

The Orphans of State and Society

In the Wake of Covid-19

Plight of Workers of Informal Sectors of Economy

**Findings of Socio-Economic Survey of Workers Belong to
Informal Sectors of Economy 2020**

Pattan Development Organisation

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1. Introduction to Study

This study is being conducted in the wake of second wave of Covid19. The study is based on two research tools – structured questionnaire, and, focus group discussions. The first provides the quantitative data i.e. statistics and the second method gives the in-depth qualitative information. Besides, relevant literature is being reviewed. This helps us to triangulate the whole set of information for conclusions and to verify the data. The Focus Group Discussion report is attached as Annexure as well as part of the main report.

All interviews and groups discussions were held in person/s. The structured interviews were held in four districts of Punjab (Faisalabad, Jhang, Multan and Muzaffargarh) and Islamabad Capital Territory from November 11-30, while FGDs were held in the first week of December. Keeping in view the women's 22.8% Labour Force Participation Rate, the study sampled about 30% females as respondents and participants. In total the sample size was 500 persons as representatives of their households. Since, this study has limited its focus on working people belong to informal sectors¹ and self-employed, we divided them into five major categories - 1. Self-employed (skill based i.e. plumbers, cobblers etc.), 2. Self-employed (hawkers & vendors), 3. Employed by manufacturing firms (power looms, kilns etc.), 4. Employed by service providing firms and businesses, and 5. Daily wagers (construction workers etc.).

Therefore, this survey research report is perhaps the latest. Though this survey research is limited in scope and scale, it is likely to be the only one which aimed to examine the plight of one of the most downtrodden and most vulnerable sections of Pakistan's society in the wake of Covid19. The findings of the study are disturbing as well as fascinating. It tells both strengths and weaknesses of the working classes. It also informs us about their civic and political isolation, statelessness and togetherness. It also tells how much they contribute and how little they get in return from the state and [civil]society. And then, how lockdown not the Covid19 hit them devastatingly. This is the crux of the tale of this study.

¹. Definitions of informal sector of economy and working people is given below.

according to International Labour Organisation, the informal sector is broadly 'characterised as consisting of units where 'labour relations 'are based mostly on casual employment, kinship or personal and social relations rather than contractual arrangements with formal guarantees.' In the context of Pakistan, broadly, informal sector may be divided in two broad categories -

Self-employed, and employed. Each of this group could be further divided into two sub- categories – self-employed who use their skill i.e. barber, cobbler, mechanic, plumber etc. and second, who have small-scale business. For instance, street hawker, vendor, corner shop owner etc.

2. Background

By 1st December, Pakistan surpassed 400,000 confirmed cases of corona infection. And the cases are rising fast. According to NCOC the positivity rate has almost reached to 10%. This is indeed an alarming situation. Though the government has not imposed complete lockdown, most of educational institutions, restaurants and marriage halls have been ordered to close and public gatherings have been banned. Pakistan is sixth largest country in terms of population and with 8,400 deaths by 7th ranked at 28th number. Despite, the country's economy is showing a little recovery. Prices of essential food items have declined slightly and there appears no shortage of food items anywhere in the country. However, the Pakistan Democratic Movement – an alliance of 11 opposition parties has been holding rallies across the country and appears to overthrow the PTI government. Though unlikely, it can cause shortage of food items. It will highly likely to accelerate spread of Covid19 in the country.

In order to curtail spread of Covid-19, the government of Pakistan had to impose though reluctantly lockdown in late March 2020. Naturally, it would have impacted severely the already poor and economically vulnerable groups of the populations. For instance, restrictions on mobility, ban on transport and closure of workplaces e.g. factories, markets and offices deprived millions of people from earning. It created shortage of commodities and raised prices. Also, it triggered a kind of panic. The people who had enough money they rushed to stock food and other groceries. Greedy traders had a golden opportunity to hoard more for larger profit. Consequently, it caused shortage of food and food insecurity, which hit the hardest who were already vulnerable, poor and had no extra money to buy food items. Reportedly, private business was the first to sack its employees. But the situation also deprived about 20 million people from their earnings. The unemployment rate jumped to 6.9% by October 2020 nearly twice the February rate - 3.5%.

Though Pakistan's economic and social progress remained slow in the past few decades in comparison to most of South Asian neighbors, the outbreak of Covid19 has not only slowed down the economic recovery. It may also have increased poverty rate to 40%. IMF also estimated 3% slow-down in real GDP growth. The first lockdown was likely to affect negatively agriculture sector too because of disruption in transport and availability of laborers. The lockdown put about 42 million children of school and might have deprived 17 million children of vaccinations. The second wave has pushed authorities to reimpose restrictions which is likely to aggravate the already precarious situation.

In response to Covid19 outbreak Pakistan government announced 'a fiscal stimulus package of PKR 1.2. trillion'. Moreover, under the expanded *EHSAAS* emergency programme, the government provided PKR 12,000 each of 12 million households. Also, 3 million daily wagers received cash grant. The government also allocated PKR 50 billion for the provision of subsidized food to poor HHs. The government also took many steps to ease out the pressure on HHs and industry. For instance, petroleum prices were reduced, payment of utility bills through installments, improved health services, tax refunds to exporters, reduction in interest rate, leave on rent and loan payments etc.

Since most of businesses are not regulated and documented in the country, to find a reliable data of their employees and of self-employed persons at districts became a real challenge in the wake of lockdown. Even Labour and Social Security Departments didn't have latest data. However, province wise data is available. According to a Bureau of Statistics report, share of own-account workers (self-employed) in total employment was about 36% in 2018, while share of employment informal sector was

71.5% workers fall in the category of self-employed in 2019². And the share of employment in informal sector was about 71.4% in 2018. data Self-employed contributed mostly people of has not only deepened poverty, it has also exacerbated profoundly the pre-existing inequalities and powerlessness of the already marginalized communities and social groups in the country, in particular, workers of unregulated and informal sectors of economy.

Like many countries, where health services were privatized Pakistan became under serious stress. Private health service providers were neither capable nor willing to respond to the emerging situation as they were just interested in profit. Regarding doctor to people ratio, there was one doctor per 1,000 persons and one hospital bed to 1,600 people. Overall, the country doesn't have universal health services.

Regarding labour market, by 2018 in Pakistan the female labour force participation rate was just 22.8%, while male had 81.1%. The gender gap continues to persist in unemployment rate too. Before the outbreak of Covid19 the unemployment rate of men and women was 4.9% and 8.5% respectively. According to Pakistan Bureau of Statistics report on vulnerability of employment also shows huge disparity between the two genders. For instance, 71% women and 51.5% men were likely to be vulnerable to job termination. See Table 2. This study clearly established that lockdown has aggravated the already precarious situation.

Table 1: Key indicators of the labour market-Pakistan before Covid-19 (%)

Indicators	2006-07	2017-18
Labour force participation rate		
Male	83.1	81.1
Female	21.3	22.8
Unemployment rate		
Male	4.2	4.9
Female	8.6	8.5

Table 2: Share of vulnerable employment by sector-Pakistan (%)

Sectors	2017-18
All sectors	
Male	51.5
Female	70.9
Manufacturing	
Male	26.6
Female	55.9
Education	
Male	2.5
Female	4.6
Health & social work	
Male	23.0

². <http://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/Pakistan%20Employment%20Trend%20%20Reprt%202018%20Final.pdf>

Female	11.6
Other community, social and personal services activities	
Male	52.4
Female	59.6

Source: PBS, various years, *Pakistan Labour Force Survey*

The he Position Paper of Pakistan Workers Federation Coronavirus-19 (from 15th March to 4th May, 2020)³ notes this – *‘The Covid19 exposed chronic inability and deficient capacity of the labor authorities regarding enforcement of labour standards and administration of labour governance including statutory registration of business units and activities, production and workplaces, as well as workers.’*

The report also reveals that as a result,

‘large numbers of workplaces and workers operate in informal economy without legal regulations and recognitions in precariat working conditions. Without the proper administrative records and monitoring system key departments of labour welfare, social security and health and safety inspections, a large majority of workers of informal and unregistered businesses and production supply chains such as power looms, garments and brick kilns, home-based and domestic workers could not benefit from EHSAAAS and other social safety net programmes introduced by the government to mitigate the economic impacts in the wake of Covid19 Pandemic.’

The report though written in May, anticipated correctly future failures in delivery of EHSAAAS programme benefits efficiently.

³. <https://pwf.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/COVID19-Report-by-PWF-4-5-2020-1.pdf>

3. Research Findings

3.1. Demographic information

Sex of respondents

As stated in the background section, by 2018 women’s share in the labour force had reached to about 29%. Therefore, the survey sample was divided between males and females proportionate to the labour force participation rate. See Table 1. Roughly one-third of respondents belonged to rural areas and two-third to urban localities. See Chart 1.

Table 1. Sexual division of survey respondents.

Sex	Numbers	%
Female	156	30
Male	355	70
Total	513	100

Chart 1. Distribution of location of respondents

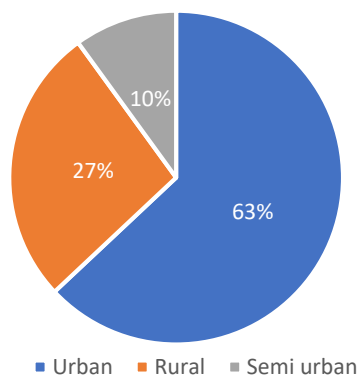


Chart 2. Sexual division of respondents

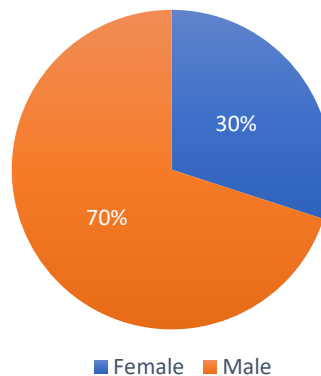


Chart 3. Showing age groups of male and female respondents.

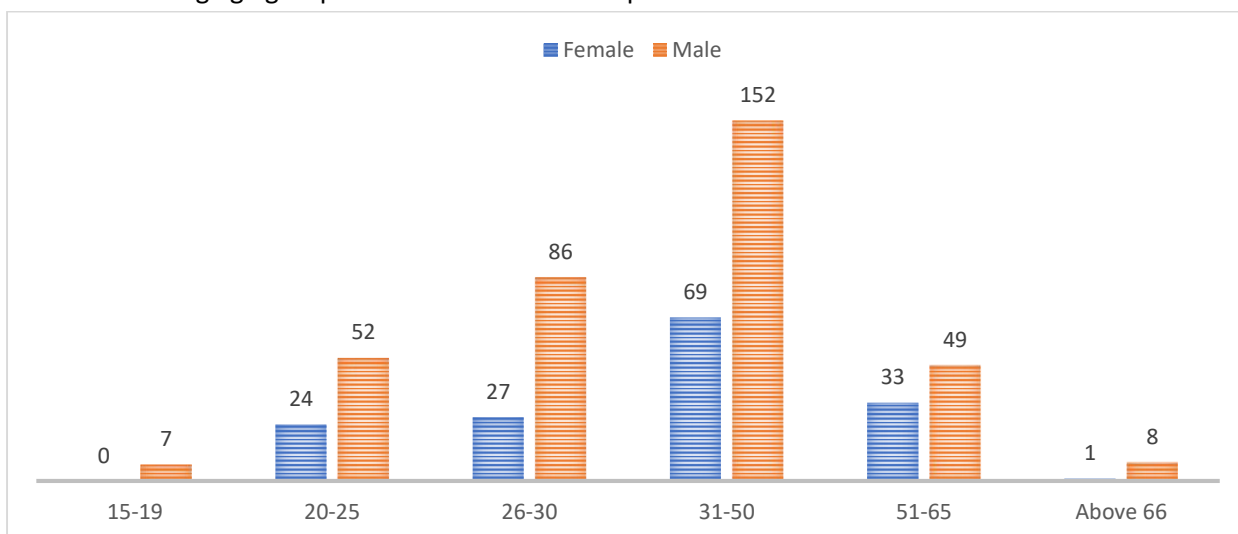
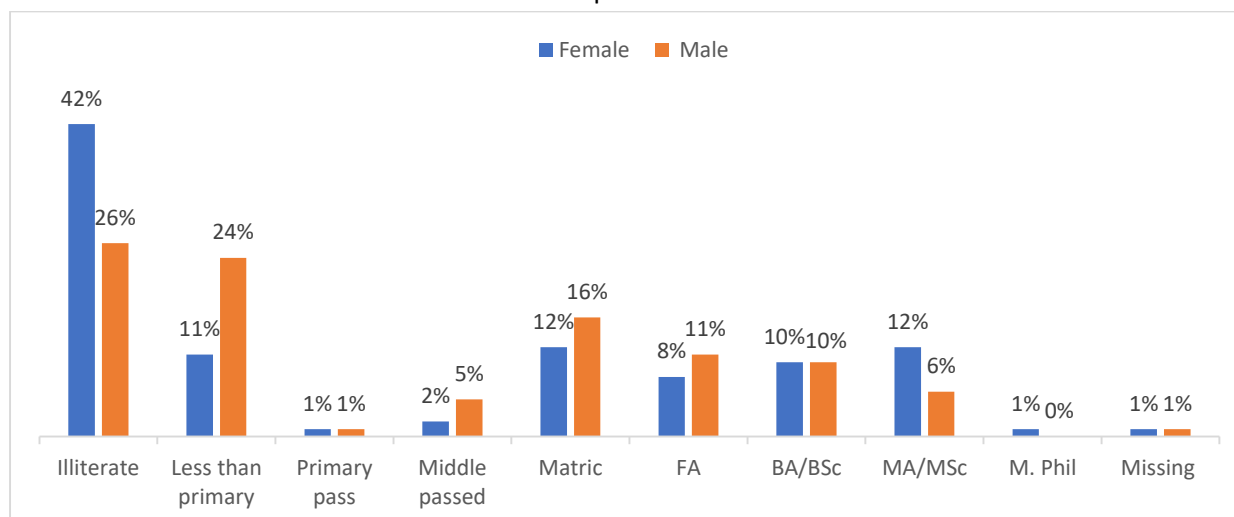


Chart 4. Educational level of male and female respondents.



Employment of respondents

The survey was conducted in four districts of Punjab and Islamabad Capital Territory. And the respondents could be divided to the following seven categories of working people. The distribution of respondents appears to reflect share of various groups of working people who are linked with informal sectors of economy. However, the sampling was also intended to capture perspectives of government employees (lower grade personnel), retired and unemployed people. For instance, the share of working people belongs to informal manufacturing firms (e.g. power looms, kilns etc.) is 32%, while two self-employed groups combine constitute 40% of the respondents. Women’s participation in various professions is evident from the following table.

Table 2. All Districts (Islamabad, Faisalabad, Jhang, Multan and Muzaffargarh).

Employment	Female	Male	Total
i. Private firm (manufacturing)	38	128	167 (32%)
ii. Self-employed - skill based (e.g. plumber, mason, barber)	30	67	97 (19%)
iii. Private firm (goods/service provider)	35	53	88 (17%)
iv. Self-employed vendor/hawker	39	71	111 (21%)
v. Retired	5	13	18 (5%)
vi. Unemployed	4	16	20 (6%)
Grand Total	156	355	513

3.2. Payment of wages

As far payment of wages, about 50% female and two-third male respondents reported that they were paid wages on monthly basis, followed by weekly payment. For details see table 3 and 4. But, most alarming aspect is that more than 80% of respondents reported that they didn’t receive any written proof of payments and they were paid in cash. See Table 5 and 6.

Table 3. Frequency of payment of wages (Numbers).

Wage payments	Female	Male	Total
Daily	7	64	71
Weekly	27	58	85
Every 2 weeks	4	3	7
Monthly	75	121	197
After months	1	0	1
self employed	42	109	151
Total	156	355	511

Table 4. Frequency of payment of wages (%).

Wage payments	Female	Male	Total
Daily	4%	18%	14%
Weekly	17%	16%	17%
Every 2 weeks	3%	1%	1%
Monthly	48%	34%	38%
After months	1%	0%	0%
Self employed	27%	31%	30%

Table 5. Method of payment of wages.

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Bank transfers	15	45	60
Cash	91	202	293
Cheque	8	3	11
On paper	2	0	2
Self employed	40	105	145
Total	156	355	511

Chart 5. Method of payment of wages (%).

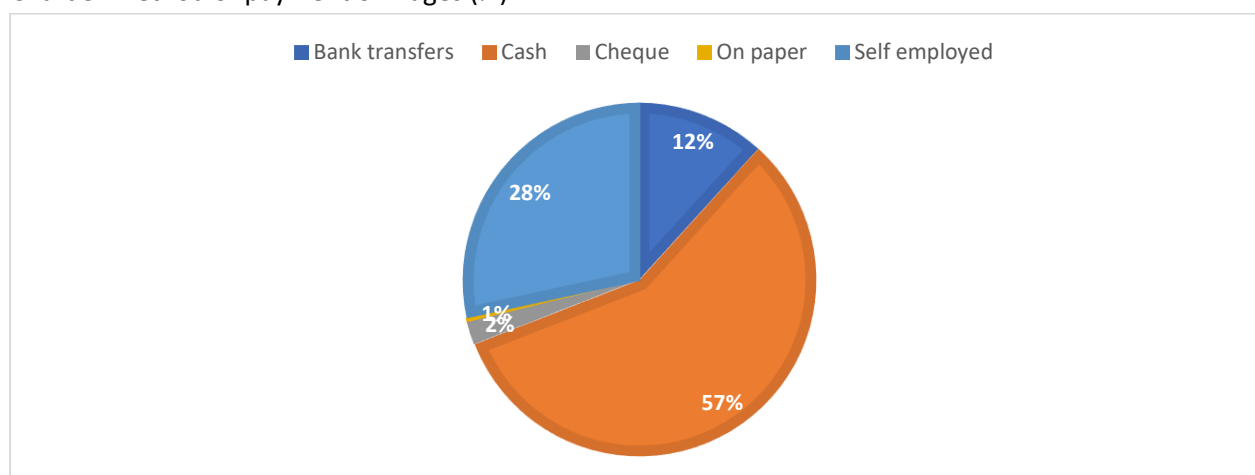


Table 6. If paid in cash, do you get any written proof of payment?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	77	172	249 (83%)
Yes	13	38	51 (17%)
Total	90	210	300

3.3. Social Protection

A number of social protections schemes are being initiated by the federal government of Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) before and in the wake of Covid-19 breakout. The previous governments had also introduced some social protections schemes. In this regard, Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) is considered with largest cover. However, interestingly successive governments have never seriously tried to implement labour laws. For instance, issuance of social security and EOBI cards to workers, enforcement of minimum wage rates and distribution of other welfare funds efficiently. Simply, because they didn't want to annoy powerful employers and secondly social protection schemes also help influence voters. The survey research was interested to ascertain coverage of social protection schemes. Only 16% of the respondents reported that they have been receiving cash support from the government currently, while before the Covid19 only 6% had received cash support. Therefore, it appears there was almost 100% increase in the beneficiaries in the wake of Covid19. See Table 7 and 8.

