NAVIGATING GENDERED SPACE:
THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF LABOUR MARKETS IN PAKISTAN

This dissertation is submitted to the University of Cambridge for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
by

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Statement

I declare this dissertation is my own, unaided and unpublished work and does not exceed 80,000 words excluding the bibliography. I further state that no part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or is being currently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University of similar institution.
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Abstract

Globalization has transformed labour markets around the world leading to an upsurge of women in the waged workforce and establishing them as the backbone of manufacturing industry. But globalizing forces are uneven and have disparate impacts. I explore why an influx of women workers is not found in some, more traditional, societies. I explore linkages between social, economic and political processes and fundamentals of inclusion and exclusion within spaces and places.

Women's absence from industrial settings in Pakistan corresponds to an institutionally licensed general deficiency of women in the formal workforce. Pakistan’s labour market is deeply segmented and distinct tiers bifurcate the secondary segment. All skills, even those like stitching that globally are presumed “women’s work”, are given male attributes. Women are considered incapable of performing skills equal to men, raising barriers of entry even within the secondary segment. Homeworking women, who engage in industrial waged-work, operate in a monopsony. Capital exploits labour market monopsonies and deepens women’s precarious positions.

Gender prohibitive forces of this society manifest in women’s scarcity in industrial settings. I explore forces and processes of inclusion and exclusion that construct gender prohibitive space. Examining the nature of inclusion and exclusion can reveal particular societal hierarchies in place, indicate which traditions and beliefs have institutional sanction and are held valuable, and which may be displaced over time. The gendering of spaces - in the home, streets, transportation, factories - is a vital feature constraining women's position in the workforce. I assess how different forces of discrimination including mind-body dualism manifested as public-private space interact and intersect to impact women’s navigation of spaces. I examine mobility as a pursued rather than assured “good” - an enabling factor that allows those that have mobility, economic and social advancement.
“I can not raise my head and look up. I start at 9 [am] and sit at a machine and work till 1 [pm]. That’s four hours at once. But when my neck really hurts because I have been bent over the sewing machine for so long, and I do look up, it could be that I look at a man - they’re all around - and what if, just by chance, I catch someone’s eye? What if he does something - winks at me or leers at me, or worse, talks to others about me looking at him? And they start saying “I like looking at men”? So I try not to move, or raise my head and look up.”

September 2016, at Lahore, Pakistan

Conversation with Nusrat, age 23, a female garment factory worker.
Part One

Chapter I

Introduction

I. 1 Introduction

“Nothing happens until something moves”
Albert Einstein (circa, 1915)

Albert Einstein was five years old when he first saw a compass. It was one of the two “wonders” that would deeply affect his early years. Einstein was mystified with invisible forces that could move a needle, and with it, help people navigate through space. Some of the greatest scientists of all time have studied the nature of movement in spaces. Galileo (circa 1610) deduced that a body in motion will move until a force causes it to stop. Newton (1687) determined that momentum of a body corresponds to the magnitude of the force applied upon it. And Einstein simply believed a state of “nothingness” results without movement.

The ability to navigate spaces depends on a body’s power to move. The quality of navigation depends also on the forces – visible or hidden – that act within that space and construct and shape its nature. The relationship between spaces, forces and mobility is thus intertwined and complex. In some spaces forces stimulate enormous movement. They catalyse navigation within and between place – continents, countries, cities, towns, villages. But in others the slightest motion is challenged.

The 23-year-old girl in the prescript describes possible repercussions from the most minute of movements – shifting the angle of her head, lifting her eyes. In the space she inhabits, physical motion of any kind is risky and can unfurl a multitude of reactions. The smallest action can damage her reputation, degrade her position in
society, affect the social standing of her family, manipulate and alter her very identity. She, and others like her, must choose either to succumb to the mechanisms that control the micro-movement of her body, or be subject to potential backlash if she defies them. Her choice, if it can be called a choice, will damage her either way.

Throughout the global south, women have entered paid work in ever-larger numbers. Over the last 30-40 years, global industries have shifted from industrialized to industrializing countries to take advantage of the movement of women into the workforce. But all women cannot make these movements. Women’s entry into the waged workforce is intertwined with the forces that enable their mobility in specific spaces. This thesis explores some of the challenges, discriminations and dynamics of contemporary, but traditional labour markets and the importance of gender within their workforce. By examining these identities and landscapes I analyze forces that allow or disallow women to navigate space and improve their economic status by working in industry.

1.2 Globalization and the influx of Women

Forces of globalization have shaped vast transformations around the world. Generally defined as an increase in world integration, the process of globalization has reshaped economic structures, and cultural, social and political systems. Four basic aspects of globalization are: trade and transactions, capital and investment movements, migration and movement of people, and the dissemination of knowledge (IMF report, 2000). Economic globalization primarily comprises the global spread of production and finance, markets and technology, organizational regimes and institutions, corporations and labour (Gao, 2000). These denote growing economic integration and interconnection of national, regional and local economies throughout the world through an increase in the international movement of goods, services, technologies and capital (International Business Report, 2009).

Economic globalization has transformed national and international institutions, the markets of commerce and trade, manufacturing and production, technology and communication as well as the labour markets that correspond to them, in
unprecedented ways. Barriers of entry to markets across the world have lessened, prompting an on-going geographic reorganization of production, and a spatial shift of manufacturing industries from advanced capitalist countries to industrializing countries (Harvey 2010). One of the most dramatic transformations of the labour market in the last three decades has been the global mobilization of women (Wolf, 2013) who, Harvey (2010) argues, now form a majority of the global manufacturing workforce.

The enormous flow of women into paid work in the global economy is in fact one of the greatest social and economic transformations in the industrializing parts of the world (Wright, 2006; Caraway, 2007; Harvey, 2010; Wolf 2013). During the last decades of the 20th century, industrialization generated millions of new factory jobs in developing countries. Although men historically outnumbered women in formal sector work in manufacturing, women have reached near parity or beyond in many countries in the short space of time of just one or two decades. Women now constitute a significant portion of the working class in developing countries, especially those that have experienced dramatic industrial expansion based on export-oriented growth, and these labour markets are increasingly feminized (Pun, 2004, 2007; Wright, 2006; Caraway, 2007; Harvey, 2010). However scholars have long argued that the process of globalization is uneven and the developments of globalization, and spatial spread of industry and manufacturing has not affected women of all industrializing countries equally. In the same vein (Hendriks, 2018), argues that economies are not automatically inclusive and if market forces are left unchecked, they do not always expand opportunities for women.

Gender is increasingly recognised as an important analytic category within geographic scholarship. Significant debates on productive/reproductive labour, the devaluation of feminised labour and occupational segregation have developed through research on gender and work (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Glick 1991; Anker, 1997; Cejka and Eagly, 1999; Carr and Chen, 2004; Massey, 2005; Pun, 2004, 2007; Elson, 1999, 2009). Feminist literature (Crenshaw, 1989; McDowell 1996, 1999; McCall 2005; Ritzer, 2007; Acker 2012; Cole, 2016; Geist and Myers 2016) draws on diverse
theoretical approaches to bring together the social and physical dimensions of
gendered work, along with an increasing appreciation of theories of intersectionality -
the interlinks of gender with other social categories of difference such as class and
ethnicity/race. While renewed academic interest in work, particularly growing
precariousness and inequalities, is encouraging, it often glosses over such debates by
focusing on waged labour or particular occupations/sectors, which can obscure
movement in and out of work, as well as the wider issues of gender inclusion and
gender exclusionary stimuli.

