pakistani army when I joined.

15. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)?
One nephew, several nieces, and my son, who went to America for graduate studies and now he is working in Houston.
16. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional).
No barriers, thanks to the Lord. I had a very smooth career and had no trouble in the army. Being a female was never an issue in the army, even though I joined back in 1965. I always was treated with respect.
17. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?
I got an army award, and that was a great honor for me. The award was for performance (overall) in the army and the devotion to the profession of medicine and my country.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Educational Background

18. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.
I had very good experiences. In my third year of medical college, I lived in the hostel and we had medical war duties due to the 1965 war. I was stationed at the hospital. I dealt with too many war casualties, I've never seen so many dead and dying in all my life, before or after that. It was horrible. But the job itself was very rewarding. It was tough because you had to work very hard, we had to be strong and not get tired or upset, because everyone depended on us and we had to deal with life or death issues on a daily basis.
19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?
No, the male teachers gave me their full support and encouragement. Especially in medical school (I was in Bangladesh then). They were very respectful of the fact that women would make excellent doctors and I think they were very happy to have female students in their classes because we were just as, if not more, hard working than the male students.
20. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?
No, not at all, never. We had co-education, so it was not difficult for them to get used to the fact that we were females and we could also be there to study. We did all our labs together and clinical exams, too, and I think they were impressed by the fact that the girls often got much higher scores than some of the males on our practical exams.

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

21. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?
Retired Colonel in Pakistan Army—Medical Doctor
22. How many employees are there in your organization?
In my hospital ward, we had only one female doctoring the medical ward, the rest of them were all males. That female was me. I practiced medicine for a total of 30 years before I retired. All of my service was in the army. The toughest experience for me was the 1965 war, because I had to deal with so many deaths and injuries caused by the war, and I was young and just starting out my career, so I was not fully prepared to handle that sort of thing. The experiences of being on duty in the hospital during that war still haunt me. War is a horrible, terrifying thing.

23. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization? *In the mid-1960's and 1970's, when I first enlisted in the army, there were only about 30 females in Pakistan's total army. Now there are many more, but back then, there were very few of us.*
24. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?
Yes, male doctors in the army were very supportive and never bothered me. They were very respectful and were much nicer to me than to their male peers.
25. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career.
I had no problem in reaching the position that I had as colonel, except for hard work. I loved being a doctor and serving people.
26. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession?
I think that there is a very positive attitude towards female doctors in Pakistan. And for army doctors especially. It is a very respectable job, but very demanding. I believe female doctors do get the respect that they deserve, especially the ones who are in public service, like the army.
27. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible.
Yes, the same status in every respect. The same pay, same status, same facilities. Last year I had minor surgery, it was a routine procedure, and I went to the hospital where I had been stationed at before I retired. I received a royal treatment, and nurses and doctors that were not even there during my tenure came to see me to make sure that I was being well treated. I think that the respect they gave me was due to the fact that I was one of their peers, and being a female doctor has great perks and I found out what those are when I was in the hospital as a patient rather than working there.
28. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail.
No, I have received excellent treatment.

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

29. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society?
The advantages of being in the army are numerous, including some of the things I mentioned earlier. The respect; the pay; the benefits; the satisfaction of serving one's country and its inhabitants. I think there is not a more respectable profession out there for women. The only major problem is if a woman is married and the husband is posted in a different city. If they are posted together, there are no disadvantages. My husband and I were posted together, so it was much easier, but otherwise we would have been separated. This is also a problem for a single woman, because she might get a position that is far from her family. If she is posted close by, then there are no disadvantages.
30. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women?
I think that American has a good image of Pakistan and our people. They have a very positive thinking about our leadership and the country, in general.
31. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)?
The media plays a very important role in contributing to the image of Pakistani women. Pakistan and America have a very close relationship right now, and I think they are playing up this relationship in

the news, both on American and Pakistani channels. I think that this will help bring the nations closer together and help to build a mutual understanding between the two countries.

32. Can you tell me a little bit more about your experiences after the Partition?

I migrated from India to Pakistan in 1962. It was not tough to migrate at all because all my brothers and sisters had already come, but I left my parents behind. I came with my cousins who were coming over.

I just went back to India in March for the first time to visit my old school, Aligarh University. It was my first trip to India since 1962 when we migrated. We received a great reception from the school's welcoming committee and I got to see my old house where I was born. It was a fantastic experience, and I'm glad that relations are finally improving between the two countries because we have such rich history between us. I would love to go again sometime and visit the new friends I made on this trip as well as my old neighbors and classmates from when I lived there over 40 years ago.