Table 7. Is any member/s of your family receiving cash support currently from govt?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	137	283	420 (84%)
Yes	15	64	79 (16%)
Grand Total	152	347	499
Missing	4	8	12

Table 8. Was any family member receiving govt support before Corona breakout?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	139	315	454 (89%)
Yes	9	23	32 (6%)
No response	8	17	25 (5%)
Total	156	355	511

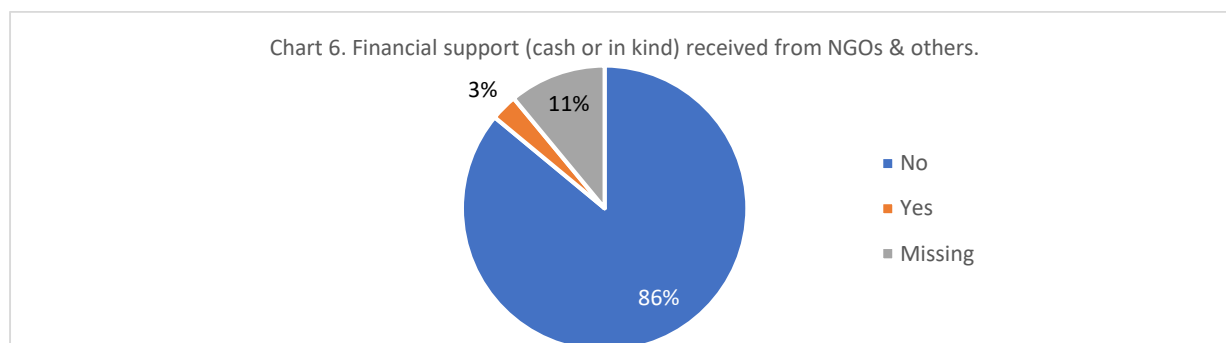
Besides, cash grants very few respondents also stated that they had Sehat Insaaf Card too.

Table 9. Names of benefits respondents have been receiving.

Benefits	Female	Male	Total
Cash grant (12,000)	0	7	7
Ehsaas/ BISP Card	17	20	37
Ehsaas Emergency Card	1	13	14
EOBI Card	1	1	2
Sehat Insaaf Card	0	8	8
Social Security Card	2	2	4
Total	21	51	72

A small percentage of respondents also mentioned that they had received cash support from NGOs.

Chart 6. Financial support (cash or in kind) received from NGOs & others



3.4. Economic resilience and vulnerability

Income level

As many as 75% respondents said their family’s total income from all sources was between PKR 15,000 and 30,000, followed by PKR 31,000 and 40,000, which constitute 10% of the respondents. When they were asked whether they had any other sources of income 81% women and 90% men said ‘NO’. Therefore, a large majority of working people belong to informal sector and self-employed people are highly likely to be very vulnerable economically. See Table 11.

Table 10. Range of family income from all work/business/property/land each month.

Range of income	Female	Male	Total
15,000 -- 30,000	109	272	381
31,000 to 40,000	9	41	50
41,000 to 50,000	9	16	25
51,000 to 60,000	0	3	3
Less than 15000	16	4	20
More than 60,000	12	11	23
No response	1	8	9
Total	156	355	511

Chart 7. Range of family income from all work/business/property/land each month (%).

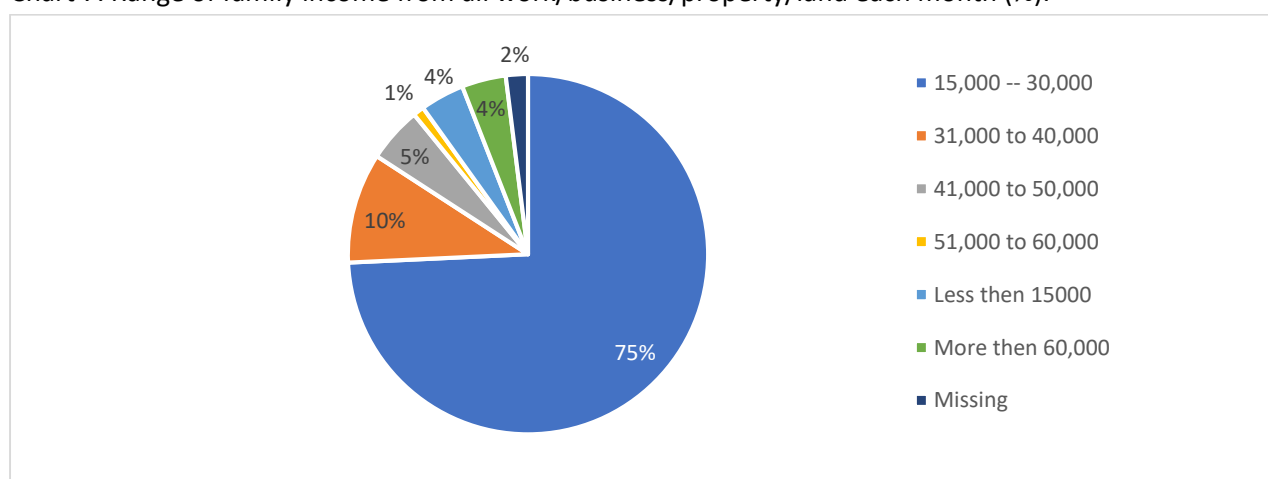


Table 11. Other sources of income/livelihoods.

Sources	Female	Male	Total
Remittances	3	5	8
Rent from land/house	7	17	24
Rent from land/house	1	1	2
Private job after retirement	0	1	1
Selling of milk	8	7	15
Sewing work at home.	1	0	1
Pension	0	2	2
Labor/farming	9	3	12
Work at home	2		2
No other source	127 (81%)	319 (90%)	446 (87%)
Total	156	355	513

Immoveable Assets (Property)

The good news is that 77% male and 71% female respondents reported that they owned the house of their residence. Yet 18% of them live in rented houses. See Table 12 and Chart 8. However, more than 80% female and male respondents said they didn't own agricultural and urban lands. Only 14% female and 12% male said they owned any land. See Table 13 and 14.

Table 12. Ownership of residence

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Free house given by employer	16	11	27
Own occupier	110 (71%)	272 (77%)	382 (74%)
Rented	26	67	93
Missing	6	5	11
Total	156	355	513

Chart 8. House Ownership

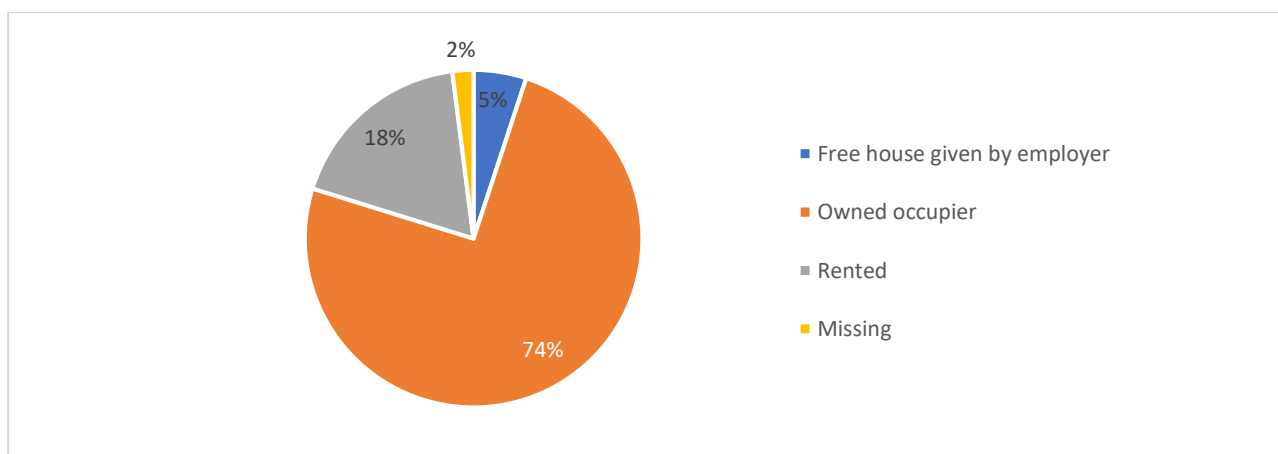


Table 13. Ownership of agricultural land (%).

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	83%	86%	85%
Yes	14%	12%	12%
Missing	3%	3%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Table 14. Does your family own any urban property?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	88%	84%	86%
Yes	7%	13%	10%
Missing	5%	3%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Moveable assets

Buying of jewelry is not just for the sake of wearing, it provides huge sense of security as it could be sold or mortgaged when no other source of money is available. More than 25% female and 14% male respondents said they had jewelry. Most HHs appear to have washing machine, sewing machine and fridge, while very few

Have TV and cooler. More than one-third owned no vehicle, while majority appears to own motorcycle. See Table 15 and 16, and Chart 9.

Table 15. Ownership of jewelry etc.

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	71%	83%	79%
Yes	26%	14%	17%
Missing	4%	3%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Chart 9. Ownership of electronic appliances.

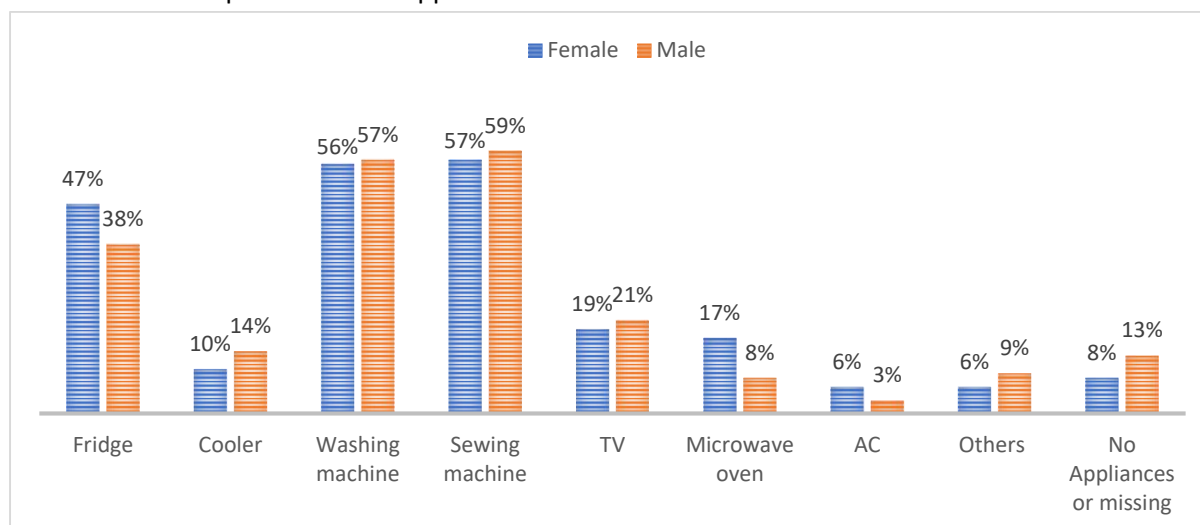
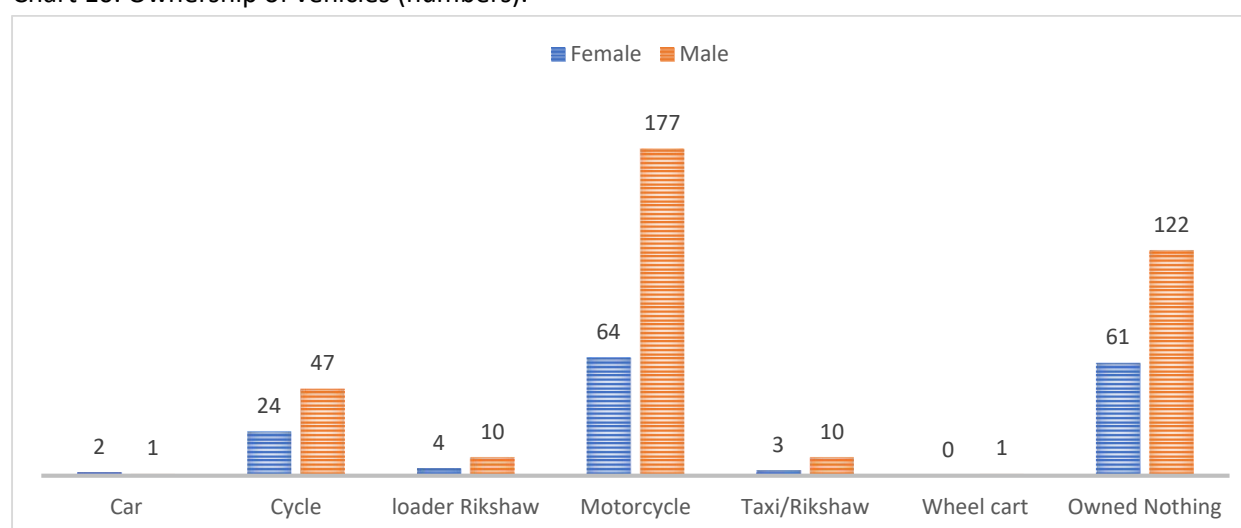


Table 16. Ownership of vehicles

Vehicles	Female	Male	Total
Car	2	1	3
Cycle	24	47	71
loader Rikshaw	4	10	14
Motorcycle	64	177	241 (46%)
Taxi/Rikshaw	3	10	13
Wheel cart	0	1	1
Owned Nothing	61	122	183 (35%)
Total	158	368	526

Chart 10. Ownership of vehicles (numbers).



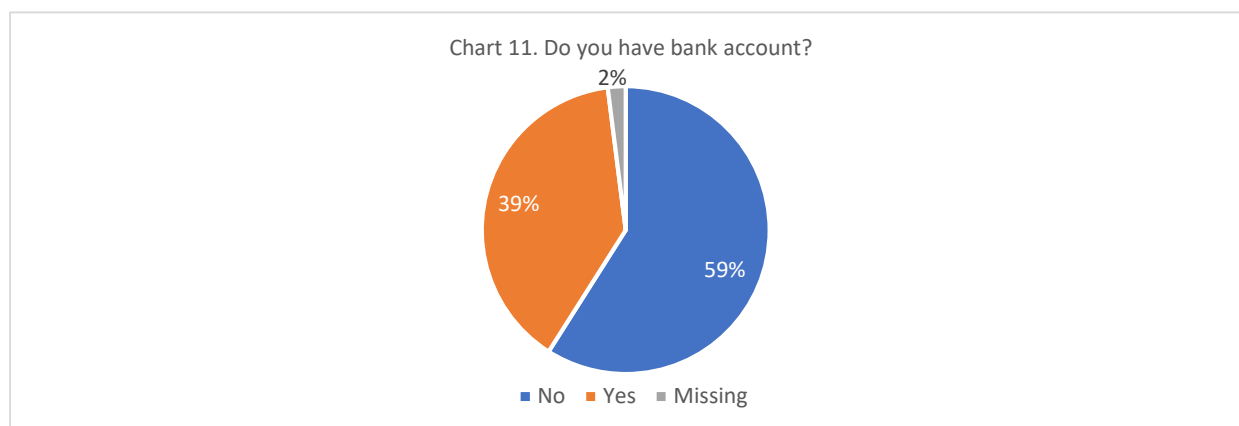
Banking

Less than 40% of respondents reported to have bank accounts. However, if you disaggregate between male and female responses, more women have bank accounts than their male counterparts. Perhaps this is because BISP and some other micro finance schemes target women than men.

Table 17. Do you or your family members have bank account?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	56%	61%	59%
Yes	41%	38%	39%
Missing	3%	1%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Chart 11. Do you have bank account?



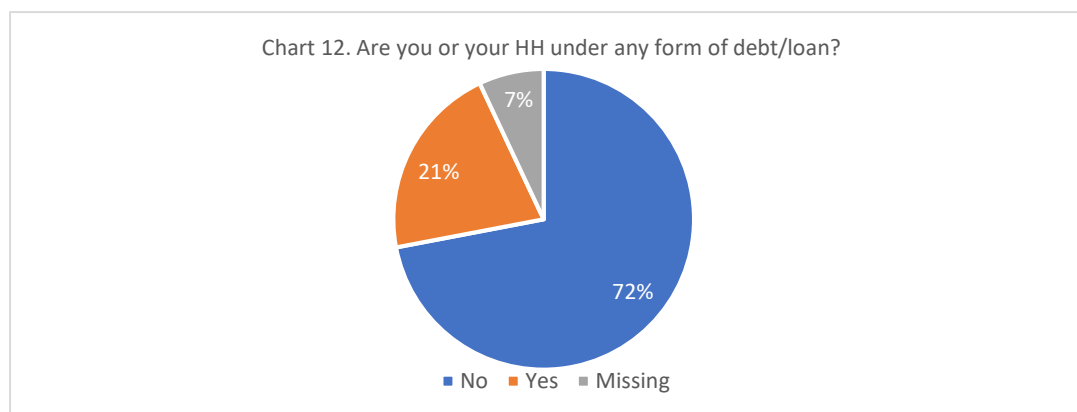
Indebtedness

One-fifth of all respondents reported indebtedness. However, more women than men are found to be facing indebtedness.

Table 18. Are you or your HH under any form of debt/loan?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	73%	72%	72%
Yes	24%	19%	21%
Missing	3%	9%	7%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Chart 12. Are you or your HH under any form of debt/loan?



3.5. Social and civic connectivity

Humans are social animals. And every community whether it is residing in some corner of Berlin or in Multan has its own institutions which provide them platform to act together at local level and beyond. Two very alarming trends emerge from this survey. First, absence of neighbourhood level committees and second, neglect of civil society and political class linkages with working people populations. For instance, only 6% of respondents said they have no relationship with any form of local committee as they didn't exist in their area, while only 7% and 6% reported to have membership of political party and trade union respectively. Disaggregation on the basis of sex, reveals that no female respondents was member of any political party or local committee, while 13% male reported political affiliation. This disconnectivity poses a great challenge to both political class and civil society. Because of this, it may be

argued that there is no platform available to majority of working classes in whole of Punjab. Simply, they appear to be orphans of civil society. This gap must be addressed. Trade unions and political parties must strategise how to engage them in civic life as this appears to be a destabilizing factor. See Charts 13 to 16.

Chart 13. Respondents' membership of civil society and political parties.