Examining the nature of inclusion and exclusion in a society highlights forces and
processes that are often loaded with economic, social, cultural and political
significance (Aadne, and Fløtten 2001; Mathieson et.al. 2008; Rawal, 2008).
Fundamentals of inclusion and exclusion often reveal particular societal hierarchies in
place, how these places are attained, and indicate which traditions and beliefs are held
valuable and which may be supplanted over time. Ascribed identities – notably
gender – are often a source of exclusion or inclusion at the workplace and commonly
manifest in the division and growth of labour markets along the lines of gender (Carr
et. al. 2004).

Wolf, (2013) argues that the rise in female labor force participation is one of the most
profound labor market transformations of the past century, and numerous studies have
examined this phenomenon. Studies have shown how women are included in the
labour markets of industrializing countries and how capital manages to profit from
women’s unique situations within the social division of labour at work and at home.
Multitudes of women are encouraged to enter the manufacturing industry for
example, and in the sweatshops of the so-called developing world it is women who
bear the brunt of capitalist exploitation and whose talents and capacities are utilized to
the extreme under conditions of male domination (Harvey 2010). Studies (Pun, 2005,
2007; Wright, 2006; Lynch 2007 etc.) show how the methods used for inclusion of
women in the workplace are a critical feature for their continued dominance and
subservience, and how existing institutions, societal customs, and norms are
employed by capital to play their part in the practices of production.
Examinations of labour market exclusion often explore how women are excluded from the more prestigious, higher paying jobs within organizations and workplaces. However, few studies examine the processes that prevent women from entering the labour market at all. This is where this thesis makes its contribution - as a study of a workforce that operates in gender-prohibitive spaces.

This study develops an analytical framework capable of addressing the formation and construction of labour-intensive labour markets, and the dynamics and processes of gender inclusion and exclusion that operate within them. This is done by focusing on the garment industry in Pakistan and the institutions that shape and structure it.

The nature of gender inclusive and gender-exclusionary spaces can expose the dominant socio-political and traditional discourses of a particular labour market. Although the quality of their employment may be questionable, and the benefits for individual women are often short-lived, many women in industrializing countries have to some extent been able to benefit from inclusion as paid workers in the global economy (Carr et. al. 2004). For example these women gain access to their own income and may enjoy greater independence and freedom. In gender exclusionary spaces however, a great many barriers constrain women from achieving these benefits. In these spaces, formal and informal institutions impact economic systems within which the workforce operates and regulate social structures that determine women’s participation capabilities (Carr et. al. 2004; Rawal, 2008). Crucially these women may be denied mobility to navigate space. In these places traditional barriers still prevent women from going out of their homes to work; and labour markets are segregated distinctly along lines of gender.

This study provides an opportunity to examine the diversity within labour-intensive markets, economies and societies. “Female workers” are not homogeneous groups and globalization affects different groups of female workers differently (Carr et. al. 2004). Pakistan provides a stark illustration. In Pakistan, despite manufacturing now constituting the second most important sector for employment in the country (after agriculture), women are conspicuous by their absence from this sector, especially in the formal workplace. A study of the lived realities of this subsection of Pakistani women, the institutions that influence their experiences, the construction of their
particular and atypical labour market, and the forces that structure the spaces they inhabit provides an opportunity to examine the diversity within these economies.

Research of a traditional society may raise questions regarding the influence of religion on prevailing societal patterns. Pakistan is a Muslim majority country with 97% Muslim population. To an outsider, and indeed sometimes from within also, Pakistan’s culture and traditions may be thought to draw characteristics from Islam. Hence, women’s scarcity in the formal industrial labour market may be assumed to be a following of religious practices. However preliminary research of female participation rates of the garment industry in other Muslim majority countries invalidates Islam as an overriding or credible factor that controls female work patterns in Muslim countries. For example Muslim majority countries like Bangladesh, Indonesia and Malaysia have high rates of female participation in the garment industry; clearly Islam alone is insufficient to explain the difference.

As a group, women in Pakistan’s garment industry embody many of the inequities, adversities and mechanics of contemporary, albeit traditional, societies and are well suited to provide an insight into these identities and environments. They enable an exploration of the interface between global market forces and Pakistani women. The labour market of Pakistan provides a striking spatial structure to investigate forces of gender inclusion and exclusion. Institutional constructions of the labour market exhibit formal and informal sanctions impacting women’s advancement. Women’s movement between labour market segments and tiers is contrived. Precarious work patterns exist and labour markets are segmented along the lines of gender. Forces constructing “masculine” and “feminine” spaces restrain women’s movement at every scale.

Research has largely focused on forces that have mobilized women towards paid employment but forces that prevent and prohibit them from entering the labour market have received much less attention. The relatively negligible presence of Pakistani women in industrial settings may have justified their academic neglect in the past. However the qualitative changes both in their relative growth despite barriers, the necessity to recognize the constitution of these barriers, and the hidden nature of their employment as manifested in homeworking women on the margins,
calls for new research on this group. Alongside the political urgency to understand the ways in which these women engage with global market forces, the focus on their lived realities and the alteration in their socio-political behaviour also sheds light on the societal transformations taking place within this society.

Academic inquiry seems to have largely dismissed Pakistan’s female workforce and their experiences as either not distinctive or simply of being of little interest. Studies and insights gained from other countries’ garment industry workers clearly do not help to understand the industrial environments of Pakistan’s labour market. There is an urgent need to explore and understand the lived realities of women working in labour intensive industry in Pakistani society. Neglect of this group in academic research is a problem. On the one hand, ignoring the individual challenges they may encounter limits our understanding of the challenges and problems these women may face. And on the other, we may be missing a great opportunity to understand the dynamics and distinctions that exist within a labour intensive market and to build theory which includes these insights.

1.3 Focus community

These issues are analyzed in this thesis with reference to a subsection of Pakistani women. Within the secondary segment of Pakistan’s industrial labour market, I examine garment factory women and homeworkers. These workers comprise the low-income class (just over $2/day) but whose income opportunities may often be inconstant, unpredictable and precarious. The women of this class/socio-economic background live in the urban cities of Lahore and Karachi. Most reside either in the city outskirts where housing is cheaper, or very close to the industrial centres where commuting to work is economical. The women (and men) of this group have low levels of education and may or may not have graduated high school or even attained primary/elementary schooling. Most of these women learn stitching within their homes but, if some larger garment factories employ them to stitch, they may be trained to operate industrial machines at the factories.

The garment industry provides a model to examine “women’s work” in South and South East Asia. Asia is often referred to as the garment factory for the world (ILO,
2015). In 2014, the developing Asia–Pacific region accounted for almost 60% of world garment textile and footwear exports. Asian economies comprise seven of the world’s top ten garment exporters, 10 of the top 20, and employ more than 43 million women and men in developing Asia (ILO 2017).

Since the 1970s with the global economy in an era of market regulation and growing labour market flexibility, new technologies, new labour control systems and reformed forms of work organization have transformed labour market patterns and made them more “feminized” (Caraway, 2007; Standing, 2009). Feminization of a particular labour market arises because available employment and labour options tend increasingly to associate production activities, rightly or wrongly, with women. The ensuing pattern of employment tends to result in an increasing proportion of women occupying the jobs of these labour markets (Chaudhry and Sher, 2014).

According to the World Trade Organization (WTO) 2014 report, the greater the share of garments, textiles and electronics in a country’s exports, the greater the employment-creating impact of trade has been for women. This is clearly the case in Asia where the garment industry is driven mainly by a female workforce. For example, around 75% or more of the workers in garments, textiles, footwear (GTF) production in Cambodia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam are women. In Bangladesh, more than 85% (World Bank 2017) and in Sri Lanka almost 90% (Lynch, 1999) of garment factory workers are women. Given these high rates of female participation Pakistan stands out for its low ratio. Pakistan’s female employment rate within the garment industry is only 28% and is the lowest in the garment-making world (ILO, 2017). Additionally, the gender pay gap in Pakistan is also the highest in the garment-making world (66.5 %)\(^1\) (ILO, 2017).