Interview Questionnaire

Demographic questions:

1. What is your age range? *41-65 years.*
2. What is the highest educational degree you have achieved?
*BA-General Arts Degree, Karachi University, Fine Arts Degree (4-year program)
18 months—Sir John Cass College—London England for Fine Arts Certificate*
3. What is the highest level of education your father has achieved?
Bachelors—Engineering. Engineer qualified from Bombay, both in electrical and mechanical. After Partition, we came to Karachi where he worked for Karachi Electric Supply Corporation and he retired from there in 1965 as Chief Engineer.
4. What is the highest level of education your mother has achieved?
Mom was a Gold Medalist and the first woman to top at Alligarh University. She graduated in 1936 with a Bachelors Degree in Education, specializing in English Literature and Philosophy. She went on to become a principal of a Girl's School in India. Then she came over to Pakistan (post-Partition) and left for graduate school in England shortly afterwards. She received a degree in school Administration from London University and got a good government job upon her return to Pakistan as the principal of Government Model School.
5. What is your profession? *I'm an artist. I do both paintings and sculptures.*
6. Are you married? *yes*
7. How many children do you have?
a. male: 2 b. female: 1
8. What is the highest educational degree your husband has achieved?
He has a Masters in Economics and afterwards he took the Civil Service Exam and is also a Law Graduate.
9. What is your husband's profession?
Member of the Judicial Board of Review. He retired in 2000.
10. How many siblings do you have? *I am an only child.*
a. male: b. female:
11. Would you describe yourself a religious person? *Yes*
12. How would you describe your level of religiosity?
 - a. Very religious
 - b. **Somewhat religious** X
 - c. Not very religious
 - d. Not religious at all
 - e. Not sure

Questions Related to Interviewee's Personal/Family Background and Upbringing:

13. Please describe your mother's role in your family.
My mother played an important role in the family. She was a "balancing influence": very educated, refined, her English and Urdu were superb. She was very academic; she never made small talk. Her conversation was usually about politics, religion, art, and the growth of civilization. My family was very well off, so we could talk about those things in great detail, but my parents knew the struggles of life and they instilled those values in me. I was not divorced from the reality of life, and I think this was partly because both of my parents were working and I got to see them work hard to get what they wanted. They were successful not because of class or family status, but because they were hard working and earned their respect and money the old-fashioned way: by working for it.

14. Who is the most influential female in your life?

My mom and my maternal grandmother were both the most influential people in my life. I lived with my grandmother for a few years in Karachi. Her life was “amazing.” She grew up in a palace in India. She was the most patient person I have ever known and she learned to adapt to her surroundings very nicely. After the Partition, the family moved to Pakistan and they lost everything, but she never complained or talked about it—she moved on with her life. She was a very religious person and I think that her faith helped her cope with and accept whatever changes took place in her life.

My mom was such a strong woman, very independent and dignified. While she was studying in the university in India, she became the Secretary General of Aligarh Muslim University’s Women’s Wing of the Muslim League. Before the Partition, she met Muhammad Ali Jinnah and worked on the cause for independence (freedom/creation of Pakistan). She was not afraid to stand up for what she believed in, and I think her determination and perseverance has always been a big influence in my life.

15. How many members of your family emigrated abroad (in particular to Europe or the United States)?

One maternal uncle went to McGill University in Montreal in the early 1960’s. One of my cousins went to America to study computer science and is now working there for IBM. Another female cousin is the Vice President of a bank the US. The children in our family were always encouraged to study abroad and have careers in other countries.

16. Please describe any barriers or hurdles you had to overcome in your life (either personal or professional).

I am an only child, which can be good, but at the same time, it was lonely for me as a child. My mother got me involved in a lot of activities at a very young age. I participated in art and classical (Indian) dance and I think this was a good outlet for me because it allowed me to make friends and also kept me busy. I still have that passion for art, literature and music instilled in me from that young age, and I have tried to pass it on to my own children as well. I am still involved in a lot of activities and organizations, and I’m always on the go, doing one thing or another. Some of the activities that I am currently involved in are that I am the zone Chairperson and former President of the Lions Club (it is similar to the Rotary Club; we are a philanthropic and social organization). I am also involved in other social organizations, such as the Ladies Horticultural Club and the International Women’s Club of Karachi. I did not have any major hurdles or obstacles in my life, and I have been very fortunate.

17. What, in your opinion, is your biggest accomplishment thus far in your career?

I have had nine solo exhibitions as an artist, as well as twelve group exhibitions. Participating in these exhibits requires a lot of preparation and a great deal of hard work.