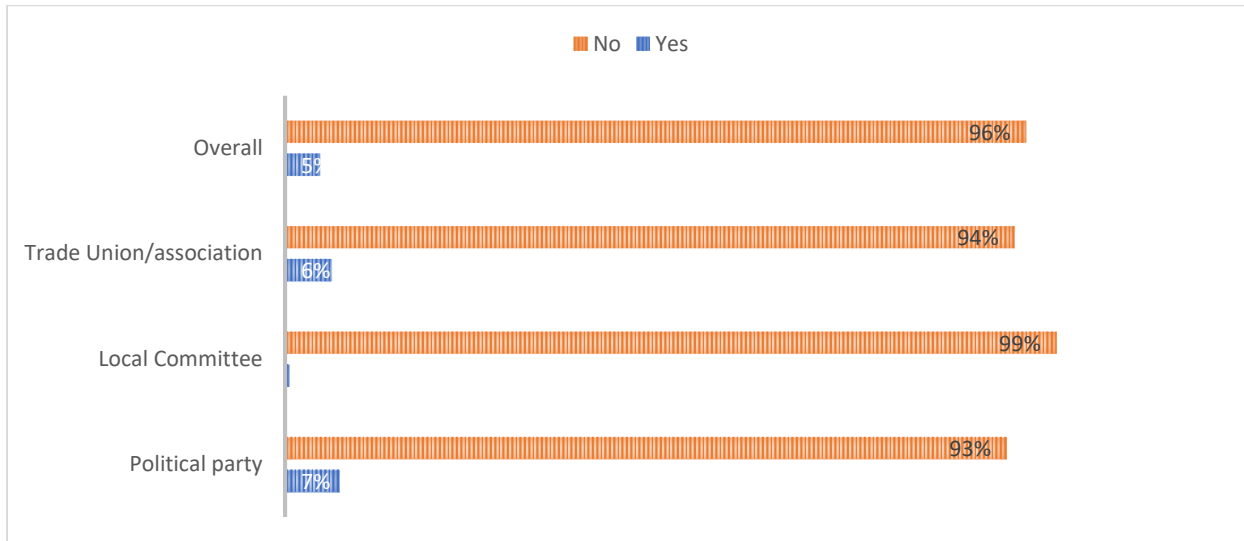


Chart 14. Membership of trade union or association

Chart 15. Membership of local committee

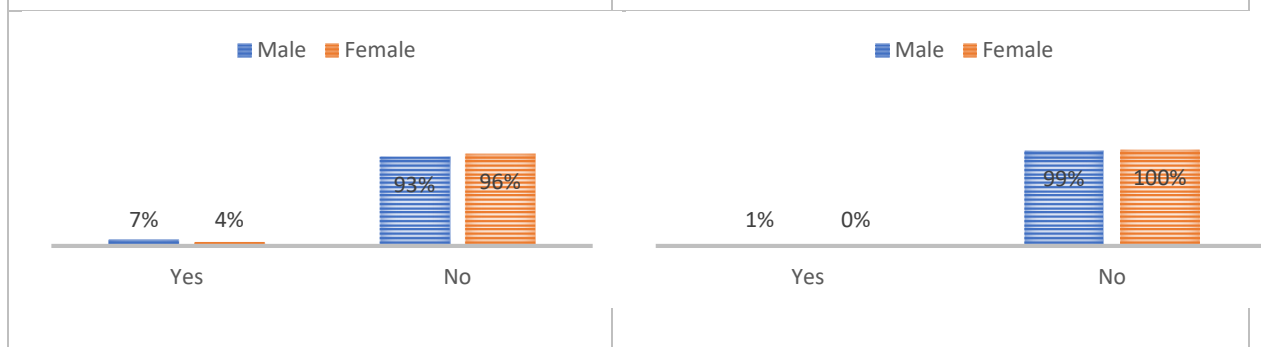
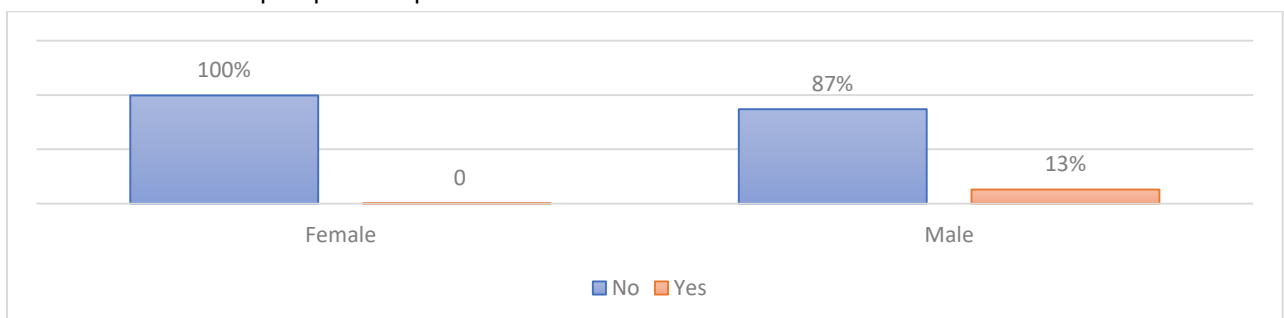


Chart 16. Membership of political parties.



3.6. Sources of information and use of social media

Interestingly, despite having little or no organic relationship with civil society, a significant percentage of respondents (30% male and 13%) were likely to read newspapers. Moreover, despite a huge digital divide, both male and female correspondents were found of using social media. As many as 45% men and 37% women said they used social media on regular basis. And the most popular platform is 'WhatsApp'. Yet another encouraging aspect is that as many as 32% respondents said they had internet

connection at home or on their cell phone. This is an indicator of their interest in public and political issues. Therefore, trade unions, social movements and political parties could use the social media to engage the working populations. For details see the following Tables (19, 20 & 21) and Charts (17, 18 & 19).

Table 19. Do you read newspapers (No)?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	130	236	366
Yes	19	102	121
Total	149	338	513
Missing	9	17	26

Chart 17. Reading of newspapers (%).

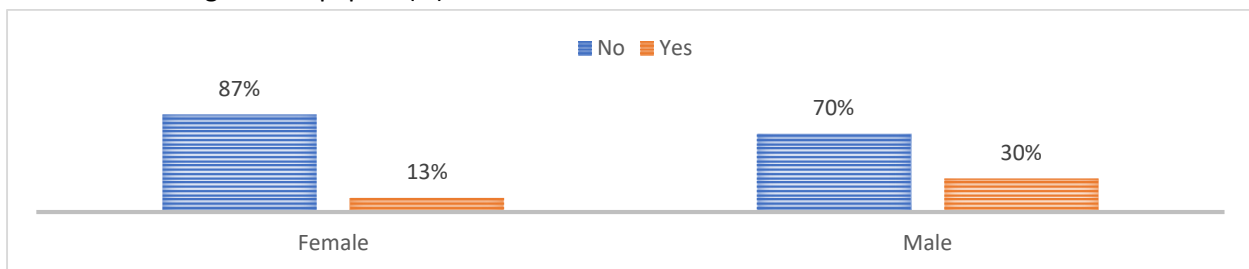


Table 20. Use of social media (No).

Response	Female	Male	Grand Total
No	99	192	291
Yes	56	158	214
Total	155	350	505

Table 21. Use of social media within each sex (%).

Response	Female	Male	Total
No	63%	55%	59%
Yes	37%	45%	41%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Chart 18. If yes which one?

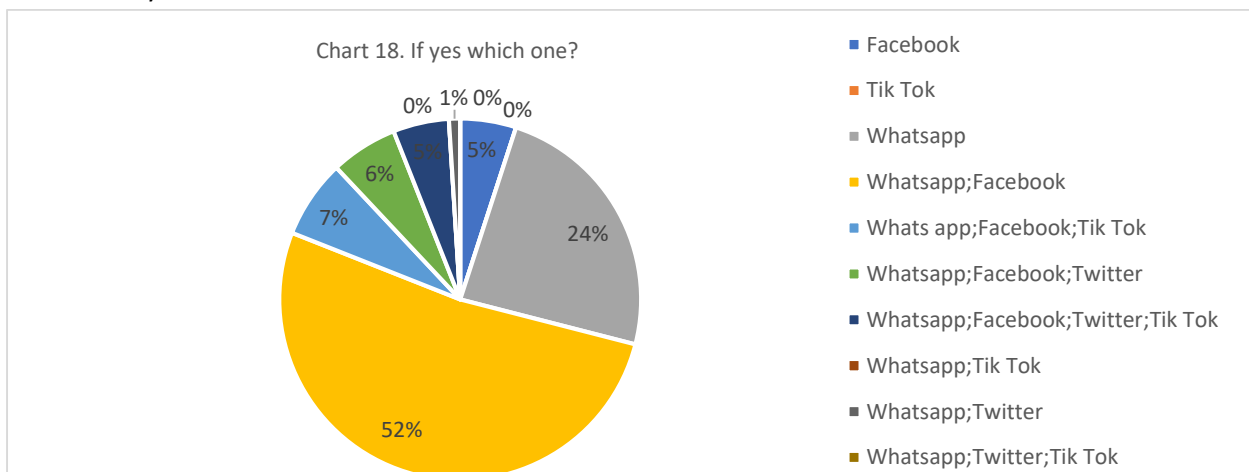
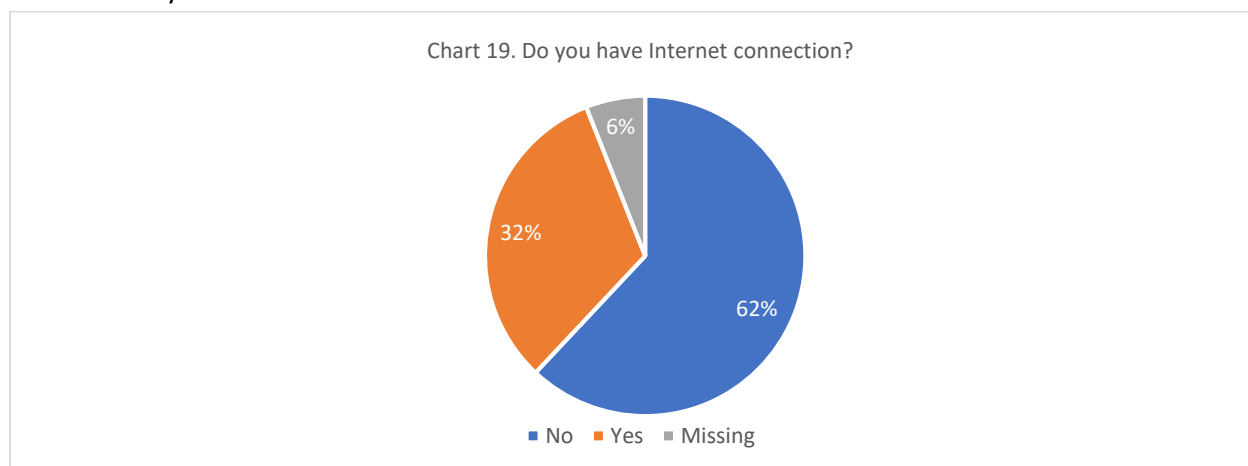


Chart 19. Do you have Internet connection?



3.7. National Identity Card (CNIC).

Registration of every person with NADRA has become very important in the country. Without it one can't get CNIC and without CNIC it has become impossible to have access to social facilities (health, education), to buy land/house, to open bank account and to get loan, to get passport and to travel, to get employment and get voting right. But above all, one can't qualify for any state benefit e.g. EHSAAAS Card and SEHAT INSAAF Card. Each family must have the 'B Form', which carries all the names of households. Without that you can't apply for CNIC after 18 years of age and register on electoral roll. Differential possession of CNICs reflects gender-based discrimination of Pakistan's society. For instance, currently, about 12 million women are missing on electoral rolls because they don't have CNIC.

Because of the above reasons, the survey intended to measure CNIC possession within the working populations. Sadly, we found more than two-third household even without 'Form B'; and those who have 'Form B' 28% of them said all their family members were mentioned on it.

Table 22. Possession of NADRA [B] Form.

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	43	124	167 (35%)
Yes	110	196	306 (65%)
Total	153	320	473

Chart 20. If yes, are all family members mentioned on it?

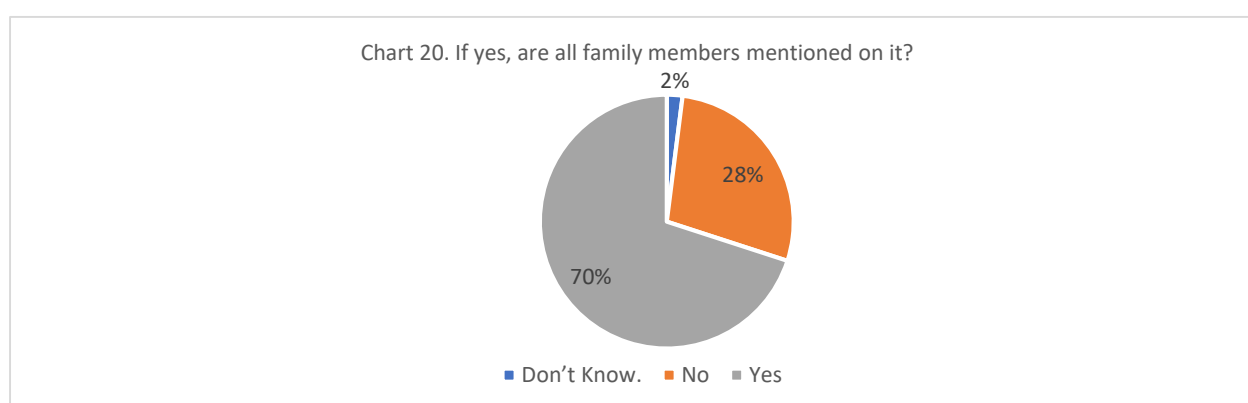


Table 23. Showing difference between 18 years old persons and possession of CNIC.

Responses	Male	Female	Total
18 years old and above	898	838	1736
CNIC Holders	811	743	1554
People not Having CNIC	87	95	182
% People not Having CNIC	10%	11%	10%

3.8. Section: Health

Corona infection

Overall three percent respondents reported that someone was infected by corona in his/her family. However, more female than male respondents reported infection in his/her family. See table 24. Regarding spread of infection within HHs more than 50% said that just one person got infected, while rest of them reported two to four persons. And 14% said all of their family members got infected. The respondents whose family members got infected reported no death because of Covid19. However, a majority said it took one to five weeks the sick to recover. See Chart 22 & 23. Regarding cost on medicines and medical treatment as many as 83% reported increase while only 6% said the cost remained same. See Chart 24.

Table 24. Did any member of your family suffer from Covid19?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	147	339	486
Yes	10	11	21
Grand Total	157	350	507

Chart 21. Did any member of your family suffer from Covid19?



Chart 22. If yes, how many family members got it?

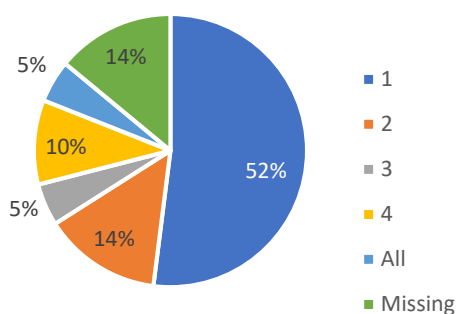


Chart 23. If yes, how quickly they got well?

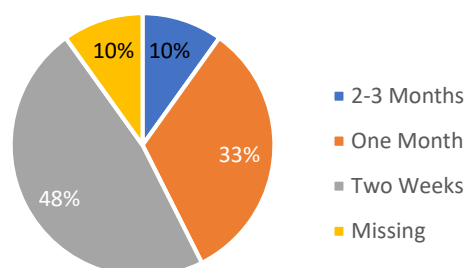
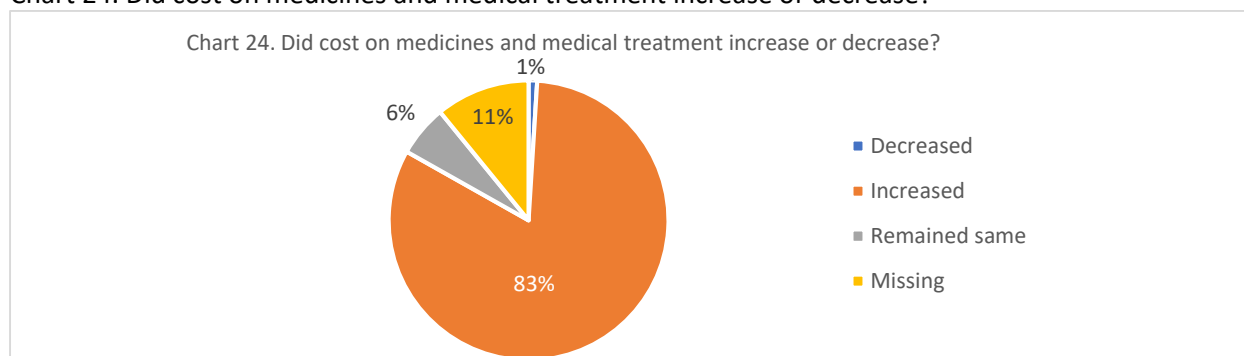


Chart 24. Did cost on medicines and medical treatment increase or decrease?



Availability of Health Services

It was important to gather information about availability of normal medical facilities. After excluding those who did not require polio vaccination about 57% of them stated that this service was available to them. See Table 25 and Chart 25. Almost similar percentage of respondents said Mother-Child Healthcare (MCH) service was available to them. See Table 26. And about 55% said they availed the government medical services during that period. See Table 27. Despite, the availability and use of these services, 52% of respondents stated that their cost on medicines increased. See Chart 29. And that had happened probably due to increase in the prices of medicines.

Table 25. Did polio and other immunization services continue during the corona breakout?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	43	111	154
Yes	63	142	205
Missing	50	102	152
Total	156	355	511

Chart 25. Did polio and other immunization services continue during the corona breakout?

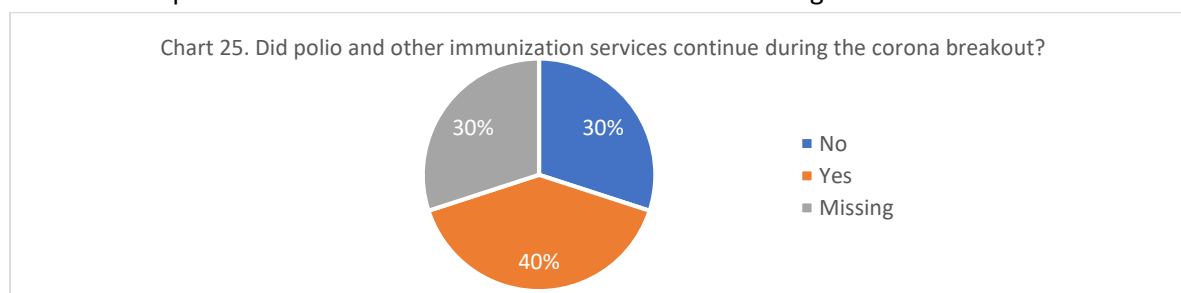


Table 26. Did Mother-Child Healthcare (MCH) service continue during the corona breakout?

Reponses	Female	Male	Total
No	48	97	145
Yes	62	162	224
Missing	46	96	144
Total	156	355	513

Chart 26. Did MCH services continue during the lockdown?

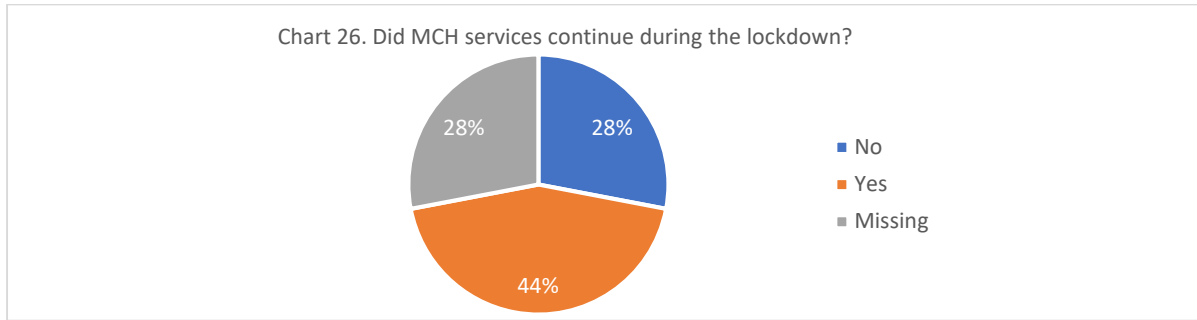


Table 27. Were govt medical facilities remained available to your family members during the corona?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	76	138	215
Yes	67	195	262
Missing	13	22	36
Grand Total	156	355	513

Chart 27. Were govt medical facilities remained available to your family members during the corona/lockdown?