Although only 28% of all garment factory workers in Pakistan are women, in reality the garment industry employs the most women in all of the manufacturing industry of Pakistan. In fact, 84.6% of all women who work in industry in Pakistan are found in the garments, textiles, footwear (GTF) sector. Thus the garment sector employs the

\(^1\) Followed by two other South Asian economies, India (36.3 %) and Sri Lanka (30.3 %).

\(^{\frac{1}{2}}\) Jeremy Bentham’s nineteenth-century prison reforms created the “Panopticon” where the perfect
highest percentage of women of all industry within Pakistan, despite its extremely low percentage on the global scale (ILO, 2017). This in turn underlines the wider challenge of low female participation in the overall economy.

Hence, despite the exceptionally low female participation rate compared to global standards, factory and home-based female industrial workers in Pakistan are most likely to work in the garment sector. Yet their influences remain unclear and this study provides insights into the processes and helps us to understand the ways in which these women navigate their identities, working lives and landscapes. This thesis moves beyond simply measuring women’s presence in the labour force and its economic benefits. Instead it seeks to explore the women working in this sector and enable a comprehensive analysis of the challenges, discriminations and dynamics that impact their lived realities at home and at work, the formation of their identities and the practices that shape their communities.

1.4 Research Questions
This research thus seeks to answer the following questions:

1 To what extent do institutions (federal state/firms) influence gendered patterns in Pakistan’s garment industry?
   ➢ To what extent do formal and informal institutions interact to promote inclusion or exclusion of female workers in Pakistan’s garment industry?

2 To what extent is the secondary segment of the segmented labour market in Pakistan’s garment industry divided along the lines of gender?
   ➢ How do features of labour market segmentation and precarious work mediate the gendered structure of the secondary segment of Pakistan’s garment industry?

3 How is “gendered space” produced, constructed and structured in Pakistan’s labour market?
   ➢ How does the structure of “gendered space” influence employment patterns for women in Pakistan?
1.5 Outline of the thesis

This research project makes an original contribution to the study of the ways in which Pakistani women navigate the interface between global market forces and their own local and domestic environments. I examine women’s ability, inability, or the extent to which, they navigate their positions within the labour market of Pakistan by focusing on Pakistan’s garment industry.

This thesis is divided into two parts comprising seven chapters. Part One has three chapters, which are the introductory chapters. Chapter I provides a brief introduction to the issues at hand, highlighting some aspects of the community under study and formulating the research questions. Chapter II provides a review of relevant theoretical frameworks of the project. Labour market studies have always been an interdisciplinary field within geographical research, which is why I pull together diverse bodies of work that have informed this research and can provide a blueprint to follow in later discussions. Chapter III addresses the research design and methodologies used. This project uses a case study method with the majority of data gathered from in-depth, semi-structured interviews and focus groups.

Part Two comprises the empirical analysis and discussion chapters grouped under two thematic sections. Each section focuses on a different dimension critical for answering the research questions outlined above. The structure helps to present complex data and to analyze factors influencing issues such as: institutional stimuli, gender inclusion and exclusion, mobility as a “pursued good”, women’s mobility, intersectionality, the bifurcation of labour markets along the lines of gender, the tiered structure of segmented labour markets, processes of social production and reproduction, concepts of power and identity formation, the nature of gendered spaces and the forces and construction of “gender prohibitive spaces”.

The first section comprises two chapters: Chapter IV: “Institutions and the institutional construction of the labour market” and Chapter V: “Labour market segmentation and precarious work in Pakistan’s garment industry”. In Chapter IV, I investigate the role that particular institutions play in industrial workers’ life in Pakistan. Formal and informal institutions are defined and I explore their reciprocal
interaction, and their impact and influence on the construction of particular labour market identities. More specifically, two institutions the state (federal) and firms are examined, and to a lesser degree, through the theoretical lens of social production and reproduction, I analyze the home.

Chapter V analyzes labour market segmentation and precarious work in Pakistan’s garment industry and studies its segments. This research focuses on the secondary segment of the labour market and the tiers within this segment. Chapter V examines the processes that consign men and women to the higher and lower tiers within the secondary sector. Additionally, I examine masculine and feminine skills and trace how skills become “masculinized” and “feminized” based on the ranking and status of particular occupations within the labour market. I explore women’s access to mobility as a means for labour market advancement. I review conditions for homeworking women of the industry and analyze how immobility creates labour market monopsonies.

Section Two has one chapter: “Gendered space in Pakistan”. In Section Two the focus turns away from institutions - the state, corporations, the home, and segmented structures of the labour market - and turns towards spaces. In Chapter VI, I analyze the creation, formation and nature of spaces that women inhabit - in their homes, those that that they navigate on the streets and in public transport, and those that they occupy and work in within factories. I explore public and private spaces and the process of relegating men and women to either sphere. This section also examines distributions of power and control and explores the nature of the woman's body as an embodiment of the features of purity and piety and a symbol of national identity.

Mobility emerges as an integral factor of inclusion or exclusion of women from particular spaces. Labour market mobility traditionally refers to mobility of workers from place to place in pursuit of work, and movements between segments, occupations and jobs. Feminist writers have extended the study of institutions and mobility to the scale of the body in their explorations of mind/body dualism and public/private space. However they rarely examine the microphysical movements of the body. This study extends these examinations to the scale of micro-movements of the body as a force and mechanism of control. I draw heavily on Michel Foucault’s
body of work, which explores the creation of power through the “gaze” and the body. The relationship between the panoptic gaze and mobility as a force that creates power and control is less explored by Foucault. I study power hierarchies that cause women’s movements to be watched at the micro-level, their body to be regulated and their mobility within spaces to be curtailed. Resistance to power and control is also investigated.

Finally in chapter VII conclusions are drawn and highlighted. Interaction of several factors construct structures of inclusion and exclusion and demonstrate why so few women in Pakistan are able to move into the labour market and improve their economic positions. The interface between formal and informal institutions is fluid and full of tension. The relationship between them may create conflicting systems that regulate social structures and determine the position and status of gender. Segmentation within Pakistan’s labour market demonstrates features of precarious work. The tiered nature of segmentation stimulates the generation of gender inclusive and gender prohibitive systems. Spaces inhabited by Pakistani women distribute power in very specific ways and maintain women’s subordinate positions. Women’s restricted mobility at every scale makes gendered spaces in Pakistan difficult to navigate.
Chapter II

Theoretical Framework

2.1. Introduction

My central research questions focus on inclusion, exclusion and advancement of women workers in Pakistan’s labour market. In this chapter I review some theoretical concepts about gender equity within the labour market that are particularly prevalent within economic geography. In doing so, I look to literature that highlights the nature of labour market dynamics. Given the theoretical breadth of work which explores the construction and functioning of labour markets and the position of women therein, I have identified four main literatures that are pertinent for understanding the social and economic positions of women and men in the labour market.

I take a “macro to micro” investigative track so as to provide a theoretical backdrop for my research questions and as a way of positioning work in the industrial sector. First, I begin with an overview of the literature on institutions, institutional economics and the institutional construction of the labour market as it pertains to geography. Within this context I examine the state, the firm and, through the theoretical lens of social reproduction, the home. Additionally, I discuss theories of intersectionality and how structural factors interact to construct labour markets. Second, after a brief overview of contemporary theories of precarious work, I look towards the labour market segmentation theory. Despite being a relatively older theory, I find the features of labour market segmentation valuable in analyzing many characteristics of the labour market under study. I also look at theories of access to the labour market in terms of mobility and monopsony and their related outcomes. Third, I examine the literature within human geography that links “space” and economic processes in order to understand local labour market norms and the mechanisms that shape labour market identities. Under this umbrella, I examine theories of social inclusion and exclusion and the creation of gendered spaces; theories of mobility and micro-movements of the body are also explored. Fourth, I provide a critical overview of
theories of power developed by Foucault and his deployment of the panoptic gaze to understand the manipulation and control of people. In particular I explore impacts of the gaze on gendered power relations. I also draw in part on Foucault, to analyze and to extend theories of inclusion and exclusion, and reveal important linkages with mobility. Finally, I demonstrate how theories of inclusion and exclusion, mobility, precarious work and segmented labour markets are interrelated and intertwined in the construction of gender prohibitive spaces and gendered labour markets.