Questions Related to Interviewee’s Educational Background

18. Please describe your experiences, both and positive and negative, that you had while in school/college.

Overall I can look back on my college and schooling and say that it was a good experience—except for having to prepare for exams. I went to a British School in Pakistan (Karachi Grammar School), which was at the time one of the best schools in the city. I then went to London, England and wanted to stay there after I graduated. I got a job as a librarian at age 23. But, my mom said, “you’re getting too old, and you’ve got to go back to Pakistan and get married,” which was actually the biggest disappointment in my life. (My mom stayed with me in England while I studied—we rented a room at

a British-Pakistani family's house in London.). My father was very excited that we went, and he really was thrilled that I would get a good, sound education in England, just as my mother had.

19. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male faculty?
No.
20. Did you ever feel that you were discriminated against (or treated unfairly) by male students, such as fellow classmates?
*No, no problems at all.
However, I did feel some discrimination in the professional setting because I believe there is a sense of resentment on the part of the artists. They see me as an outsider because for me, art is a hobby, not my means of earning a living. For most artists, not just in Pakistan, but I think this is true all over the world; their artwork is their means of earning a living. I'm well off, married (not the "starving artist" but someone who creates art for fun and enjoyment, as a pastime of mine).*

Questions Related to Interviewee's Career/Current Employment

21. What is your position in the field in which you are currently employed?
Self-employed: Artist
22. How many employees are there in your organization?
Just me.
23. What is the percentage (an estimate, if exact figures are unavailable) of the number of female employees in your organization?
I'm self-employed and don't have any employees. However, there are more and more art colleges and institutions than ever before that are teaching art. I think there are more females also entering the profession now than there were when I first started out. It has become very popular now, especially with females.
24. Do you feel that you are accepted by male employees in your organization?
I don't think there is any discrimination within the professional setting for female artists. Pakistan is opening up to both outside influences and new internal ideas. Art is becoming more and more common-many families in the past didn't want their kids to become artists as their sole profession because it is not a field where a lot of money is easily made. People now are getting away from the "my kid needs to be a doctor/engineer" mentality and allowing their children to aspire to become whatever it is that they want to be.
25. Describe in detail what problems, if any, you faced in reaching the position you currently hold in your career.
It is difficult to get into the art world and have your work be accepted. I am often too immersed in my home life to sit down and spend a lot of time on my artwork. We have a large home and it takes a great deal of work to get it cleaned and take care of it, so I have little time left to paint and sculpt and rarely spend significant time on my artwork. When I meet my old art coworkers and class fellows, I get excited and it motivates me to keep going and creating more pieces. But you really have to pay your dues in this business before you can earn the respect of your colleagues.
26. How would you describe the overall attitude towards females in your profession?
It is not bad at all. Very positive attitude towards females. They are respected as artists and as professionals.

27. Do you believe that women in your profession are treated fairly (example: paid the same) as male coworkers? Please explain giving as many specific instances as possible.
It does not matter whether you are a male or female in this profession—what matters is the quality of your work. For example, if you produce a great painting, you will get good money for it, and it does not make any difference whether you are a female or a male.
28. Have you thus far in your career felt that you were discriminated against? If so, in what way? Please explain your answer in detail.
No, see question 25.

Questions Related to the Overall Attitude Towards Pakistani Women

29. What are the advantages and disadvantages of being a female professional in Pakistani society?
The advantages of being a female professional are that the woman usually has the option to stay at home and not have to work. If she chooses to work, then usually she will retain her income, and do it as more of a hobby (as I have) rather than a means of earning a living for her family. It is difficult when you have a home and kids, however, to work and be able to take care of the family at the same time. I think that the biggest disadvantage is that you are always on the go. Sometimes you do not have time to relax and pamper yourself if you simultaneously have a family and a career.
30. Do you think that the West (America in particular) has a positive image of Pakistani women?
No, women are not portrayed to be educated. They are thought to be old fashioned and backwards.
31. What role do you think the media plays in contributing to the overall image of Pakistani women in the West (particularly in American society)?
The media plays an important role. They only show the negative aspects of society (any society for that matter) but especially Pakistani society. Pakistan is culturally expanding, with both internal and external influences. This is especially true in advancements related to the arts. More and more schools are opening for young artists to study in and it is not considered taboo for a student to study art.
32. What do you think can be done to improve the image of Pakistani women?
I think that the media should try to be less biased and also show the positive aspects of the society. Like I mentioned earlier, the media can run stories on the cultural advancements in Pakistan. Maybe they can do a piece on the new up-and-coming artists. The idea is to show a well-rounded picture of the country that shows all aspects of the society, not just the negative.