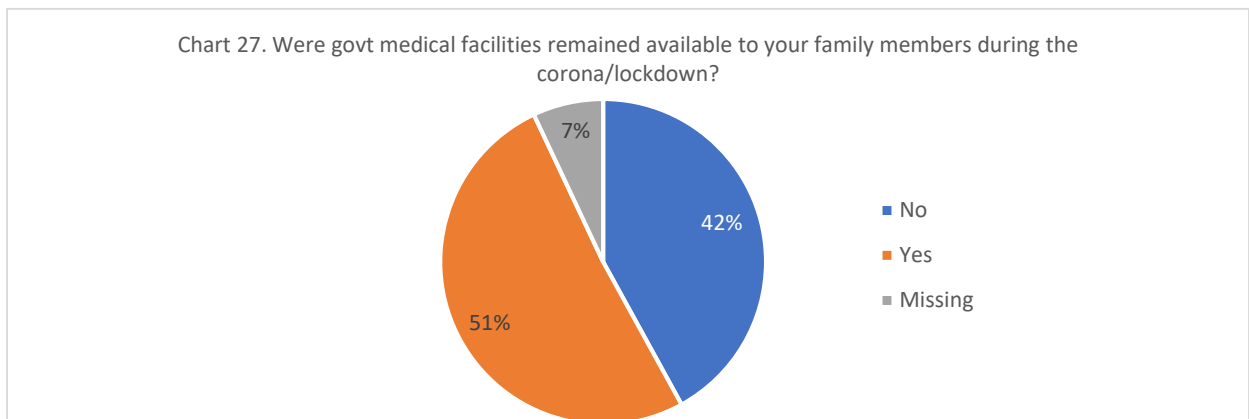


Chart 28. If yes, did you use them?

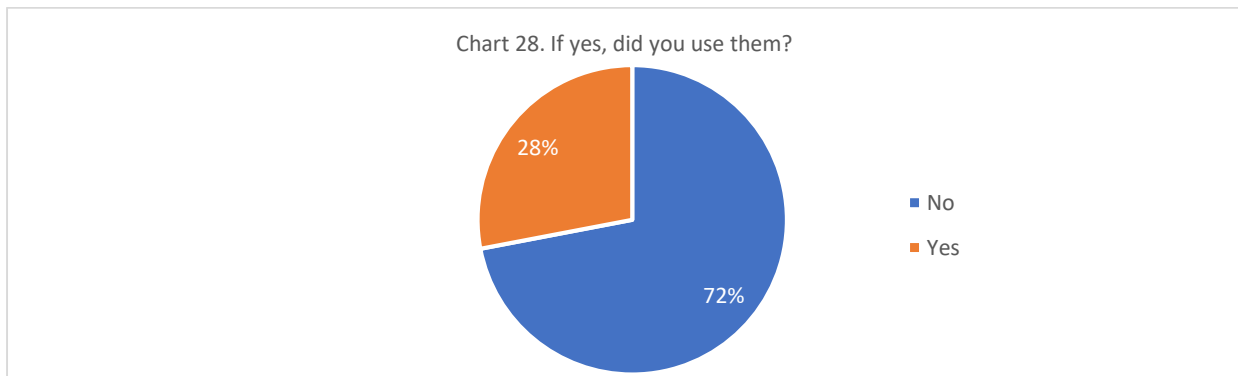
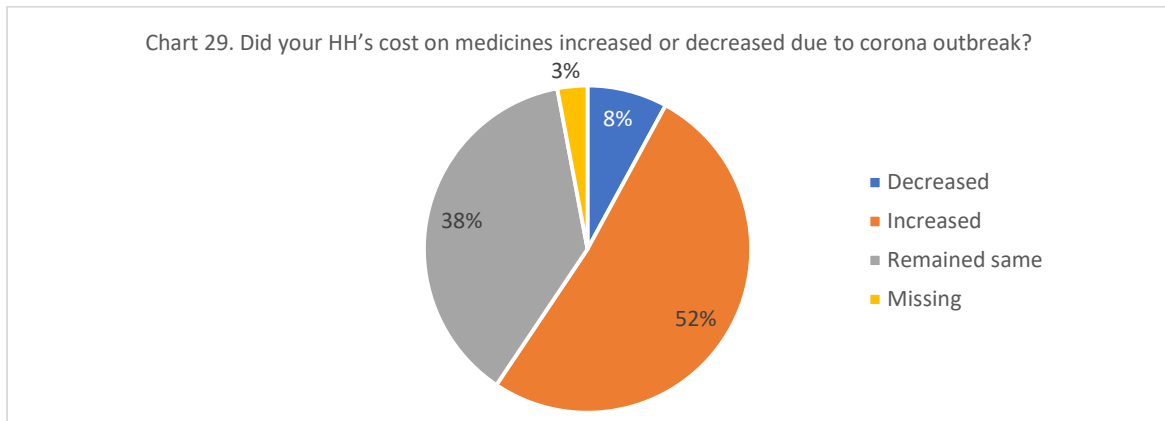


Table 28. Did your HH's cost on medicines increase or decrease due to corona outbreak & lock down?

Responses	Female	Male	Total	Percentage
Decreased	12	28	40	8%
Increased	77	189	266	52%
Remained same	62	132	194	38%
Missing	5	8	13	3%
Total	156	357	513	100

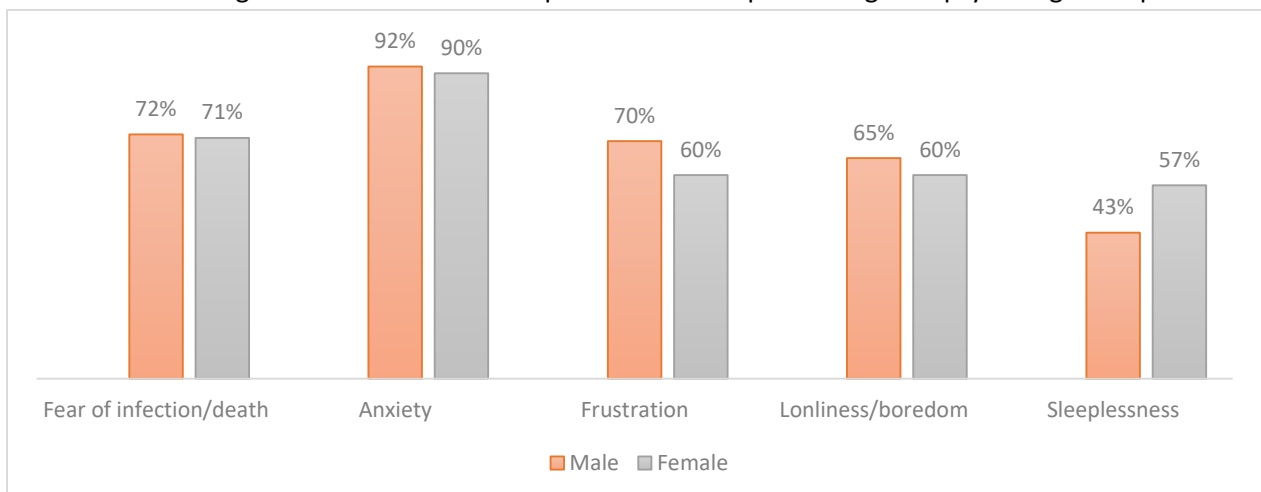
Chart 29. Did your HH's cost on medicines increased or decreased due to corona outbreak?



3.9. Psychological impact

Regarding psychological impact when we asked respondents, a large majority of both men and women said they suffered from 'fear of infection and death', anxiety, frustration and loneliness. However, fewer men than women reported sleeplessness problem.

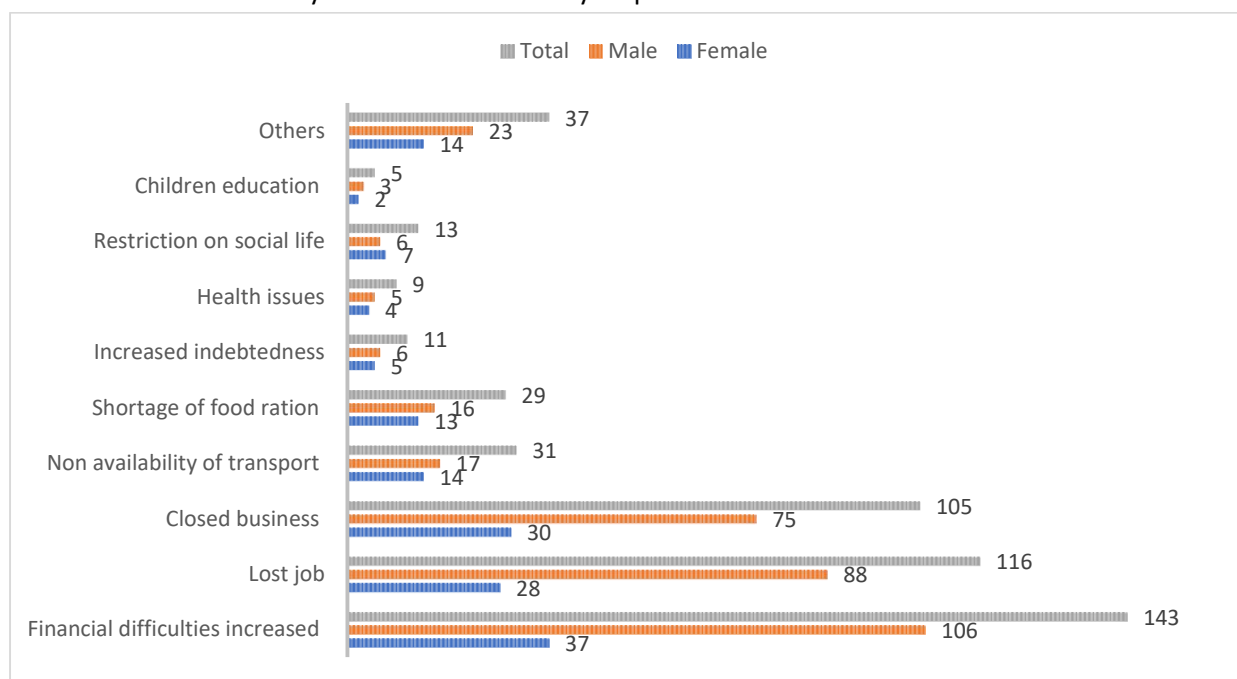
Chart 30. Percentage of male and female respondents who reported negative psychological impact.



3.10. New difficulties faced by respondents.

Increase in ‘financial difficulties, loss of job and closure of business’ emerged as three most devastating difficulties for majority of the respondents. This is likely to corroborate findings of other some studies. A UNDP paper, ‘COVID-19 – Pakistan Socio-economic Impact Assessment & Response Plan (Version 1 May 2020⁴).’ The paper warned, “pandemic could push millions more into poverty.” Pakistan Workers Federation’s Position Paper on Corona (from 15th- 4th May 2020)⁵ also finds similar trends. See Chart 31.

Chart 31. Shows hierarchy of difficulties faced by respondents due to Covid19 related lockdown.

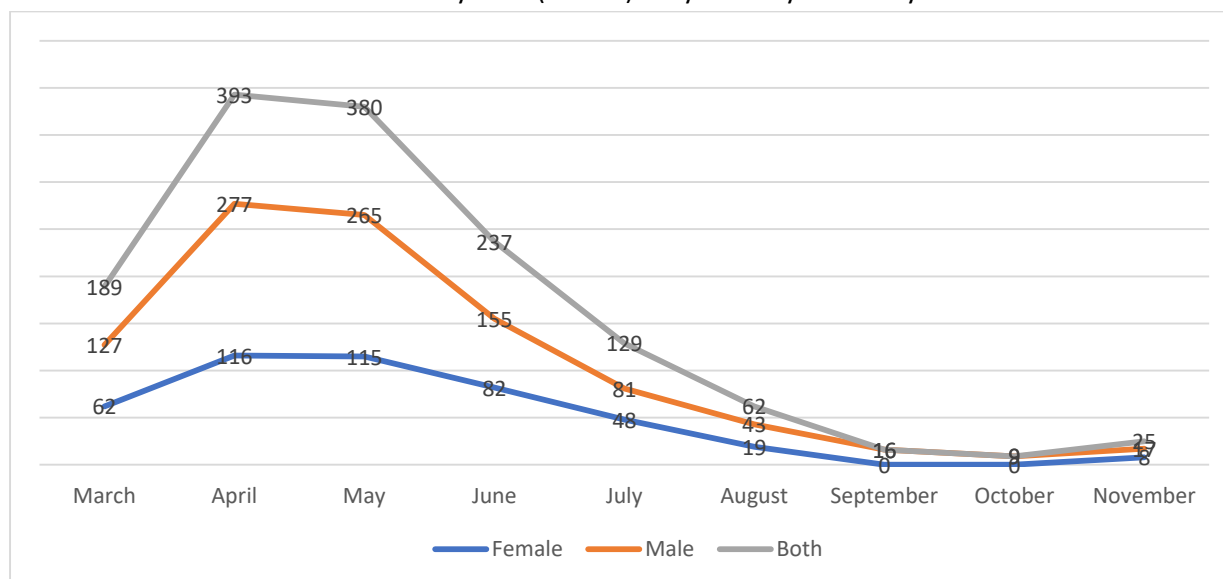


The field survey was conducted during the middle of November. Therefore, it covers the whole period of infection (March to November) till the beginning of the second wave. According to our survey the most difficult months both for male and female respondents were most likely to be from March to June end. By July the trend began to drop.

⁴. <https://reliefweb.int/report/pakistan/covid-19-pakistan-socio-economic-impact-assessment-response-plan-version-1-may-2020>

⁵. <https://pwf.org.pk/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/COVID19-Report-by-PWF-4-5-2020-1.pdf>

Chart 32. What was the most difficulty time (month) for you and your family since March 2020?



3.11. Scale of economic devastation

Though fewer female than male respondents considered it extremely devastating, overall 83% of all respondents said the lockdown was extremely devastating for them and their households, while for 18% it was devastating to some extent. See Chart 33. To our question about decline in income, 55% of them said all of the income, while 19% noted half of it. However, more men (60%) than women (41%) were found to say that all of their income has been lost. But we find more women (29%) than men (16%) who said they lost half of their income. See Chart 34.

Proverbially, difficulty never come alone. The loss of income was likely to subsequent social marginalization, indebtedness, loss of confidence, self-respect, poor health which reduces immunity. Chart 35, shows different coping measures that the respondents had adopted. One very important finding appears to be this – primordial networks i.e. extended family and friends play larger role in difficult times than the state and private sector. This is consistent to our previous post disaster studies. Besides, family savings and assets also play very important role in building resiliency of poor households. Chart35, also shows self-scarifying as a large majority has mentioned that they reduced consumption of mutton, beef, fish, poultry and fruits and increased the use of lentils, which provides good protein. A significant percentage of respondents also said they stopped buying non-essential items. See also Chart 36.

A respondent said this during FGD,

“Before corona at least we would have bread to eat, now there is no bread”. A Plumber from Jhang.

Table 29. Impact of devastation.

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Not at all	9	6	15
To some extent	34	46	80
To a large extent	114	300	414
Total	157	352	509

Chart 33. To what extent corona and lockdown was devastating for you and your family?

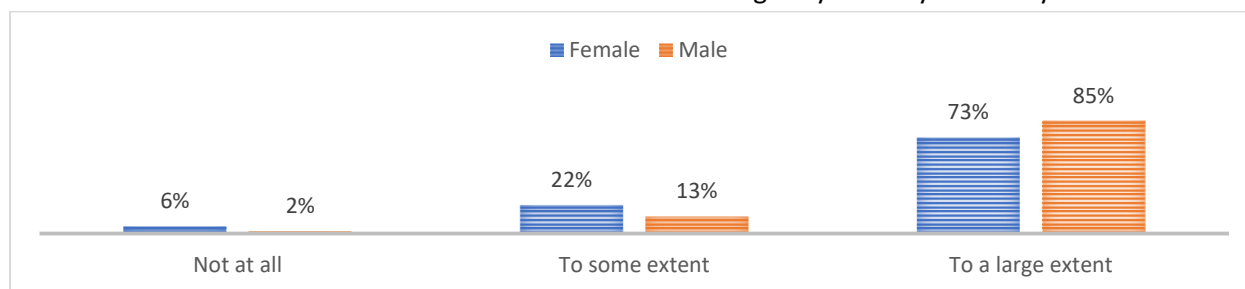


Table 30. Negative impact on income.

Responses	Female	Male	Total
About half	38	51	89
About one-third	12	31	43
About two-third	16	32	48
Almost all	55	197	252
Not at all	13	17	30
Total	134	328	462

Chart 34. Showing negative impact on income.

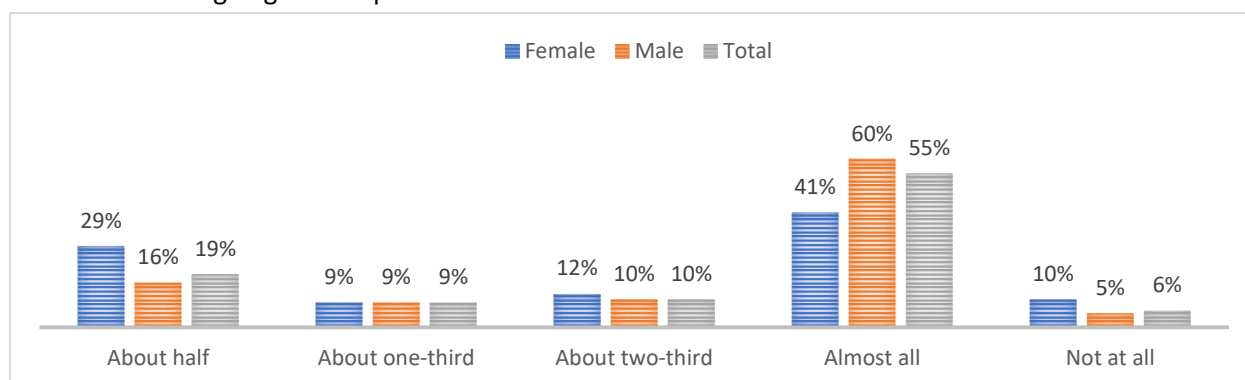


Table 31. If your income was reduced or you were sacked from work, how did you fulfil your and family needs?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Reduced food/fruit intake.	69	225	294
Stopped buying non-essential things.	65	256	321
Started a new business.	3	14	17
Put family members including children on work.	2	6	8
Took children out of school.	5	9	14
Borrowed money from money lender/employer.	20	46	66
Used our savings.	79	274	353
Sold some family assets.	34	69	103
Borrowed money from friends/family.	61	133	193
Received cash/food from govt.	7	26	33
Others	14	9	23
Missing	20	20	40
Total	379	1087	1465

Chart 35. If your income was reduced or you were sacked from work, how did you fulfil your and family needs?