2.2: Part I

Role of Institutions - the State - the Firm - the Home

“Economic phenomena do not consist of agents—individual or in groups, more or less rational—acting in a vacuum. Economic activities take place in the context of the restraints of society, both formal and informal, that encourage and limit the activities of those agents” Hodgson (2006)

In its most simple form the labour market is an institution where labour is bought and sold, with the intent of individual advantage for both the employer and the worker. Hodgson (1988) argues that while being institutions themselves, all markets are influenced by other institutions with which they interact. These shape the beliefs, tendencies and actions of economic agents and have an important effect on the patterns of interaction that develop in market transactions (Bathelt and Glu‘ckler, 2011). The labour market thus, is constructed and shaped by the interaction of numerous related institutions.

Institutions

The term institution is commonly applied to specific official bodies of the government and public services as well as to customs and behaviour patterns important to a society. Institutions shape the behaviour of a set of individuals in a particular community and can construct particular social and economic outcomes within a given
tertiary (Hodgson, 2006). The durability and importance of institutions fundamentally arises because they can create stable expectations of the behaviour of others (Hodgson, 2006). They have a social purpose, both creating and negotiating the rules that govern living behavior. By imposing form and consistency on human activities, institutions enable ordered thought, expectation, and action. Hodgson (2006) argues that by structuring, constraining, and enabling individual behaviours, institutions have the power to mould the capacities and behaviour of agents in fundamental ways, and that rather than merely enabling or constraining aspirations they can also alter and adjust them. The original institutional economists, in the tradition of Thorstein Veblen (1899) and John R. Commons (1934), similarly understood institutions as a special type of social structure with the potential to change agents, including changes to their purposes or preferences. They are structures and mechanisms of social order that stimulate established, valued and regular patterns of behavior (Huntington, 1965, North, 1996). Institutions are thus the mechanisms that can inculcate, reinforce or change the behavioural norms that exist in a society.

Understanding the theory of institutions is important within my research as it emphasizes the essential interplay between the formal and informal institutions and rules operating in a gendered labour market. It helps to explain how, despite formal laws and rules being in place, the informal institutional norms that are entrenched in a particular society’s customs and traditions are often more important, and are the rules in practice.

Institutions are the constraints that human beings impose on human interaction. They consist of formal rules (constitutions, statute law, common law, regulations) and informal rules (conventions, norms and self enforced codes of conduct) and their enforcement characteristics (North, 1991; Hodgson, 2006; Rodgers, 2007). Hodgson (2006) argues that institutions are of greatest significance in the social realm as they make up the substance of social life. He defines them as “systems of established and prevalent social rules that structure social interactions” (p. 2) that can thus influence and establish social norms. Much of human interaction and activity is structured in terms of explicit and/or implicit rules and these are the building blocks of institutions. Rules include norms of behaviour and social conventions as well as legal rules. When people act according to rules, they have a social belief that when particular
circumstances arise, they are to behave in specific ways, and that others will do the same. Likewise traditional Veblenian institutional economists, argue that institutions work only because the rules involved are embedded in shared habits of thought and behaviour. Members of a particular community have implicit or explicit knowledge of these rules and this shared understanding of the rules involved, defines the community and creates “social norms”.

Institutions often have legal or statutory dimensions that are legitimized through public endorsement and acceptance. Institutions operate and exercise authority through rules and regulations that determine who is eligible for what (World Bank Report, 2000). However, it is not possible to understand institutions merely through their formal rules, since actual practices often deviate from these. In fact, another set of underlying structures that embody “rules in use” may be operating and may better explain regular behaviour patterns that really exist on the ground (WB, 2000). For example, in a society while formal rules may prohibit bribery, “rules in use” may commonly require a bribe in exchange for a service delivery.

**Formal and Informal Institutions**

Institutions are often divided into groups as *formal* and *informal*. Generally, the term formal is taken to mean legal, written, explicit and codifiable. Broadly defined, the rules and constraints that are considered official such as constitutions, laws, property rights, charters, and bylaws make up formal institutions. "Official" structure is thereby provided to society and the economy (North, 1991). The government, and laws represent formal institutions, as do business corporations, labour unions, markets and religious organizations.

Unofficial rules create informal institutions, such as customs, traditions, taboos, codes of conduct, and social sanctions (North, 1991). Helmke and Levitsky (2004) define informal institutions as “socially shared rules, usually unwritten, that are created, communicated and enforced outside of officially sanctioned channels” (cited in Lauth, 2015). Informal institutions are not officially established, but are practices in
common usage and apply to all types of activity - social, cultural, political, and economic. Beliefs and attitudes are entrenched in the mind-sets of people and are internalized by society participants. These lead to deeply rooted social practices, which are the hallmark of informal institutions, and which develop in societies without direct manipulation or guidance. Informal institutions reproduce themselves, and through reproduction can cultivate more and more value, by shaping future behavioural expectations (Lauth, 2015). While informal institutions do not carry the weight of law, they, like formal institutions, create a solid structure to society.

Many writers attempt distinctions between “formal” or “informal” institutions (Hodgson 2006). A distinguishing feature between the two is that formal institutions have binding elements that are safeguarded by the state and deviations from these can result in state sanctions against the diverging party (Lauth, 2015). Notable however, is that sanctions also exist in the realm of informal institutions and though these are not defined or written down, they may be just as powerful as official sanctions. These can be measures of social exclusion or mechanisms that restrict access to, or knowledge of, much-needed goods and services (Lauth, 2015). Hence, institutions can sometimes reproduce prevailing social and power inequities by serving only those who fulfill certain requirements, thereby perpetuating existing inequalities in social patterns of gender, race, and ethnicity.

Formal institutions develop with help from the informal (North, 1991; Assaad, 1993; Hodgson, 2006). Generally, the idea that there is a dividing line between institutions that are entirely “formal” on one hand and entirely “informal” on the other is incorrect. In order to operate “formal” institutions always depend on non-legal rules and inexplicit norms, as embodied in informal institutions. For them to be valid, the formal laws and rules need to be routine and entrenched in individual natures. The rules must grow to be normal and regular, otherwise they will have insignificant consequences and not develop into established social rules (North, 1991; Assaad, 1993). Hodgson (2006) argues that “formal” laws or decrees have inconsequential effects if they are neither habitual nor embodied in individual dispositions. They are “mere declarations or proclamations, rather than effective social rules. Some
declarations simply codify existing customs. Other proclamations may eventually become effective rules but only through additional powers, such as persuasion, legitimization, or enforcement” (Hodgson, 2006, p. 18). Consequently, legal or "formal" institutions that do not have resilient “informal” backings are unsupported legislative declarations rather than real institutions. This does not mean that legal rules are unimportant but that they become important by becoming incorporated into custom and habit.

**Institutional Economics**

The study of institutions occupies an important place in economics. Institutional economics takes into account the restraints that institutions lay on members of society, and thus hopes to better understand how economies actually function. This involves how goods are allocated within the specific society, including the demand and supply of labour, and how the production and exchange of goods is carried out. Institutions provide the basis of particular economic systems and formal and informal rules shape these systems. They establish the "rules of the game" according to which the economic system operates. These rules provide the framework needed to carry out day-to-day economic activities, such as production, consumption and exchange, the demand and supply of labour, and establish the specific method or way of performing an economic activity that is widely accepted throughout society (North, 1991; Amin, 2001; Hodgson, 2006; Rodgers, 2007).