Impact of reduction in food consumption particularly of meat and fruit was articulated by a participant of FGD reflects in this quote - “Because we’ve decreased our food intake, we experience a low blood pressure and depression”. Another participant also expressed her opinion in similar way - “During lock down my platelets began to fall down which still happens. Physician advised to maintain a proper die, but we can’t maintain a proper diet due to debt and inflation”.

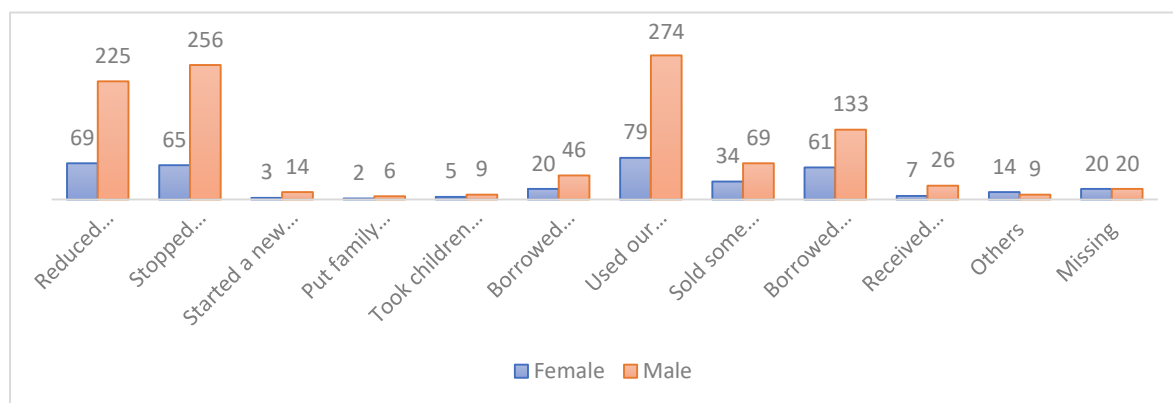


Table 32. Changing patterns (percentage wise) in food consumption

Food item	Stopped	Reduced	Increased
Mutton	96	4	0
Beef	88	12	0
Chicken	51	42	7
Fish	94	5	0
Eggs	36	60	4
Fruits	65	32	3
Vegetables	4	48	48
Cooking oil	8	80	12
Lentils	2	38	60
Milk	16	74	10

Chart 36. Changing patterns (percentage wise) in food consumption

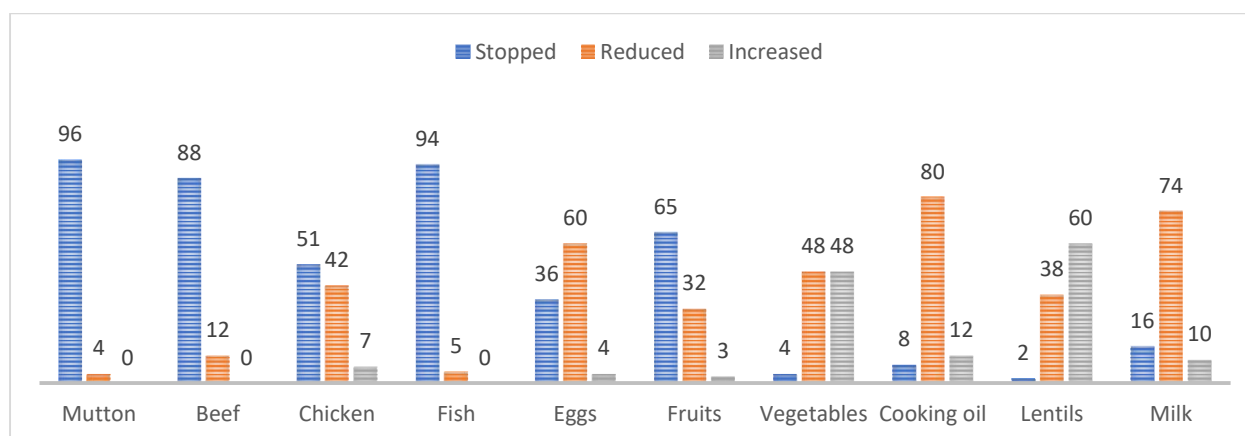


Table 33. Changing consumption patterns in the wake of covid19.

Food Item	Increased		Reduced intake		Stopped eating completely	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Mutton	0%	0%	1%	3%	27%	68%
Beef	0%	0%	3%	9%	26%	62%
Chicken	3%	4%	13%	29%	14%	38%
Fish	0%	1%	3%	2%	27%	67%
Eggs	1%	3%	17%	43%	11%	24%
Fruits	1%	2%	12%	20%	17%	48%
Vegetables	15%	33%	13%	35%	1%	3%
Cooking Oils	4%	8%	19%	61%	4%	4%
Lentils	21%	39%	7%	31%	1%	1%
Milk	3%	7%	23%	51%	7%	9%
Others	20%	0%	20%	40%	20%	0%

3.12. Price hike

While people were losing income hugely, prices of essential food items surged in the country. Almost everyone we interviewed complaint about rising prices of wheat flour, lentils, cooking oil, meat, vegetables etc. Moreover, most respondents also reported shortage of food items. For both the hike in prices and shortage of food items, more than half (57%) blamed the government, while 43% accused the hoarders and manufacturers. See Chart 38.

A participant of FGD who was an employee of a private firm was said this about price-hike during the discussion –

*“If government increases price by 5rps., market increases it to 15 rps.
There is no check and balance on the parts of government,
but hoarders must also look after the people”*

Table 34. Did prices of essential food items increase in your area?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
No	1	11	12
Yes	156	335	491
Total	157	346	503

Table 35. Who is mainly responsible for price hike?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Govt	89	172	261
Govt & Hoarders	3	20	23
Hoarders/manufacturers	63	149	212
Total	155	341	496

Chart 37. Did prices of essential food items increase in your area?

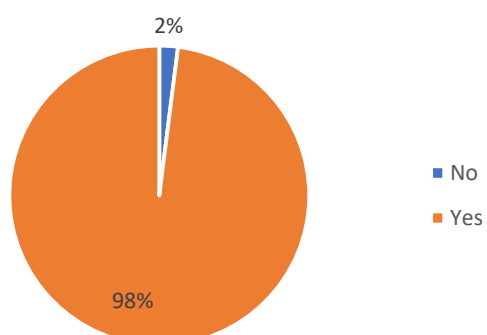
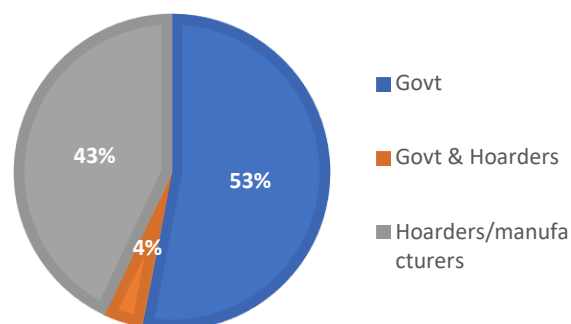


Chart 38. Who is mainly responsible for price hike?



3.13. Government response

The ruling parties (federal and provincial) came under severe criticism for failing to control the food crisis. In response to the price hike and shortage, the government took a number of measures. For instance, increased amount for provision of subsidized food items, increased import of wheat and sugar, set up Sahulat Bazaars and increased supply of items to Utility Stores. Despite, all these measures, a large majority (79%) of respondents were highly likely to buy food items from corner shops of their neighborhoods. Only 15% seemed to buy food items from government run shops e.g. Utility Stores and Sahulat Bazaars. See Chart 39. Most likely, its reason was distance to these stores and secondly, many poor people buy grocery from corner shop on deferred payment basis.

Regarding quality of grocery items are being sold at the government run Utility Stores, a participant of FGD commented –

“The items in utility store are not worth eating, particularly flour. Also, one has to stand two hours in queue to get his/her chance.”
 -Multan, Self-employed (vendor and hawker)

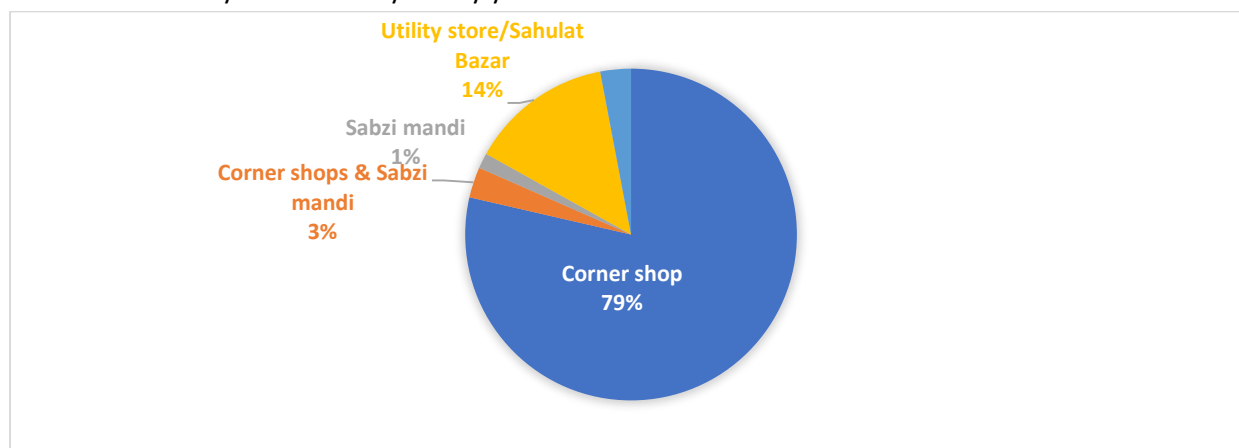
A group of participants would say this –

“When we go to shop and ask why the price is higher, the shopkeepers say, “had you not cast your vote to Imran Khan there would have no inflation”, but government says hoarders are responsible. I don’t know who is responsible?”
 -Multan, Self-employed (electrician, plumber, motor mechanic, cobbler, barber)

Table 36. Normally from where you buy your food items?

Responses	Female	Male	Grand Total
Corner shop	112	292	404
Corner shops & Sabzi mandi	0	15	15
Sabzi mandi	3	5	8
Utility Store/Sahulat Bazar	35	37	72
Others	1	13	14
Grand Total	151	362	513

Chart 39. Normally from where you buy your food items.



3.14. Self-Assessment on poverty

Since, the focus of our survey was on the working people who belong to informal and un-regulated sector of economy, instead of measuring poverty level of respondents, we already knew that they were one of the most marginalized and vulnerable sections of our society. Moreover, the main purpose of this study is to assess impact of Covid19 and lockdown.

Therefore, it seems fair to let the respondents to assess the impact of lockdown on their poverty. Slightly more than half of them categorized their household as poor, while one-fourth perceived them as very poor. See Table 38 and Chart 40. The data however shows difference of perspective of men and women. For instance, while 37% females thought that their HH was very poor, only 18% men agreed to them. However, more (56%) men than women (37%) considered their HHs poor.

But, a large percentage (90%) of both male and female respondents agreed that they were worse than before (Covid19 break out). See Chart 41.

A large majority seems to be optimistic of having fast recovery from the effects of corona and lock down as 81% said they would recover within four years. To further probing, as many as 45% said it would take them one-two years to recover from this damage, while 36% believed it would take three-four years. Two percent each thought they might not recover at all or took ten years to reach to the level of pre-Covid19 situation. See Chart These are HHs which would need support of the state.

Table 37. How do you define your household economically?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Not Poor	22%	24%	23%
Poor	37%	56%	51%
Very Poor	37%	18%	24%
Missing	4%	2%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%

Chart 40. How do you define your household economically?

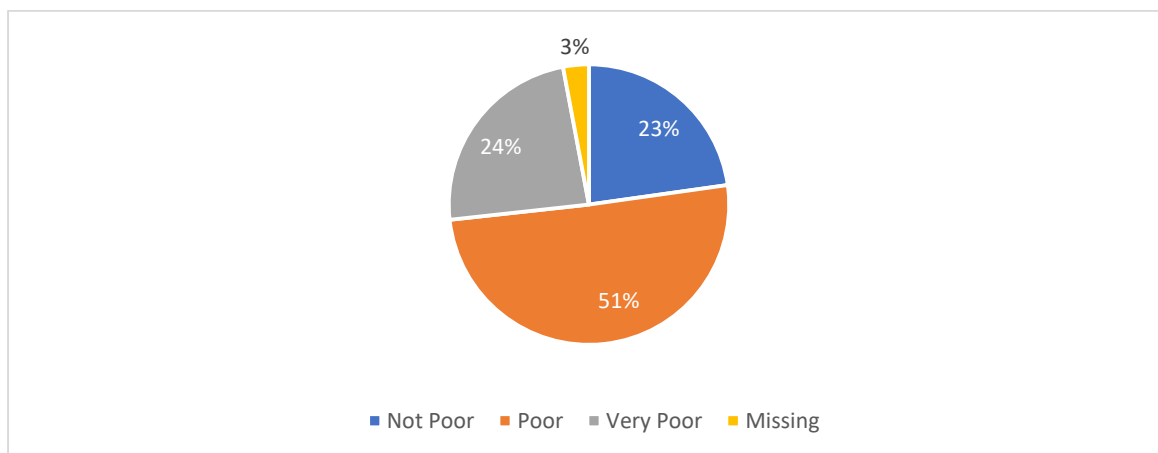


Chart 41. Overall economic impact on households.

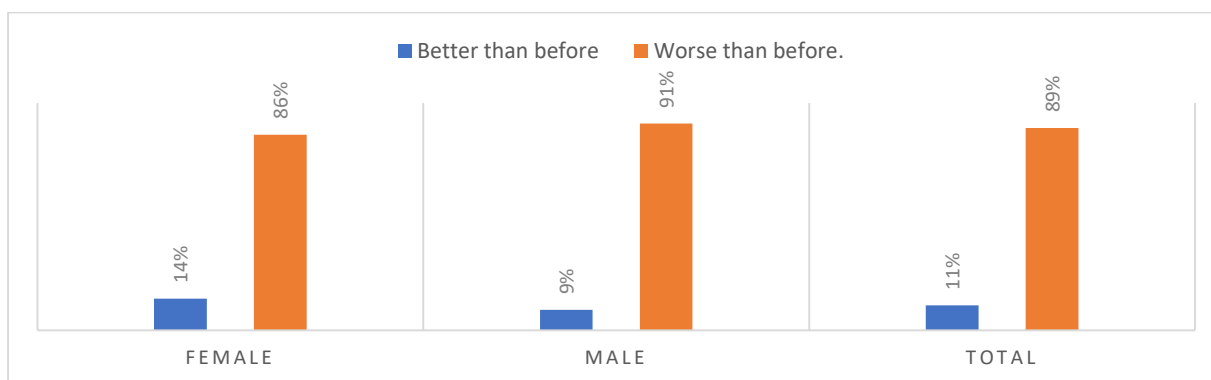
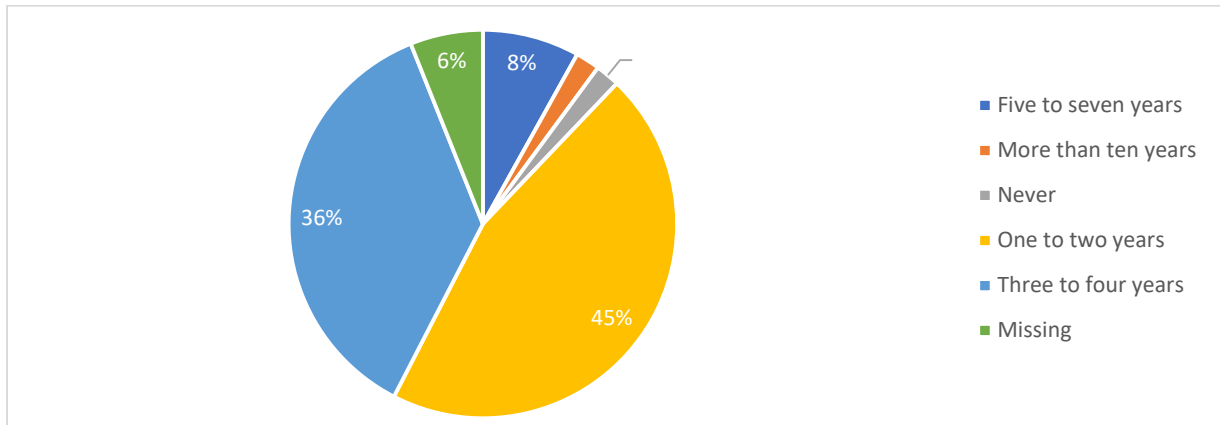


Table 38. If you have become poorer than before. How much time your family will need to recover fully to pre lockdown position with your own resources and income?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Five to seven years	16	21	37
More than ten years	4	4	8
Never	5	6	11
One to two years	51	148	199
Three to four years	59	100	159
Don't know	4	23	27
Grand Total	139	302	441

Chart 42. If you have become poorer than before, how much time your family will need to recover fully to pre lockdown position with your own resources and income?



3.15. Social Impact

Life without social mobility seems strange but this has been happening all over the world since March 2020 with varying degree. Consequently, it also forced economic activities to a halt. It must have enormous implications. Time and resource limited our scope. This survey research therefore aimed to cover few aspects of social and economic restriction which included impact on family and extended family, neighbors/community, employers etc. PATTAN also intended to measure perception of respondents about state institutions, officials and politicians. The following datasets throw sufficient light on the situation from this angle.

Question. Due to prolonged lockdown most people were trapped within homes for many weeks. Did it have any negative or positive impact on your family relation?

In response to this question, most (about 60%) people reported NEGATIVE impact, while only 9% said it had some POSITIVE impact. See Chart 43. On further probing on nature of negative impact about 43% male and 29% female respondents admitted that quarrels between husbands and wives increased, followed by fights between parent and children, and, between children. See Chart 44. But a large majority stated that relations with extended family members remained as they were before. See Chart 45. Similarly, about 90% noted that their relations with neighbors remained same. However, more women than men said their relation remained same, while 5% said their relations became tense with neighbors. Similar trend is visible in relations with employers. See Chart 47.

A female employee of a private firm in Multan expressed her feelings during a FGD - *“Relation with relatives remained tense because of their non cooperative behaviour during the difficult time.”*

Chart 43. Impact on immediate family relations (%).