**2.3 The State**

The state can be defined as “a body of institutions which are centrally organized around the intentionality of control with a given apparatus of enforcement (juridical and repressive) at its command and basis” (Anthias and Yuval-Davis, (1989) pg. 5, cited in Yuval-Davis, 2003). It is generally considered the state’s responsibility to provide secure property rights, justice and the rule of law, the provision of public goods and services, protection of people and the freedom to contract and exchange (Gross 1994: Yuval-Davis, 2003; Wolf, 2010; Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012;
When the state achieves a degree of political centralization it can fulfill its role to enforce law and order, provide public services and instigate and regulate economic activity (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012). Although markets and private citizens can provide many public services, it is the state, with its central authority, that has the level of coordination required to enable a well functioning society and economy. It provides roads, transport networks, and a public infrastructure so that economic activity can flourish as well as basic regulation to prevent fraud and wrongdoing. Wolf (2010), argues that protection of people and property, justice, correction of externalities, social insurance, and the provision of public goods are considered by many to be legitimate roles of the institution of the state. Economic institutions rely on the state to administer law and order, protect private property, enforce contracts, and provide public services (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2012).

The “State” is first and foremost an institution. Literature on institutions argues that ‘good’ institutions are synonymous with government and state bureaucracies that are effective both in their allocation of public goods and the process by which they distribute them, and are most important in the creation of a “just” system of state (Rodrik et. al., 2010 Acemoglu et al., 2004; 2012).

**Institutions and the Construction of the Labour Market**

The traditional view of markets is that they are idealized formations where individual economic actors with “perfect knowledge” buy and sell commodities to their personal benefit with no social interactions or influences. Economic geographers and institutional economists have long disputed this view however, and argue that markets (and labour markets) are “social constructs” governed by both formal and informal rules and systems (Cumbers et. al. 2003) agreements and practices that “coordinate expectations and compliances between supply and demand” (Bathelt and Glu¨ckler, 2013 p. 16). Formal and informal rules together construct the labour market through individual interactions between buyers and sellers, workers and employers, and through the regulations of relevant authorities – the state, legislature, regulatory bodies that provide the legal boundaries within which transactions are conducted.
Geographers Bathelt and Glu¨ckler, (2013) argue that labour markets of an economy are constructed in a relational manner. Functioning through the demand and supply of labour, these markets develop through intricate interactions at both the macro and micro level. Formal institutional influences operate at the macro level – legislation, politics and societal institutions including wage setting institutions, such as unions, mandatory social benefits, unemployment insurance and protection legislation, and laws on minimum wage, etc. (ILO 2015). Formal, written rules that sanction and control what can or can not happen in a labour market and carry with them modes of implementation and enforceability are generally considered to be the formal institutions of the labour market. A fundamental example is the employment contract, which outlines the type of and expectations of a job, where it will be carried out and the rights that are attached to it (Rodgers et al. 2005). These encompass laws and legislature passed by the state, unions and their work in securing bargaining power and collective-bargaining systems, rules for wage determination, rules and regulations within firms for career advancement, access to jobs (for example educational qualifications).

Informal influences operate at and impact the micro level – the everyday negotiations and experimentations between suppliers, customers, unions, and other parties. They include features of employment contracts, which are implicit and socially shaped – for example, customs and traditions, beliefs in hierarchical systems that seem to have no connection with the actual workplace and are not written down in the contract, but which affect behaviour in the workplace of both workers and employers (Rodgers et. al, 2005). Informal institutions may extend admittance to jobs and income opportunities to particular population groups and deny them to others (e.g. discriminating against women, selecting based on caste and class). Informal networks of communication are also important in controlling knowledge and contacts needed for jobs, restricting or supplying information of where jobs are and how to get them. Formal and informal institutions largely coexist and may compliment or compete with each other.
2.4 The Firm

Since the 1970s, the forces of globalization have modified political and economic institutions around the world resulting in transformations of economic, industrial, financial and social institutions. Structural adjustment advised by supranational regulatory bodies (World Bank, IMF, GATT, WTO etc.) reduced barriers of entries to markets (Lobao et. al. 2009; Lall, 2014; Stiglitz, 2014) leading to the growing importance of the firm in the economic institutional structure. A “third player”, the multi-national (MNC) or trans-national company (TNC), has emerged as an actor whose power is growing significantly in the current economic environment. These power shifts have influenced existing institutions, both formal and informal, and dramatically impacted the labour market (Strange, 2009; Stiglitz, 2014).

Strange (2009) argues that the re-organization of work and the structure of production in the world economy, i.e. which goods are made, how, where and by whom is the single most important market change that has occurred in the last few decades. She contends that firms and corporations have been around for a long time, and it is not they that have transformed, rather the market they supply to has. Production that was previously designed and destined for one local or national market is now production often designed and destined for a world market. In the course of producing goods for the larger world market, a great number of national or local firms transformed into transnational corporations (TNCs) and multinational corporations (MNCs), their reach now extending beyond national borders. MNCs and TNCs are now economic institutions with enormous influence in the international system. They participate in the majority of global economic activity and growth (Kapfer, 2006) and impact the construction of the markets they operate in.

The global labour market has been especially modified as we see an increase in international labour flows between countries and the expansion of formerly unwaged labour brought into waged work. For example, in the last thirty years or so, about two billion-wage labourers have been added to the available global workforce, through the collapse of communism in central and Eastern Europe and the opening-up of China (Harvey, 2010). Harvey (2010) argues in fact that the mass of population has been
put in a position of having to work for capital in order to live. All around the world the integration of rural and hitherto independent peasant populations into the workforces has occurred and women have been mobilized to join the labour force.

**Rise of the firm - retreat of the state**

In addition to supranational bodies’ influences, growth of firms and institutional transformations have often resulted from ‘state’ policies in many developing countries. Where states were once the masters of markets, they now rely on capital, often MNCs and TNCs, to integrate their economy into the global economy and to boost local development through foreign direct investment (FDI). In order to encourage continued investment of capital from wealthier nations and firms into their countries, in many places the state has allowed wages, labour and environmental standards, safety and health, organization and labour relations, taxes, state regulation and intervention to be lowered. This allows firms (MNCs, TNCs) to act with little regard to the authority of state law or agreed upon industry codes (Amin, 1998; Gross, 2004; Seidman, 2004; Pun, 2005, 2007; Lee, 2007; Keune et al, 2009; Harvey, 2010; Stiglitz, 2014).

In the light of investment needs, the state’s institutional power to protect its workers has weakened, especially within poorer, developing countries (Seidman, 2004; Strange, 2009) and this power has shifted to the firm. States will often comply with firm’s demands and requirements and state policies and strategies surrounding different labour costs and rates, labour laws and systems, business laws and regulations, environmental laws and standards, and taxes and levies may be modified to benefit firms (Gross, 2004; Hoffmann, 2006; Kepler, 2006).

**The firm and informal institutions**

The firm is a formal institution but one in which micro-level norms and conventions hold great importance. Social systems, and informal institutions, (norms of behaviour, conventions, and self imposed codes of conduct), and their enforcement
characteristics may greatly influence and/or constrain the activities that take place within the institution of the firm (North 1993). North (1991) argues in fact that formal institutions like the firm cannot be examined without considering their relationship to informal institutions. A society’s traditions, belief-systems and values comprise some of the informal social rules that impact the workings of labour market institutions. Attitudes and belief systems factor in the characteristic functioning of labour markets and formal institutions, like the firm, operating within them. For example, existing societal beliefs about certain work groups (e.g. women, ethnic groups), and their roles in society affect the position and work ethic of the groups, how and where they work, and their interaction with others. The supply of labour to the market is also influenced by the social reproduction of labour (discussed later), in which household systems and arrangements, including the position of gender, function. Community frameworks, religious beliefs and attitudes to work, acceptance of labour divisions, feelings towards the elite and relationships within the communities all have an impact on the social construction of the particular labour market they are part of and influence the formal institution of the firm (Rodgers et. al, 2005; Farole et. al, 2010; Rodrik et.al. 2010).

2.5 Social Reproduction and the Home

Marx and Engels (1867 cited in Bezanson and Luxton 2006) argue that “the most indispensable means of production" is the worker. Everyday labourers sell this factor of production - labour power - to the employer in exchange for a wage. After expending their capacity to work in the labour market, workers return home and use their income and their unpaid labour to produce food and other forms of daily household maintenance for themselves and their family. These processes are repeated daily and every day the labourers’ ability to work is reproduced (Bezanson and Luxton 2006).

The concept of social reproduction involves the processes related to sustaining and reproducing people, particularly the working population, and their labour power on both a daily and generational basis (Laslett and Brenner 1989; Bezanson and Luxton 2006). Social reproduction theory is used by many writers to refer to the activities and attitudes, behaviours and emotions, responsibilities and relationships directly
involved in both the maintenance of life on a daily basis, and intergenerationally (Laslett and Brenner, 1989; Bhattacharia, 2017). Theorists also associate social reproduction with the construction and communication of knowledge, social values, and cultural practices and the production of individual and collective identities (Picchio 1992, Elson 1998; Bezanson and Luxton 2006). ‘Production’ suggests not just economic activity but also “the social processes involved in producing goods and services and reproducing knowledge, capital and labour power” (Henderson et al., 2002). The fundamental insight of social reproduction theory is that human labour is at the heart of creating or reproducing society as a whole (Bhattacharya, 2017). The formal economy is the production site for goods and services; social reproduction theory shows how the "production of goods and services and the production of life are part of one integrated process" (Bhattacharya, 2013, 2017).

Theories of social reproduction also help to understand functionings of different institutions (the state, the market, the family/household) and their role in running and maintaining a balance so that the work involved in the daily and generational construction and continuation of people is accomplished. In many feminist arguments, renewing life is a form of work, a kind of production, as fundamental to the perpetuation of society as the production of things (Humphries and Rubery, 1984; Chaudhary and Sher, 2014; Bhattacharya, 2013, 2017). The concept of social reproduction builds on and deepens debates about domestic labour and women's economic roles in capitalist societies.

As discussed, one of the most dramatic transformations of the labour market in the last three decades has been the mobilization of women into the global workforce (Harvey 2010). But gender segregation within the labor market is high, fuelled by gendered and discriminatory practices and assumptions (Baunach 2002; Nelson and Bridges 1999; Cohen, 2004) and extensive research shows that women very often occupy a secondary position in labour markets. In the context of the “gendered division of labour”, particular gendered structures and constructions of a labour market are the outcomes of a series of different institutions, both formal and informal, that operate in interconnected ways. In fact, researchers like Humphries and Rubery (1984), Laslett, and Brenner (1989), Folbre (1994) and Bhattacharya (2013, 2017),
maintain that the secondary status of women in societies and the continued reconstruction of this position is not merely due to subjugation and traditional structures regenerating themselves.

Women’s secondary position in the home and labour market

Many Marxist feminists writing on social reproduction of the workforce argue that the suppressed position of women in societies is really maintained by capital because it serves capital’s interest. These writers maintain it is in capital’s interest that the cost of producing and socially reproducing the labour force is kept to a minimum. Regeneration of the workforce most often takes place within the homes and domestic survival continues to be reliant on enormous unpaid labour. Most of this involves complex amounts of work, which is still most often performed by women, even if they are fully incorporated into the wage labour force (McMahon 1999; Statistics Canada 2000; Bezanson and Luxton 2006). In fact as Seccombe (1992, 11, cited in Bezanson and Luxton, 2006 p. 28) states: “… this is primarily what families do: they people societies, restoring their members’ energies and replacing worn out labourers with the fresh blood of youth.” As it is women who primarily take on the household duties for the family, it is essentially women who create and recreate the labour force - at little or no cost to capital.

Capitalism recognizes productive labour for the market as the singular form of real and valid work, ignoring the enormous amount of familial work that goes on to maintain and reproduce the worker (Bhattacharya, 2017). The women who do most of this familial work and who are not employed in the labour market are often described as dependents. But men and children most often rely on them for the immense and multifarious work that they perform for care and nurturing within the homes. In many cases despite working full time in the waged labour market many women dedicate a lot of their time to housework and childcare in addition to their waged employment (Folbre 1994; Braedley 2006). Fulltime work for many women has not changed gendered divisions of labour within homes or the social relations of production and reproduction within the family institution.
As women are still largely paying the costs of caring for themselves, their children, and other dependents (Folbre, 1994) both inside and outside the money economy, researchers argue that any gains for gender rights that are made either in the formal economy or outside of it can “only be temporary because the material basis of women's oppression is tied to the system as a whole” (Bhattacharya, 2013, p. 2). Capital is able to extract value since much of the costs of social reproduction are provided out of women's non-waged domestic labour, and thus supports and reinforces the gendered norms within the labour market. Marxist-feminists see the secondary position of women as particularly useful to capital because women provide a cheap source of labour that can be easily fit into secondary-type employment sectors. Women are an ostensibly malleable backup of labour that can be readily assembled or relocated back into the family according to the dictates of the production process (Beechey, 1977, 1978; Bruegel, 1979; Humphries and Rubery, 1984).

Maintaining traditional status quo within the family is important for capital, as the people who work in the formal economy are themselves produced outside the sphere of the “market” at very little cost for capital. The gendered division of labour within the household generally assumes that women are responsible for most of the work of reproduction, including child-rearing, food provisioning and preparation, cleaning, laundering, and other tasks of homemaking (Katz, 2001). It is thus largely women who are employed in producing and reproducing the people who work in the formal economy and in this analysis, women's subjugation within the family is not merely because of traditional power relationships but because this system of family organization is functional for many processes of capital (Humphries and Rubery 1984; Laslett, and Brenner, 1989; Folbre 1994; Bezanson and Luxton 2006; Bhattacharya, 2013). Maintaining gender norms within a society is thus beneficial to capital, which will encourage the state and informal institutions to preserve them. As institutions are the mechanisms that can establish and perpetuate behavioural standards and customs that exist in a society (Huntington, 1965, North, 1996) these norms, in the state, the firm and the home, are preserved and regenerated.

While continued division of labour assigns most care work to women, some distinctions do appear in terms of class and economic position. Studies show that in
some countries, wealth and development have in many cases offered stand-ins for some household tasks - prepared foods, domestic assistance, childcare services, etc. However, these are not often available to lower income women. Convenience meals and facilities are less accessible to lower income women, as they cannot afford to pay for them or to employ others for help with unpaid social reproduction. Additionally, lower income women are frequently in jobs that do not offer employer subsidized health care, sick leave, compassionate leave or paid leave for family care. They are more likely to have employment with inflexible hours and poor working conditions (Braedley 2006).

2.6 Intersectionality and class distinctions

The theory of intersectionality has developed over the last few decades since Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) first introduced the term. Many theorists regard the incorporation of intersectionality as crucial to a comprehensive and inclusive study of gender (Crenshaw 1989; McDowell 1996; Risman, 2004; Acker 2012). Critical theories use the concept to explain the ways oppressive institutions (racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, xenophobia, classism, etc.) are interrelated and cannot be analysed independently from one another. Examining the interconnected nature of social divisions such as race, class, and gender (etc.) as they apply to a given individual or group, is regarded as essential to understand the overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage acting upon them.