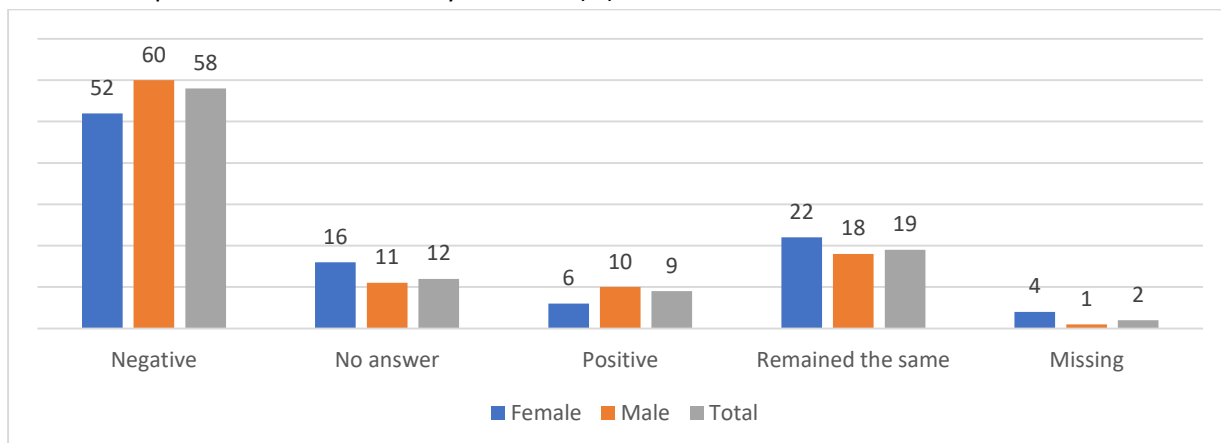


Table 39. Impact on immediate family relations (%).

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Negative	82	214	296
No Answer	25	39	64
Positive	9	36	45
Remained the same	34	64	98
Missing	7	3	10
Total	157	356	513

Chart 44. Nature of impact.

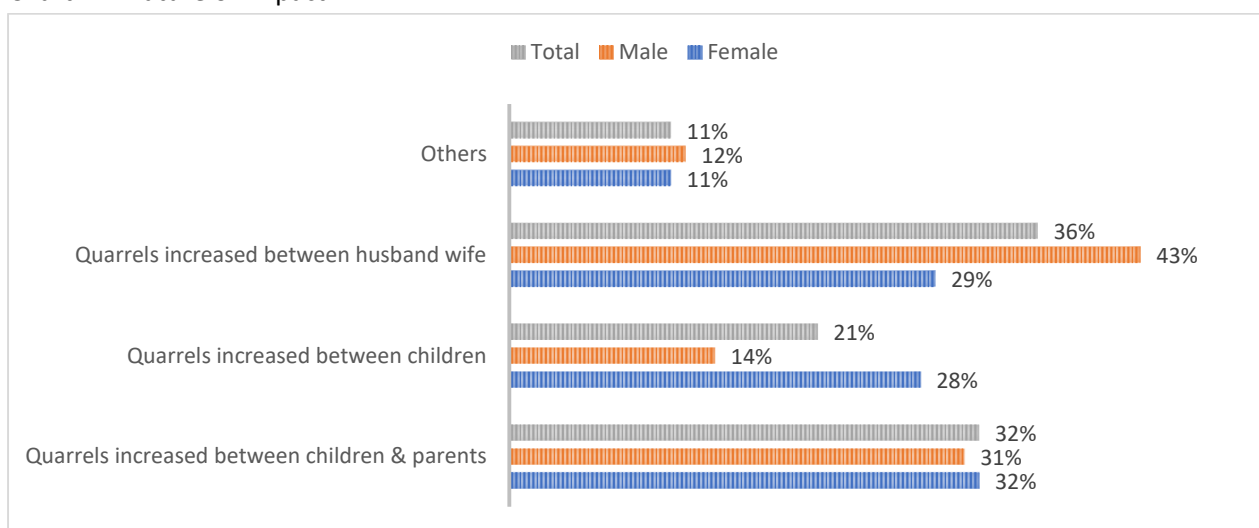


Chart 45. Impact on extended family members (%).

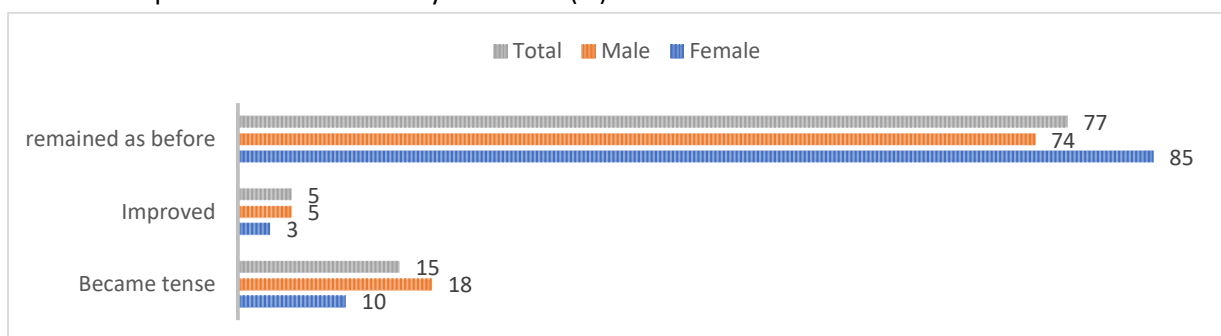


Chart 46. Relation with neighbors and community members (%)

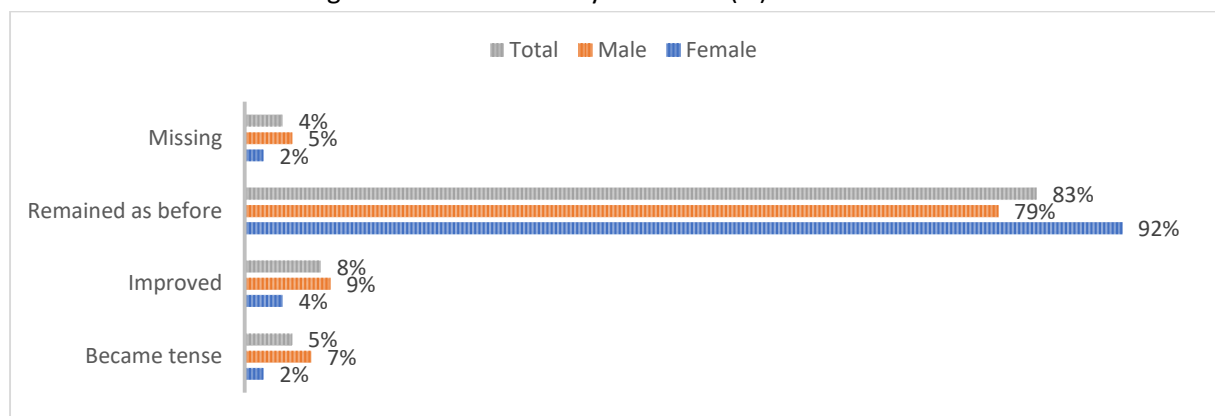
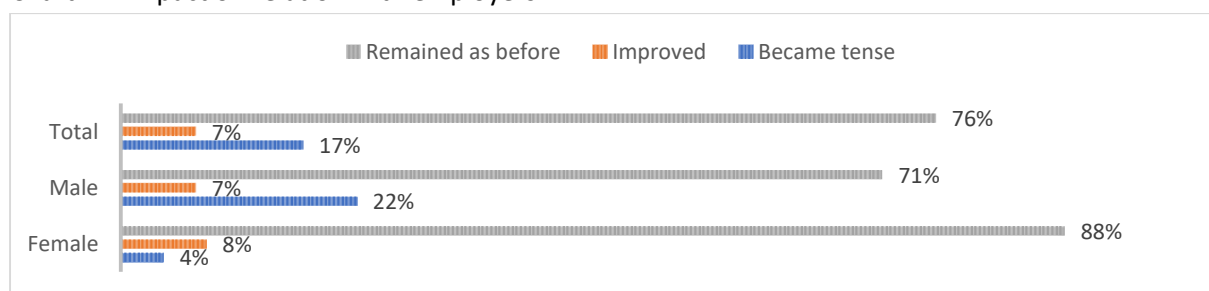


Chart 47. Impact on relation with employers



3.16. Impact on social behavior

About 10% respondents said the incidences of violence in their areas increased during the lock down, while about 50% said there was no change. Regarding incidences of theft and stealing, and, begging more than one-third respondents said they have increased. See Chart 48.

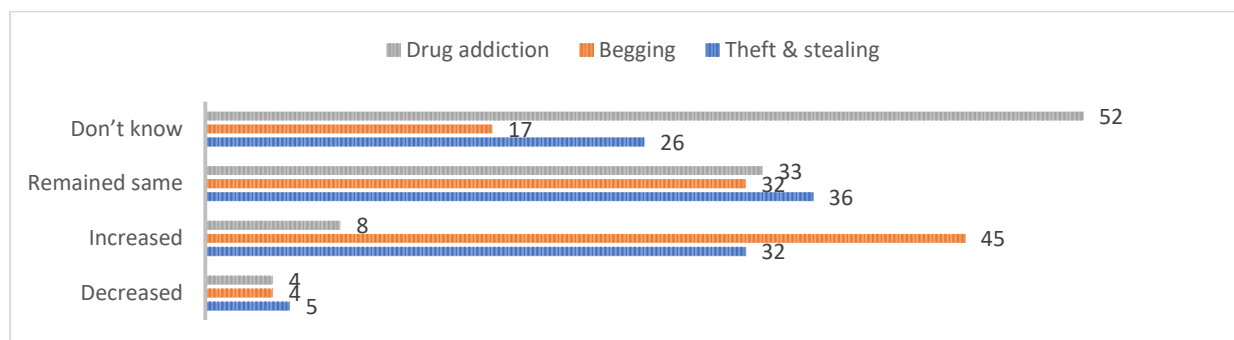
Table 40. Did incidences of violence increase in your area since the lockdown?

Responses	Violence
Don't Know	40%
No	48%
Yes	9%
Missing	3%

Table 41. Changes in social behavior (%).

Responses	Theft & stealing	Begging	Drug addiction
Decreased	5	4	4
Increased	32	45	8
Remained same	36	32	33
Don't know	26	17	52

Chart 48. Crime rate.



3.17. Who do you blame for the spread of Covid19?

As the research study was conducted at a time when second wave of Covid19 had already started and combined opposition was holding mass rallies across the country and media was busy holding talk shows, it was considered important to ask the FGD participants about its spread.

There were two main groups that they held responsible for the spread of the virus, the general public and/or the government. There were participants in every group who suggested that the virus is not as severe as media portrays, with a variety of conspiracies suggested, including that it is simply American propaganda to keep Pakistani children uneducated, or to suppress Islamic economies. In most discussions there were facets who argued against these conspiracies. The main perpetrators however were thought to be negligence on the part of the public, ineffective planning by the government and the protests being carried out by the opposition.

The following quotes of the participants reveal differentiation in their opinions and perceptions.

“People do not look after their health nor do they maintain hygiene because of lack of awareness. They go to protests. That’s why Corona spread”.
- Faisalabad, private firms (looms and textiles)

Religiosity was also quoted as a reason –

“Allah will protect them and still attended mosques.”
“Rush in mosques and markets without appropriate care led to the spread of virus.”-Multan, private firms (female)

The government was held responsible for not putting effective measures in place, and therefore the public had no option but to engage in activity that spread the virus.

“Until government helps us, we will not follow the SOPs and will come out for work.”
- Multan, private firms (kiln workers)

When asked about the non-compliance with SOPs most people cited poverty as the main reason, as people had to go out looking for work or risk starvation, or that their work was incompatible with SOPs.

“We work in looming industry where we cannot wash hands time and again. Also, we need to hold string with teeth which compels

us not to wear face mask”.

- Faisalabad, private firms (looming industry, female)

A lack of awareness and understanding was also presented as a reason since participants observed that educated rich people were often seen wearing masks. Another reason many of the participants gave was that SOPs go against their culture, to avoid seeming rude they do not maintain distance and do not wear masks. There was a section of the participants who said masks cause suffocation and that since the disease is simple hyped up by the media and no more severe than the simple flu, the masks are more dangerous than the virus, or who felt that Allah would protect them and thus it was not their responsibility to follow SOPs.

Very few of the participants knew anyone infected with corona, though there were a handful of corona related deaths in their circles, a neighbour, an uncle, a husband. They suggested this is due to the strong immune systems of the working classes and that rich people are getting sick due to their consumption of fast food.

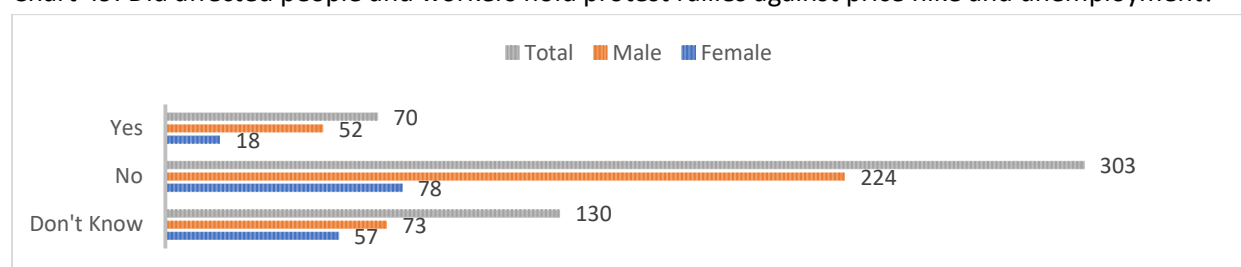
3.18. Civic and political impact

In the wake of lockdown, the affected people came out and held protest rallies against price-hike and termination of jobs. In order to gauge civic and political reaction, we asked the respondents and in response about 14% said the affected workers had held demos. See Table 43.

Table 42. Did affected people and workers hold protest rallies against price hike and unemployment?

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Don't Know	57	73	130
No	78	224	303
Yes	18	52	70
Missing	4	7	10
Total	157	356	513

Chart 49. Did affected people and workers hold protest rallies against price hike and unemployment?



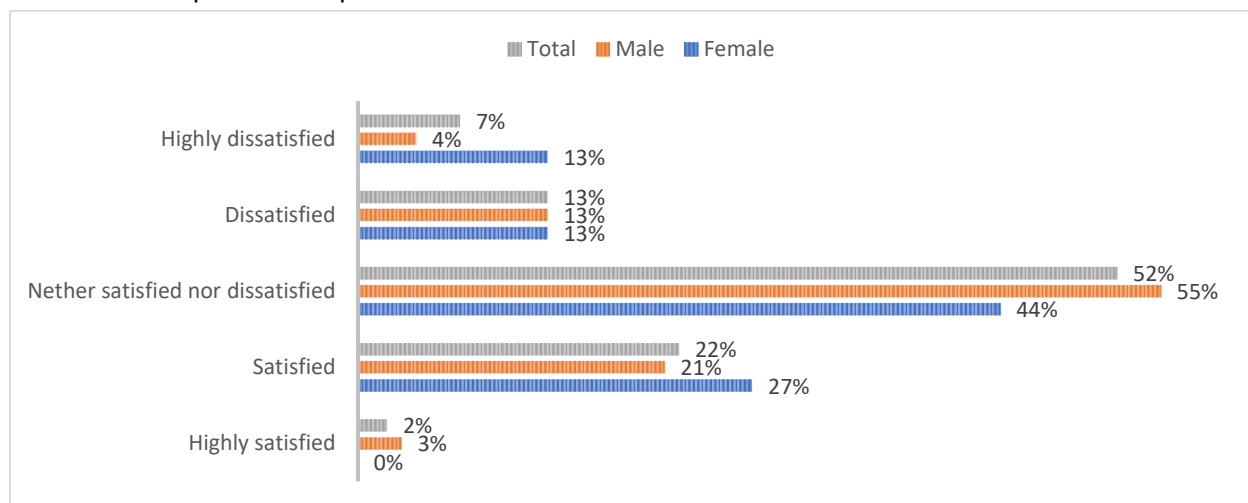
Protest rallies very often are reflection of anger. Therefore, respondents were asked to share their perception about performance of government officials and elected representatives. To our amaze, just 20% respondents were likely to be dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied while about 30% were found satisfied or highly satisfied. See Chart 50. However, a large percentage of men (61%) and women (38%) were found dissatisfied from elected MPs, while just about 3% fall in the category of satisfied. See Table 44.

Inserting a quote from a focus group discussion here seems to be appropriate.

“Imran khan should have ensured that his order was being implemented. The rate in utility store is not different from that of the ordinary shops. We are extremely dissatisfied with the government performance”

Faisalabad, private firms (loomings and textiles, female)

Chart 50. Perception about performance of Govt. officials.



The study shows that people’s interaction with MNA, MPAs and political parties remained non-existent. The participants of a focus group discussion would say this in unison –

“We read about them in the papers but did not meet any. Politicians only show up when it’s election time. One participant did interact with MNAs and MPAs but said - MNAs, MPAs came and wrote my name, took copy of my ID, phone number. I never heard anything from him since then. Only relatives helped each other”. FGD with private firms (kiln workers) in Multan.

A loom worker in Faisalabad would express his opinion about MNAs and MPAs

“The assistance announced by the government has been stolen by MNAs and MPAs, otherwise Imran Khan had announced much more than any other leader”.

-Faisalabad, Private firms (looms and textiles)

Yet, another participant looked into the issue from this angle -

“There is no authority of government, administration does not listen to the government. Imran khan himself is a good man but his coteries are dirty. Government needs to bring forward the sincere people.”

- Faisalabad, private firms (electrician, plumber)

Every participant agreed that lockdown had been one of the most difficult periods in their lives. With the expectation of one group of government employees who continued working and receiving salaries, every participant had lost their source of income. They therefore were all against a complete lockdown and suggested smart/local lockdowns instead. One participant noted that government instruction to lockdown the city after 6pm was particularly frustrating as he could see no sense in it.

Table 43. Perception about performance of MNA and MPA.

Responses	Female	Male	Total
Dissatisfied	60 (38%)	217 (61%)	277 (54%)
Satisfied	4 (2.5%)	11 (3%)	15 (3%)
Same as before	73 (46%)	115 (32%)	188 (37%)
No response	21 (13%)	12 (3%)	33 (6%)
Total	158	355	513

3.19. Impact on popularity of major leaders

An open-ended question was asked from men and women of the survey. 58 (11%) respondents mentioned names of about 30 politicians, which were local level leaders. About 12% did not like any politician and 21% refused to answer. After excluding these categories of responses, we calculated ranking of the following leaders. Imran Khan the current Prime Minister of Pakistan is highly likely to be the most popular leader with 62% liking, followed by former Prime Minister Mr. Nawaz Sharif with 29% rate. Less than a dozen people mentioned names of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Shahbaz Sharif.

Table 44. Ranking of favorite living politicians after excluding other categories of responses.

Name	Female	Male	Total
Imran Khan	60.7%	62.8	62%
Nawaz Sharif	25%	29.7	28.7%
Bilawal Bhutto	12.5%	4%	5.6%
Shahbaz Sharif	1.7%	3.5%	3.1

Chart 51. Ranking of popularity of major living politicians (%) inclusive of all categories of responses.

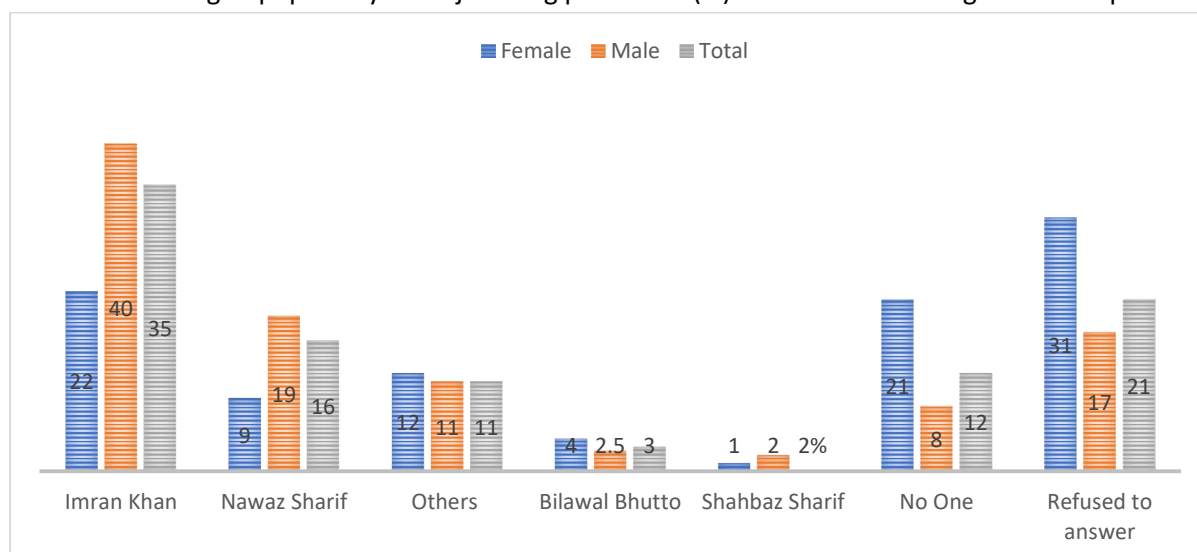


Table 45. Favorite living politician inclusive of all other categories of responses.

Name	Female	Male	Total
Imran Khan	34 (22%)	144 (40%)	178 (35%)
Nawaz Sharif	14 (9%)	68 (19%)	82 (16%)
Others	19 (12%)	39 (11%)	58 (11%)
Bilawal Bhutto	7 (4%)	9 (2.5%)	16 (3%)
Shahbaz Sharif	1	8 (2%)	9 (2%)
No One	33 (21%)	28 (8%)	61 (12%)
Refused to answer	49 (31%)	60 (17%)	109 (21%)
Total	157	356	513

3.20. Finding a way forward

Covid19 and enforcement of lockdown caused havoc all over the world including Pakistan. Unemployment increased manyfold as most sectors of industry and businesses were to be closed. This not only deepened poverty but also threw millions of lower middle classes below the poverty line.

A solution could come from experts, but people must also be involved in finding a way forward. Not [interestingly], no one of our respondents suggested any structural change nor demanded improvement in compliance with labour laws. Most of them mentioned general measure like control hoarding & inflation (33%), create jobs (30%) and provide loans to poor (26%) etc. Strangely, very few (4%) said improve the governance etc.

Chart 52. In your view what should Govt. do to reduce poverty in Pakistan?

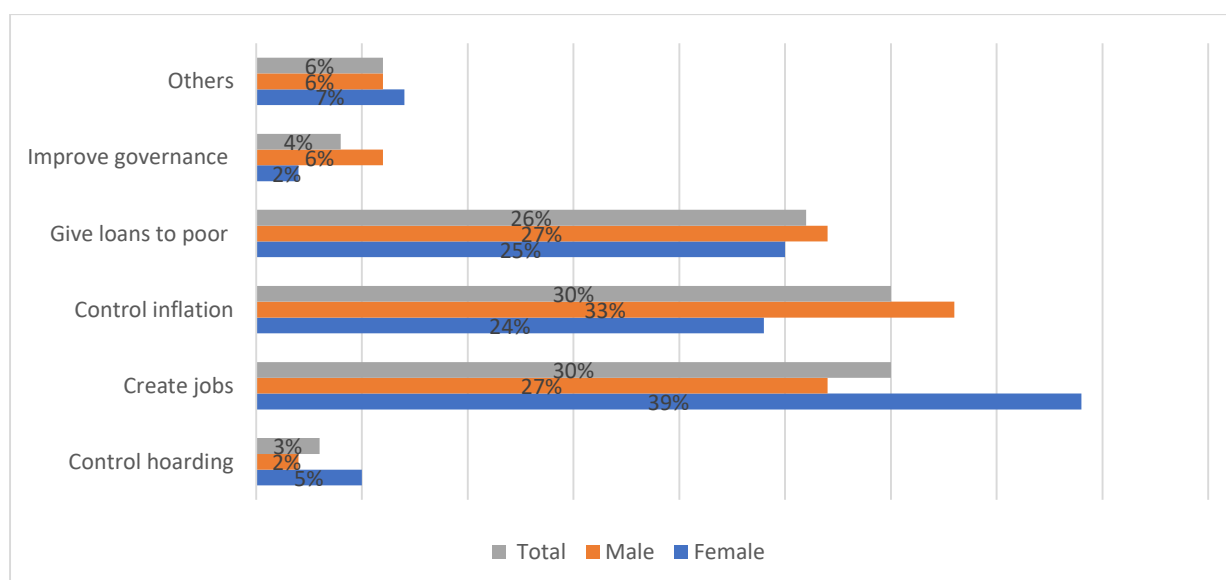
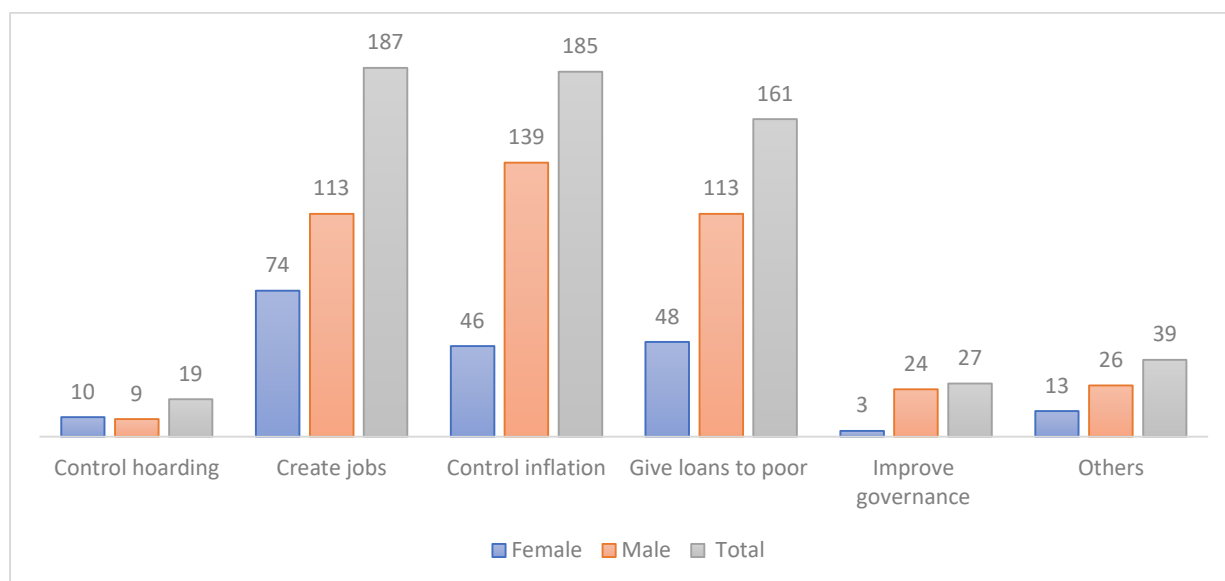


Chart 53. In your view what should govt do to reduce poverty in Pakistan?



4. Conclusions and recommendations

Though the respondents have strongly suggested to the government to end poverty, they seem to believe that it could be done by improving governance and by the existing political leadership. It also appears from the survey research that the working classes particularly those who belong to informal sectors of economy lack social and civil platforms. They are being ignored even by formal sector trade unions and civil society groups. As a result, there is no organized labour movement in the country. They are also being isolated by political parties, which was not the case in the past. For instance, the founding father of Pakistan Muhammad Ali Jinnah was elected president of All India Postal Union Association, which had 70,000 members in 1925. And in the first Constituent Assembly about 7% MPS had some form of relationship with trade union movement. The general election 1970 increased the percentage to 15%. Today there is hardly anybody from trade union in our assemblies. Therefore, in order to improve labour governance in the country, the working people must be assisted to organise themselves.

As the survey data shows that protest rallies took place only in Faisalabad and Jhang, where Labour Quomi Movement has been active for the last 15 years, response of district level officials was better than rest of the surveyed districts. Therefore, state officials appear to be more responsive where labour is more organized and more vocal.

We urge

- Civil society in general and trade unions in particular to reach out to workers of informal economy, and organise them.
- Political parties should engage the marginalized and vulnerable working people and they should develop mechanisms for this purpose.
- The state officials at district, province and national level must be trained and facilitated to reach out to communities and neighborhoods.
- And above all, neglected communities must find ways and means to raise their voices.
- Awareness raising about diseases and preparedness/risk reduction culture must be inculcated.

5. Analysis of Focus Group Discussions

The Focus Group Discussions were conducted in the first week of December 2020 when second wave of Covid19 was rising. Moderators and Notetakers were therefore instructed how to observe SOPs during the conduct of FGDs. PATTAN also provided some of them with face masks and bottles of sanitisers or small amount of money to buy these items for themselves and for the participants.

In total PATTAN trained and experienced teams conducted 19 FGDs, six with female groups and 13 with male groups. One FGD was held with minorities in Multan. For district and profession wise distribution see Annexure 1.

Focus group discussions were carried out with working class people from Islamabad, Faisalabad and Multan to understand the impact of Covid-19 and its corresponding lockdown on this socio-economic class.

The participants were asked about the responsibility for the spread of Covid-19. There were two main groups that they held responsible for the spread of the virus, the general public and/or the government. There were participants in every group who suggested that the virus is not as severe as media portrays, with a variety of conspiracies suggested, including that it is simply American propaganda to keep Pakistani children uneducated, or to suppress Islamic economies. In most discussions there were facets who argued against these conspiracies. The main perpetrators however were thought to be negligence on the part of the public, ineffective planning by the government and the protests being carried out by the opposition.

“People do not look after their health nor do they maintain hygiene because of lack of awareness. They go to protests. That’s why Corona spread”.

- Faisalabad, private firms (looms and textiles)

Religiosity was also quoted as a reason, since people feel that Allah will protect them and still attended mosques.

“Rush in mosques and markets without appropriate care led to the spread of virus.”

-Multan, private firms (female)

The government was held responsible for not putting effective measures in place, and therefore the public had no option but to engage in activity that spread the virus.

“Until government helps us, we will not follow the SOPs and will come out for work.”

- Multan, private firms (kiln workers)

When asked about the non-compliance with SOPs most people cited poverty as the main reason, as people had to go out looking for work or risk starvation, or that their work was incompatible with SOPs. *“We work in looming industry where we cannot wash hands time and again. Also, we need to hold string with teeth which compels us not to wear face mask”.*

- Faisalabad, private firms (looming industry, female)

A lack of awareness and understanding was also presented as a reason since participants observed that educated rich people were often seen wearing masks. Another reason many of the participants gave was that SOPs go against their culture, to avoid seeming rude they do not maintain distance and do not wear masks. There was a portion of the participants who said masks cause suffocation and that since the disease is simple hyped up by the media and no more severe than the simple flu, the masks are more dangerous than the virus, or who felt that Allah would protect them and thus it was not their responsibility to follow SOPs.

Very few of the participants knew anyone infected with corona, though there were a handful of corona related deaths in their circles, a neighbour, an uncle, a husband. They suggested this is due to the strong

immune systems of the working classes and that rich people are getting sick due to their consumption of fast food.

Every participant agreed that lockdown had been one of the most difficult periods in their lives. With the expectation of one group of government employees who continued working and receiving salaries, every participant had lost their source of income. They therefore were all against a complete lockdown and suggested smart/local lockdowns instead. One participant noted that government instruction to lockdown the city after 6pm was particularly frustrating as he could see no sense in it.

“Markets are forced to close after 6 pm. Does the virus come out after 6 pm?”

Faisalabad, private firms (looming and textiles, female)

They all also suggested stricter enforcement of SOPs that would allow safety without the loss of business. Many suggested that the starvation resulting from a second lockdown would be more detrimental than Corona.

“Government should punish those who violate the SOPs. Inflation should lessen so that people can remain in their home. When people relax, their immune system is stronger and they will defeat corona.”

Faisalabad, private firms (looming and textiles)

Most participants described their household as poorer than before.

“Before corona at least we would have bread to eat, now there is no bread”

Faisalabad, private firms (looming and textiles, female)

As mentioned, everyone lost their source of income, whether they were the business owner (barbers, mechanics) or employees. Though some managed to find small ways to earn that was in line with government regulations, the mechanic made house visits without interacting with the customer, some spun thread at home, this was a small respite, but every participant had to make use of any saving they had and many had to further still take out loans from family or neighbours which has left them in debt.

The health of the participants was also affected as many were too afraid of being infected to go to the hospitals. They said that government hospitals were busy with Corona, so they had to contact private practitioners or self-medicate from pharmacies, all of whom had increased their prices. Almost every participant said that due to reduced income, they reduced food intake which affected their health.

“Because we’ve decreased our food intake we experience a low BP and depression”

Faisalabad, private firms (looming and textiles, female)

The regular medication of other family members like diabetes, heart patients or high blood pressure was interpreted and conditioned to availability of money.

“During lock down my platelets began to fall down which still happens. Physician advised to maintain a proper diet but we can’t maintain a proper diet due to debt and inflation”.

Faisalabad, private firms (looming and textiles, female)

A few said their relatives and siblings were providing medications for their parents. Home remedies were also used as an alternative to expensive medication. Two stated that relatives went to hospital for regular check ups and were diagnosed with Corona and charged 20,000.

The education of the children was severely impacted. Some participants suggested that as many as half of the neighbourhood children would not be returning to school and were instead looking for labour work. The extended time that children were at home meant more meals to pay for and more time spent trying to look after them in small houses often resulted in quarrels in the household. Many started playing in the streets since the school routine was finished, which led to quarrels in the neighbourhood. A significant complaint was that private schools were still charging fees. As a result, many parents removed their children and enrolled them in government schools instead. It is agreed by all the participants that online education has not worked. For people in this socio-economic class, devices on which to access the material were too expensive. One parent did appreciate the efforts made by teachers to share homework via Whatsapp.

“Children had no understanding or practice of online education and neither did their teacher’s”.

Faisalabad, private firms (electrician, plumber)

Social life has also been affected by the virus and its corresponding lockdown. Relations within the household were often tense during the lockdown. With the economic tension it was difficult to pay rent, provide enough food and thus there was no ability to help others in need. Relations with landlords and shopkeepers became worse due to rent payments and high prices. Extended families fought due to quarrels among the children who were going stir crazy stuck at home. There was a mixture between people saying that relations with neighbours improved as even though no one had much, they all helped each other, borrowing and lending essential items. Others stated the opposite saying they were so anxious about how to look after themselves they were unable to look after their community.

“Relation with relatives remained tense because of their non cooperative behaviour during the difficult time.”

-Multan, private firms (female)

The spare time of the participants was spent playing ludo or cards, watching TV or Tik-tok but more often than not, worrying about where the next meal is going to come from. Many said that the situation resulted in their depression. It was felt that incidences of theft and begging rose, as well as drug taking and the harassment of women.

It was very much felt that the price of essential items was increased. There were a few main groups who were held responsible by the participants, hoarders, shopkeepers and mainly the government. Whether it was hoarders or shopkeepers who were to blame, the participants said that the government should have better mechanisms for controlling them. Sellers do not follow the government price list and there is no one to check them so they get rich by keeping the profit.

“If government increases price by 5rps., market increases it to 15 rps. There is no check and balance on the parts of government, but hoarders must also look after the people”

- Multan, private firms (kiln workers)

One group blamed the previous governments support of the hoarders, lifting the blame from this government, another blamed facets of the government but not Imran Khan “Imran Khan is a good person”. All found the Sasta Bazaar initiative ineffective, either that they are selling at the same price as normal shops and the stock is not as good, or due to other shortcomings like a lack of sugar, inconvenient locations.

“The items in utility store are not worth eating, particularly flour. Also, one has to stand two hours in queue to get his/her chance.”

-Multan, Self-employed (vendor and hawker)

They were annoyed that to deal with inflation the government simply reduced the price of petrol, which they felt had no effect on their life. Additionally, suggested that Government must control price hike, provide employment and business opportunities rather than distributing rations or money which is not a long-term solution.

“When we go to shop and ask why the price is higher, the shopkeepers say, “had you not cast your vote to Imran Khan there would have no inflation”, but government says hoarders are hoarding. I don’t know who is responsible”

-Multan, Self-employed (electrician, plumber, motor mechanic, cobbler, barber)

“Imran khan should have ensured that his order was being implemented. The rate in utility store is not different from that of the ordinary shops. We are extremely dissatisfied with the government performance”

-Faisalabad, private firms (looming and textiles, female)

Coping mechanisms amongst the participants were similar. Loans were taken from friends, relatives or lenders. The household decreased their food intake and avoided buying non-essential items. Savings were used. And noble people in the villages helped as well. Many of the participants from Islamabad returned to their villages during this time hoping to save some money compared to the capital. The electricity bill was a significant contributor to the need to seek a loan. They said that a second lockdown

would be more detrimental than the first as there was no longer any cushion and they were all already in debt.

Interaction with MNA, MPAs and political parties was non-existent. The participants read about them in the papers but did not meet any. They said this was the level of interaction they were used too as politicians only show up when it's election time. One participant did interact with MNAs and MPAs but said;

"MNAs, MPAs came and wrote name, took ID copy, phone number but no avail. Only relatives helped each other"

- Multan, private firms (kiln workers)

When asked about sources of support for working people like them, no one was satisfied with the performance of the government. The financial aid given by the government was too little, too late and the process of distribution was not appropriate as people had to stand in long lines in the sun and SOPs were not followed. Most participants said that they had applied for government aid and not received it, there were some who had and were happy with the performance of the government though maintained there was room for improvement. It was suggested by some participants that the support the government announced for the poor was taken away by MNAs and MPAs.

"The assistance announced by the government has been stolen by MNAs and MPAs, otherwise Imran Khan had announced much more than any other leader".

-Faisalabad, Private firms (looms and textiles)

Philanthropists from some of the participants villages distributed packs of rations another supported widows in his area. Two participants families received the 12,000 promised by the government. A participant's ex-employer send 7,000 for two months. The Christian community praised the support they received from their church. Relatives who were in a position to help did what they could.

When asked about the lessons they have learned the overwhelming reply was to save better and look after their health more. While most agreed that it was necessary to take more care in following SOPs, they also acknowledged the difficulties in doing so. There were some hopeful sentiments saying that they learned that on our own humans are fragile and succeed only when part of a community to we should learn to listen, care for, respect and help each other.

The final question was about overall government satisfaction during the pandemic. With the exception of one, every group said that they were not satisfied with the performance of the government due to their inability to control the inflation, the shutting down of business and the lack of aid during the pandemic.

"There is no authority of government, administration does not listen to the government. Imran khan himself is a good man but his coteries are dirty. Government needs to bring forward the sincere people."