Intersectionality questions whether studying gender in isolation is enough to wholly understand the subordination of women. Intersectionality theorists argue that considering gender the principal (or only) factor of analysis overlooks how race and class as well as economic and social locations jointly shape women’s lives (Risman 2004; Ritzer, 2007; Acker 2012; Cole, 2016; Collins and Bilge, 2016). They argue that the simultaneous experience of different types of oppression, like, classism, sexism, and xenophobia coincide and overlap to create an integrated system of subjugation.
Intersectionality is important for this research because it helps to recognize that the labour market under study may not be identical for all women. The constructions of particular labour markets are an outcome of the interaction and responses of several different institutional forces. Thus on the one hand this research demonstrates that different women may have access and points of entry to the labour market based on their class and training, (discussed further in the section of segmented labour markets) and on the other, different formal and informal institutions like racism, classism etc. will interact on gender to produce different levels of subjugations.

The principal concern for intersectionality theory is the knowledge that women’s subjection is a result of a fusion of different forms of oppression that they experience in varying degrees of intensity (Ritzer, 2007). In a given society, one factor alone does not shape social inequality or the organization of power, many factors crisscross, influence each other and work together to produce them. Thus to gauge systems of oppression through a single axis be it of race or class or gender is inadequate as many axes will have jointly and in varying measures combined to create the resulting arrangements (Collins and Bilge, 2016). Hence all forms of oppression are not experienced by all women and nor do they experience them in identical ways. Distinctions can be understood by recognising that while gender is the basis for all women to potentially experience oppression, women are additionally subjugated by the intersections of other forces and arrangements that operate within their own particular societies.

Risman (2004) warns against using only an intersectional framework to study and analyse gender and argues that by solely focusing all inquiry into the complex experience of oppressions and how and where they interlock and interact, an appreciation of how mechanisms and forces of inequality are produced may be lost. She argues that as gender can not solely be studied in isolation from other inequalities, “nor can we only study inequalities’ intersection and ignore the historical and contextual specificity that distinguishes the mechanisms that produce inequality by different categorical divisions, whether gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, sexuality, or class” (Risman, 2004, P. 443).
The theory of intersectionality must be further broadened to extend to the “other” women - women of developing countries whom some feminist theorists have begun to recognize as distinct and acknowledge may differ from popular “western” feminist ideologies. For example, McDowell (1996) suggests that “multiple others” (subjugated peoples of the Third World, women, people of colour, etc.) are often overlooked by western academics who mistakenly consider western theories to be universally applicable. It is this gap that this thesis seeks in part to fill. This research studies women of industrializing countries who, through globalization, experience a re-shaping of their world and examines the varying forms of oppression that may accompany it. A world in which globalizing forces have changed traditional ways of living and working, and in which women may consequently experience diverse systems of repression that may have forms and intersections that differ from popular western ideology.

2.7: Part II

Labour Market Segmentation and Precarious Work

Precarious Work

Precarious work can be explained as employment that is uncertain, irregular, and risky for workers. Factors of employment precarity include job loss or fear of job loss, insufficient alternative employment opportunities in a labor market, and reduced occasions to acquire and maintain specific skills (Kalleberg, 2009, 2013). Some outcomes of these forms of uncertainties are unpredictable incomes, distress, unsafe work, and a lack of collective voice (Standing 1999).

Since the 1970s, neoliberal globalization has increased economic integration, providing companies better opportunities to outsource work to lower-wage countries. Features of neoliberal globalization within industrial communities include considerable uncertainty, instability, and insecurity characterized by privatization, deregulation (and reregulation) of markets (Kalleberg 2013). As a consequence, nation-states and businesses have been encouraged to establish increasingly flexible production processes and employment systems. Firms (national and international)
have re-organized work along flexible lines to suit their needs (Benner, 2002; Strange, 2009). Labour market flexibility implies a lessening of control of workers over their employment (Rodgers, 2007). The ensuing business patterns are characterized by greater precarious work, in which employees assume more risks and accept reduced social benefits and legal entitlements (Kalleberg 2013). The reorganization of work along the lines of flexibility has led to the decline and erosion of labor standards. Employers have reorganized work to cut wages, reduce benefits, and avoid or reject legal responsibility for their employees. In many instances, workers are intimidated into making concessions due to threats of factory shut downs, capital flight, and other forms of precarity (Vallas, 2006).

The era of flexibility is an era of more generalized insecurity and precariousness, in which many more men as well as women have been pushed into precarious forms of labour. The employment of regular, full-time wage labour has been giving way to a more diverse pattern, categorized by “informalization” of employment, through more outworking, contract labour, casual labour, part-time labour, homework and other forms of labour, unprotected by labour regulations (Rodgers, 2007; Standing, 2009). Accordingly, both men and women are increasingly involved in “feminized” work.

Theorists (Freeman, 2007; Rodgers, 2007; Kalleberg 2013; Bernhardt, 2014) argue that the macro-level changes of neoliberal globalization have led employers to seek greater flexibility in their relations with workers. In the standard employment relationship, typified by the classic ‘standard model’ of regular, contractually based work (Davies et. al. 2017), workers were expected to work full-time for a specific employer at the company's place of work. Within this standard job relationship internal labour markets often presented job-ladders upon which workers could progress (Cappelli, 1999). In the era of greater flexibility however, the standard model has been eroding. Redundancies have become an integral part of employers’ restructuring strategies and provide a means to raise short-term profits by reducing labor costs (Bernhardt, 2014).
The scope and features of changing working practices along the lines of flexible and precarious work are considered by many academics to depart from the ‘standard model’ of full-time, regular, contractually based work (Houseman and Osawa, 2003; Kalleberg et al., 2000 cited in Davies et. al. 2017). Despite the extensive history of segmented labour markets, the “non-standard model” of work is still considered to be a deviation from the norm for many precarious work theorists. Bernhardt, (2014) argues that nonstandard arrangements are deficient on at least one factor: (1) the job is temporary, (2) the job is part-time, (3) an intermediary employs the worker, or (4) there is no employer at all. But as Davies et. al. (2017) maintain, many jobs have always been not ‘standard’ and precarious, especially those rooted in the insecurity and lower wages of the secondary segment of the labour market (Reich et. al., 1973; Doeringer and Piore, 1985).

Bernhardt’s theories may apply to parts of the industrialized world but are less relevant to labour markets of industrializing economies. Theories of segmented labour markets demonstrate that jobs that may be considered non-standard may not be defined as such by the workers. Although all features of standardized jobs may not be evidenced in many jobs yet their nature may be “standard”. In Pakistan many jobs found in the factories of the garment sector often demonstrate one or more aspects of the non-standard work as described by Bernhardt, however, many workers essentially consider their jobs standardized. Despite their jobs not being contractually secure, a lot of workers have positions in the factories that they have held for years. They work full time, many also fulfilling over-time duties and receiving over-time pay; they work directly for an employer on the premises of the factory that employs them. While many of these jobs fulfill the criteria of “non-standard”, for the worker, their jobs are in fact standardized. Thus theories of precarious work are inadequate to define these workers; however, theories of segmented labour market may be used to understand them better.

Segmented labour market theory, (discussed ahead) describes the features of precarious and non-standard work in terms of a dual labor market (Kalleberg 2009). The division of jobs between the primary and secondary segments is based primarily on precarity and insecurity located within the secondary segment. Standard jobs, that
have generally been equated with good jobs (Kalleberg et al., 2000; Cappelli and Keller 2013) are positioned in the primary segment; and insecure, precarious jobs are mostly found in the secondary segment.