- Faisalabad, private firms (electrician, plumber)

The wanted medicines to be cheaper. They all requested better and more transparent allocation of aid and wished that the government provided more jobs. They said that the government should be more prepared for future disasters. They did not want businesses and educational institutions closed. They wanted to be cared for at home because they believed that injections were being used to kill people in the hospital.

"There is wide-spread perception and fear in the country that those infected with corona are murdered in hospital through injection. That's why people do not go for test. Government needs to provide health facility at home so that treatment of corona can be administered at home and the pressure on hospital be minimized as well"

- Faisalabad, private firms (electrician, plumber)

They said the current government initiatives are not enough and distributing rations or money is not a long-term solution. They shared that they campaigned and voted for PTI, who is failed to resolve their issues. They expressed that this government is not in support of poor. It was therefore suggested all parliamentarians contribute their salaries and reduce expenditures so that money could go to funds to

provide job opportunities to poor people. Government give skill trainings to children and teenagers, subsidized the basic necessities including basic food and medicines.

Some groups presented a mixture of reasons. One demanded that the government impose a full lockdown, provide free masks and initiate an awareness campaign. He said that he had been of the opinion that there is not corona until he said that Mecca and Medina were closed and then he realised that it was something serious. While the other's said that at most there should be smart lockdowns allowing most businesses to remain open. They all also emphasised that the public should follow the preventative measures laid out by the government. They understood that it was impossible for many people to follow these measures because they were forced to go out of their homes in search of work to be able to feed their families.

Most groups said that the government was using the oppositions protests as a scape goat for their decision to close schools. They were particularly frustrated at schools demanding fees despite closure. They wished for the previous government once again. Many participants spoke of Shahbaz Sharif effectively controlling dengue as a reason for dissatisfaction with this government. Many therefore said they would not be voting for PTI again despite some having campaigned for them during the previous elections. While most groups said that protests should not have been happening and were only exacerbating the situation with the virus, one group said that they would be joining the protests. Since they felt that so many of their community were already dying due to the difficult conditions, dying of corona was no worse. They requested the Imran khan resign.

In conclusion, the two main perpetrators of spreading the virus were thought to be public carelessness and government ineptitude. The same could be said of the non-compliance with SOPs, though poverty was cited as the offending reason. Lockdown has been a very difficult period in all the participants lives, even the ones who were continuing to work. Most had to take out loans to be able to feed themselves. As private schools still demanded their fees, children were permanently removed from them, favouring public schools instead. Household relations remained tense due to stress from the lack on employment and extended time at home. A major complaint was that on inflation which everyone felt the government had not been able to control. While some blamed the previous administrations support of hoarders, most felt that this government should have implemented more checks and balances. They felt left down by the lack of assistance provided and survived on limited rations made available by local philanthropists. Every participant felt that smart-local-lockdowns and better enforcement of SOPs were the only way to deal with a second wave, as a second lockdown would be detrimental to their wellbeing.

4. Does any member/s of your family receive cash support currently from govt?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, how many persons? [i] One. [ii] Two. [iii] Three. [iv] Four.		
5. Was any family member received govt support before Corona breakout?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, how many?		
6. Please tell us the names of the benefits you have been receiving. (Note: make request for seeing the cards)	[i] Social Security Card	[ii] EOBI Sahulat Card	[iii] Sehat Insaf Card
	[iv] Ehsaas Card	[v] BISP Card	[vi] Ehsaas Emergency Card
	Others: specify:		
7. Are you receiving or received any financial support (cash or in kind) from NGOs & others.	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, please mention name/s [i] [ii] [iii]		
8. Currently on average how much income you and your family members earn from all work/business/property/land each month?	[i] 15,000 -30,000. [ii] 31,000 – 40,000. [iii] 41,000 – 50,000. [iv] 51,000 – 60,000. [v] More then 60,000.		
Section 3: Assets			
1. Appliances, your HH has.	[i] Fridge. [ii. Microwave oven]. [iii. AC]. [iv. Cooler]. [v. Washing machine]. [vi. Sewing machine]. [vii. TV. [viii]. Other, specify:		
2. Vehicles, you own	[i] Cycle. [ii] Motorcycle. [iii]. Rikshaw]. [iv] Taxi. [v] Other, specify		
3. Other livelihoods	[i] Rent from land/house. [ii] Selling of milk. [iii] Remittances. [iv] Others, specify:		
4. House ownership	[i. Owned occupier]. [ii. Rented]. [iii] Free house given by employer]. If rented, what is the rent? PKR.		
5. Do you or your family members have bank account?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, how many of you have bank accounts? [].		
6. Does your family own agricultural land?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, how much is its value?		
7. Does your family own any urban property?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, how much is its value? [Rs.].		
8. Assets you own (jewelry)	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, how much is its value?		
9. Are you or your HH under any form of debt/loan?	[i] Yes. [ii] No.		
10. If yes, please tell us source and amount of loan/s.	Source	i.	ii.
	Amount		
	Purpose		
	Interest rate		

Section 4: Relation with civil society	
1. Are you member of trade union or association?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, please tell name:
2. Are you member of any local committee?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, please tell name:
3. Are you member of any political party?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, please tell the name:
4. Your favourite living politician.	
5. Do you read newspaper/s?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, please tell the name:
6. Favourite TV talk show/s (maximum 3)	1. 2. 3.
7. Do you use social media?	[i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes which one? [i. What's app]. [ii. Facebook]. [iii. Twitter]. [iv. Tik Tok]. [iv] Others, specify:
8. Do you have Internet connection?	[i] Yes. [ii] No.

Section 5: House and Household information

1. How many persons living with you?

Age group	Male	Female	Total
a) Less than 2 years old			
b) 3 – 5 years old			
c) 6 – 19 years old			
d) 20 – 35 years old			
e) 36 – 60 years old			
f) 61 and above			

2. Those who are working/earning what is the nature of their work

Nature of work	Male	Female	Total
a) Govt job			
b) Private job			
c) Self employed			
d) Home based work			
e) Others			
Total			

3. Education (how many are attending school/college?)

Age group	Male	Female
a) Just one		
b) Two		
c) Three		
d) Four		
e) Five		
f) Six		
g) None		
h) Total		

4. How many of your family members normally do paid work?

Age group	Male	Female
I. Just me		
II. Two		
III. Three		
IV. Four		
V. Five		
VI. Six		
VII. More than six		
Total		

5. Number of rooms: [i] One. [ii] Two. [iii] Three. [iv] Four. [v] Five. [vi] None.

6. Facilities at home

1. Water supply. [i] Yes. [ii] No.	2. Electricity. [i] Yes. [ii] No.
3. Natural Gas. [i] Yes. [ii] No.	4. Hand pump. [i] Yes. [ii] No.
5. Lawn. [i] Yes. [ii] No.	6. Toilet/bath. [i] Yes. [ii] No.

7. If you don't have natural gas connection, what do you use to cook food?

Section 6: Information about CNIC

- Does your family have NADRA [B] Form? [i] Yes. [ii] No.
- If yes, are all family members mentioned on it? [i] Yes. [ii] No. [iii] Don't Know.
- How many of your HH members have CNIC?

18 years old and above	Numbers	CNIC Holders	Numbers
I. Males		Male CNIC holder	
II. Females		Females CNIC Holders	

Section 7: Observation of SOPs (wearing face mask, washing hands, keeping physical distance, not shaking hands, not embracing, not drinking water from same glass).

- To what extent do you believe that corona infection is a killer disease? [i] To a large extent. [ii] To some extent. [iii] To a little extent. [iv] Not at all.
- If answer is 'to a little extent' or 'not at all' then please tell us the reason.
- How strictly your HH has been observing SOPs? [i] Very strictly. [ii] Strictly. [iii] Only sometime. [iv] Not at all.
- If answer is 'only sometime' or 'not at all' then please tell the reason.

Section 8: General Impact of corona and lockdown

1. Please also tell us what kind of new difficulties did you and your family face due to Corona breakout and lockdown?

i.	
ii.	
iii.	
iv.	
v.	

2. Please rank the above-mentioned difficulties in order of impact e.g. duration and cost.

First	
Second	
Third	
Fourth	
Fifth	

5. Government introduced the lockdown in late March 2020, ended it in early May 2020 and it is being reimposed again. What was the most difficulty time (month) for you and your family since then?

	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
I. Most difficult										
II. Difficult										
III. A little difficult										
IV. Least difficult										
V. Not difficult										

Section 9: Economic Impact of Covid19 and Lockdown

1. Please just tell us about your or your family's experience of Corona related lockdown. To what extent it was devastating for you and your family? [i] To a very large extent. [ii] To a large extent. [iii] Somewhat moderately. [iv] To a little extent.
2. If it has been devastating, could you please explain in what way? [i] I was sacked from my job. [ii] My employer closed his/her business. [iii] I had to close my business/work. [iv] My income dropped. [v] Others, specify:
3. If your earnings have decreased, could you please roughly tell us how much? [i] About one-third. [ii] About half. [iii] About two-third. [iv] Almost all. [vii] Not at all.
4. It is assumed that due to lockdown and ban on travel, the usages of cell phone and internet increased. Do you agree with this observation? [i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, give examples.

5. If your income was reduced or you were sacked from work, how did you fulfil your and family needs?

a. Reduced food/fruit intake.	b. Used our savings.
c. Stopped buying non-essential things.	d. Sold some family assets.
e. Started a new business.	f. Borrowed money from friends/family.
g. Put family member/s on work.	h. Received cash/food from govt.
i. Put children on work.	j. Cash/food grant from NGOs.
k. Took children out of school.	l. Support from philanthropists/religious groups.
m. Borrowed money from money lender/employer.	
n. Others, specify:	

6. If you have reduced the food intake, could you please mention which food items you have stopped eating and whose intake you reduced.

Food Items	Stopped eating completely	Reduced intake	Increased
a. Mutton			
b. Beef			
c. Chicken			
d. Fish			
e. Eggs			
f. Fruits			
g. Vegetables			
h. Cooking oil			
i. Lentils			
j. Others, write name			

7. Did prices of essential food items increase in your area? [i] Yes. [ii] No. If yes, who do you think is mainly responsible. [i] Govt. [ii] Hoarders. [iii] Producers/manufacturers. [iv] Others, specify:

8. From where do you buy your food items? [i] Corner shops. [ii] Sabzi mandi. [iii] Utility store. [iv] Sahulat Bazara. [v] Others, specify?

9. How do you define your household economically?

	Very poor	Poor	Not poor
Before lockdown			
Currently			

10. If it is different than the pre-corona situation, what change has occurred? [i] Better than before. [ii] Worsened than before.

11. If you have become poorer than before. How much time your family will need to recover fully to pre lockdown position with your own resources and income?

[i] One – two years. [ii] Three – four years. [iii] Five – seven years. [iv] More than ten years. [v] Never.

12. In your view what should govt do to reduce poverty in Pakistan?

Section 10: Social implications (reciprocity, social cohesion and social interaction)

1. Due to prolonged lockdown most people were trapped within homes for many weeks. Did it have any negative or positive impact on your family relation? [i] Positive. [ii] Negative. [iii] Remained the same. [iv] No Answer.
2. If answer is 'positive' please tell us in what way?
3. If answer is 'negative' please tell us in what way? [i] Quarrels between children increased. [ii] Quarrels between children and parents increased. [iii] Quarrels increased between husband and wife. [iv] Others, specify.
4. Relation with extended family members [i] remained as before. [ii] Became tense. or [iii] Improved.
5. If there is a change, then please give us some example:
6. Relation with neighbors and community members [i] Remained same. [ii] Became tense, or [iii] Improved.
7. If there is a change, then please give us some example:
8. Relation with employer [i] remained same. [ii] Became tense. [iii] improved.
9. If there is a change, then please give us some example:
10. Due to lockdown most people had lots of free time. If you had this experience too, how did you use your free time?
11. Did incidences of violence increase in your area since the lockdown? [i] Yes. [ii] No. [iv] Don't know.
12. If yes, please give some example:
13. Did incidences of theft, stealing, crime [i] Increased. [ii] Decreased. [iii] Remained the same. [iv] Don't know.
14. If there is a change, then please give us some example:
15. Did begging in your area [i] Increase. [ii] decrease. Or [iii] remained same.
16. If there is a change, then please give us some example:
17. Did drug addiction [i] Increased or [ii] decreased. Or [iii] remained same.
18. If there is a change, then please give us some example:

19. Did affected people and workers hold protest rallies against price hike and unemployment? [i] Yes. [ii] No.
20. If yes, please give some example:
21. Performance of govt officials [i] improved or [ii] deteriorated or [iii] remained the same. (including bribery by officials)
22. If there is a change, then please give us some example:
23. Interaction of MPs and political parties [i] improved or [ii] deteriorated. Or [iii] remained the same with people in your area?
24. If there is a change, then please give us some example:

Section 11: Response

1. Did your family get any form of relief (cash and in kind) from anyone after the corona breakout?
[i] Yes. [ii] No.
2. If yes, who provided you of the following items?

	Cash (write amount)	Ration (write value)	Loan (write amount)	Others (mention)
a) Govt				
b) NGOs				
c) Political parties				
d) Religious parties				
e) Philanthropists				
f) Trade unions & associations				
g) Others				

3. Whose support in your opinion was the most adequate to your needs and distributed most efficiently, timely and transparently?

	Most adequate	Most efficient	Most transparent	Least adequate	Least efficient	Least transparent
a) Govt						
b) NGOs						
c) Political parties						
d) Religious parties						
e) Philanthropists						
f) Trade unions & associations						
g) Others						

4. To what extent you were satisfied or dissatisfied of govt performance regarding handling of corona and lock down?
- [i]. Highly satisfied. [ii]. Satisfied. [iii] Neither satisfied not dissatisfied. [iv] Dissatisfied. [v]. Highly dissatisfied.

Section 12: Psychological impact

Are you or your family members face any of the following condition/s?

Fear of corona infection & death	Anxiety	Frustration	Loneliness/boredom	Sleeplessness
[i] Yes. [ii] No.	[i] Yes. [ii] No.	[i] Yes. [ii] No.	[i] Yes. [ii] No.	[i] Yes. [ii] No.

Section 13: Impact on health

- Did any member of your family suffer from Covid19? [i] Yes. [ii] No.
- If yes, how many?
- If yes, how quickly they got well?
- Did you or your family members suffer from any new disease during the corona?
- Did cost on medicines and health increase or decrease? [i] Increased. [ii] Decreased. [iii] Remained same.
- If increased, approximately how much and on what?
- Did polio and other immunization services continue during the corona breakout? [i] Yes. [ii] No.
- Did MCH (زچہ بچہ) and other govt medical services continue during the corona breakout? [i] Yes. [ii] No.
- Were govt medical facilities remained available to your family members during the corona? [i] Yes. [ii] No.
- If yes, did you use them? [i] Yes. [ii] No.
- Did your HH's cost on medicines increased or decreased due to corona outbreak? [i] Increased. [ii] Decreased. [iii] Remained same.

Section 14: Lessons and suggestions

- What lessons you have learnt due to corona and lockdown?

[i].

[ii].

[iii].

- Second wave of infection has already started. To what extent are you prepared to cope with it and how you will you the lessons you have learnt?

6.2. ANNEXURE 2. Profession wise distribution of FGDs

Category of employment	ICT	Faisalabad	Multan
Govt (peons, sweepers, guards/chokidars, cleks, naib qasid etc.)	1 female FGD	1 male FGD	
Private firm (kilns, looms, garments, carpet, textile etc.)		1 male FGD 1 female FGD	1 female 1 male
Private firm (workers of NGOs, property dealers, private clinics, restaurants, hotels, schools, shops, stores etc.)	1 male GFD	1 female FGD	1 male 1 female
Self-employed (electrician, plumber, motor mechanic, cobbler, barber etc.)	1 male FGD	2 males FGD	1 male
Minorities			1 male/female
Self-employed (vendor/hawker), daily wagers	1 male FGD 1 female FGD	1 male FGD	1 male
Total (19)	5 (3+ 2)	7 (5 + 2)	7 (5 + 2)

6.3. ANNEXURE 3. Focus Group Discussion Themes and Probes

Focus Group Discussion Themes and Probes

Socio-economic impact of Covid19 on working people belong to informal sectors of economy November – December 2020

Opening of the discussion

1. **Who in your view is mainly responsible** for the spread (not origin) of Corona?

Probes: public, media, clerics, political leadership, government, all of us? And why do you say that?

2. To what extent **public is responsible** for its spread and why a large majority of people in don't observe SOPs? And why?

Probs: business, ignorance, religiosity, poverty, culture and attitudes. Give examples

3. Did anyone of your **family member/s got corona** infection and how did it affect your family?

4. **Lockdown:** What do you think about lockdown?

Probes: What options government had/has? It appears government had/has only three options – complete lockdown, smart or local level lockdown and no lockdown. What do you say and why? What priority in your view should be – life, well-being of people or income? Explain by examples of last lockdown.

5. **Status:** How do you define your household economically?

Probes: Last year and currently and next year. (use cards)

6. **Impact:** What impact on your income, health and education?

- a. **Economic Impact:** In what way (loss of job, loss of business etc.)? Give examples. Encourage participants to explain by examples.

- b. **Impact on health** and cost on medical treatment reduced or increased and why

- c. **Education:** How it impacted on the education of children?

- d. **Social Impact:** Relations within HH members and extended family members.

- e. Relations and reciprocity with community (neighbours, mohalla walay, relatives).

- f. Relations with employers.

- g. Interaction with and support from MNA, MPAs and political parties. Did they support you?

- h. Incidences of violence, theft, begging, bribery, drugs etc.
- i. How did you use of spare time?

7. **Shortage and increase in prices of essential food items. What do you say?**

Probes: who do you think is mainly responsible for price hike? Govt, hoarders, producers/manufacturers, all of them. Govt says it has taken many steps to reduce prices, but it has failed? In your view why? What should be done?

- a. Currently from where you buy your food items? (multiple replies allowed).

Probes: Corner shops, Sabzi mandi, Utility store, govt Sahulat Bazara etc. To what extent you are satisfied or dissatisfied from govt in this regard?

8. **Coping mechanisms:** Which months were **most difficult** and when situation became normal or less difficult for you and how did you cope?

Probes: How much your income reduced? What survival tools used? (savings, selling of assets, borrowed money from friends/relatives or employer, reduced food intake, sent family to village etc.). Started new business. What makes situation better or worse? Get examples.

9. **Sources of support:** who have been supporting you in these difficult times? Government cash grants, employers, NGOs, religious/political parties.

Probes: whose support was adequate and timely? Whose support was most delivered efficiently and not efficiently? Get examples.

- a. Did your union/association play any role during these difficult times? In what way? Give examples.

- b. Who in your view has helped the working people like you the most? Get examples and why?

10. **Risk Reduction:** Our country faces disasters of all kinds. In 2010 we had super floods, in 2005 we had massive earthquake, in other times we had drought and locust attack. Polio and dengue too are uncontrollable. Yet, **RISK REDUCTION** in our country remains poor. In your view why is it so?

Probes: give example of helmet, wearing of face mask etc. as examples of **RISK REDUCTION**. Who are responsible and why? Give examples.

11. What **lessons** you have learnt and to what extent are you **Prepared for current wave** to cope with the new wave? **Probes:** Get examples.

12. To what extent you are satisfied from govt's performance and opposition's role, from your MNA and MPA? What should government do? Get specific suggestions.