2.8 Labour Market Segmentation

The neoclassical tradition defines the labour market as a space in which all actors are directed by a precise set of rules: those of competitive and optimizing behaviour (Peck 1996). The neoclassical description is one where “individual actors pursue rational self-interest within the framework of free competition” (Peck 1996, p. 46). The theory of labour market segmentation developed in the 1970s as an alternative to the prevailing neoclassical orthodoxy. Segmentation theories have their foundations in the dual labour market developed by Doeringer and Piore (1971) to explain low income and unemployment in ghetto labour markets. Doeringer and Piore’s work developed institutionalist approaches to labour economics and the concept of primary and secondary sectors of the labour market.

Labour market segmentation is the process whereby political-economic forces encourage the division of the labour market into separate submarkets, or segments. These segments are distinguished by different labour market characteristics and behavioural rules with little to no movement between them (Reich, Gordon, and Edwards 1973). The theory maintains that two separate labor markets exist side by side, which includes a “primary segment” and a “secondary segment”.

The core labor market is governed by a set of formalized internal labor market rules with institutionally driven entry and formal career ladders. This forms the primary labour market. It is ordinarily understood to contain people with secure jobs and good conditions of work such as public-sector employment, large corporations and highly unionized industries. The secondary market lacks such rules. The secondary labour-market is understood to include small employers, non-unionized segments of the economy and competitive activities such as retailing. Here jobs are less secure, conditions of work and pay are generally poor and workers move from job to job with
little opportunity for advancement (Piore 1971; Reich, Gordon, and Edwards 1973; Berger and Piore 1980; Dickens and Lang 1985; Piore and Safford 2007).

Piore (2002) extended the definition of the segmented labour market by arguing that the dual labour market is not only governed by a set of administrative rules and procedures. Developing an institutionalist approach he defines it more broadly to include social practices and customs, and argues that the boundaries between the primary and secondary segments are socially defined as well. Social constructions may include institutional paradigms that encourage particular selection criteria, extending or restricting access to the different sectors; employer discrimination, the effects of union imposed constraints on labour supply, information shortages, etc. This extension helps to explain the institutional and social construction of the segmented labour market and that some of the barriers that exist between the primary and secondary sectors are similarly socially constructed.

Primary and Secondary Segments

Theorists primarily base the differentiation between the two segments on security and stability characteristics.

Primary segment

The primary segment contains a stable workforce: one that has stable contracts, enjoys regular hours, has a path of progress or a work ladder that encourages work towards promotions, higher salaries and benefits, and often a pension scheme for retirement. Employees within the primary segment thus form the core of secure employees of a firm. Existence of well-defined career ladders makes promotion and advancement more predictable, thus contributing to the relatively high worker stability in such institutions (Piore, 1975 cited in Harrison and Sum 1979; Piore and Safford 2007). Employees in this sector often need long on-the-job training in firm-specific skills, which in turn give them more security and good opportunities for promotion, a high span of discretion, and high material rewards. Primary jobs require and develop stable working habits, skills are often acquired on the job and wages are relatively high. The primary segment is thus characterized by well-paid, long-term
jobs and promotional prospects. Moreover, primary jobs are rationed, that is, not all workers who are qualified for primary sector jobs and desire one can obtain one (Piore 1971; Reich, Gordon, and Edwards 1973; Berger and Piore 1980; Dickens and Lang 1988; Barron and Norris 1991; Piore, 2002).

Secondary Segment

The wage and employment mechanisms in the secondary segment are different from those in the primary segment (Wachter, 1974). The secondary segment provides jobs that are comparatively low skilled and offer little independence and responsibility. Jobs in this sector do not require and often discourage stable working habits. There is generally no path for progress (job ladder) and turnover is high as no promotions or promotional incentives are given to workers that may encourage them to remain over long periods.

Wages here are often unstable - wages are low, salaries are flexible and may be awarded on piece rate. Working conditions can be poor, working hours may also be flexible and shifts often exist. Employment in this division is generally unstable and irregular; workers do not generally have contracts and can be hired and fired at will. The segment often includes casual and seasonal work making employment less reliable. In the secondary sector jobs are more plentiful and can employ a larger number of workers, but it is characterized by jobs that are generally unattractive, have lower pay and employment insecurity and instability (Wachter 1974; Reich, Gordon, and Edwards 1973; Barron and Norris 1991). The secondary segment of the labour market is fluid, absorbing more workers in times of greater need and just as quickly expunging them when need is fulfilled.

Doeringer and Piore (1975) maintain that a central distinction between primary and secondary markets is the existence of “internal labour markets” within the primary segment of an enterprise. Structures with accepted (if not always literally scripted) work rules, promotion patterns, and sanctions against unacceptable behaviour constitute internal labour markets. New workers generally enter at the bottom of the
pyramid and advance from within. Worker stability in such institutions is maintained through the existence of well-defined career ladders and workers tend to have more job control. Internal labor markets of the secondary segment conspicuously lack this degree of structure (Harrison and Sum 1979; Piore and Safford 2007; Porta et. al. 2016). Additionally, Piore (1975) provided three-fold stratification which further bifurcated the primary segment into a lower and upper tier. In this system, higher tier workers are better paid and have greater opportunities for advancement. The lower tier within the primary segment consists mainly of well-paying blue-collar jobs, but has turnover and promotion patterns that more closely match the secondary sector and tasks are likely to be more routinized (Harrison and Sum 1979; Porta et. al., 2016).

The theory of labour market segmentation is sometimes considered to lack in economic foundation and differentiation (Porta et. al. 2016). Critics of the theory argue that it has a tendency to overgeneralize by categorizing (and lumping) whole sections of the economy together based on the experiences of sections of the periphery, thereby generalizing and representing whole segments based upon the worst experience at the margins (Porta et. al. 2016). Piore’s (1975) three-fold stratification divided the primary segment into a lower and upper tier, but theoretical attention has focused less on the tiers existing in the secondary segment endorsing Porta et. al.’s (2016) critique of segmentation theory’s tendency to combine all features into one homogeneous segment based on the experience of a portion. Theories of precarious work and non-standard employment can be criticized in a similar manner. (For example, as discussed above, theorists may classify all “non-standard” work together whereas acute differences and experiences may in fact exist).

But although much of the literature for the segmented labour market theory is from the 1970s, and 1980s and despite the criticisms of oversimplification, many features remain significant and relevant today that are important for my research. For example, many features characteristic of the secondary segment pertain to the lack of formal institutional rules, deficient facilities for promotion and progress, in many cases unstable and irregular jobs, lack of job contracts and regular salaries; women’s
labour is also highly concentrated here. These features are prevalent throughout the secondary sector. Additionally, as Peck (1996) argues, the same social groups tend to suffer the brunt of labour market disadvantage and remain within secondary segments. Labour market disadvantage tends to be distributed in accordance with the ascribed rather than achieved characteristics of workers, varying more closely with ethnicity, gender, and age, for example, than with education, training and skill. In this entire segment, wages are low, and may be awarded on piece rate; working hours may also be flexible and shifts often exist; importantly, women of the research group under study are concentrated here, making an examination of segmented labour market and its theories important for my study.

**Why is there segmentation in the labour market?**

Researchers argue that segmentation exists for the benefit of employers who consign key workers in the primary sector and retain them over the business cycle. Workers are resources that employers invest in by providing on-the-job training and other decent benefits. In primary jobs, workers are given "responsible autonomy" and are encouraged to serve the boss via a wage premium, job security, defined-benefit pensions, etc. (Devine, 1999). The jobs of the primary segment are generally considered “ideal” as they have career paths for promotion and advancement with greater responsibility and autonomy and higher salaries as the ladder is climbed. However, employers are only able to maintain the primary segment if other costs are kept down and the secondary segment is essential for this.

The lower costs of maintaining the secondary segment are essential for employers to maintain of the primary segment (Reich, Gordon, and Edwards 1973; Piore and Safford, 2007). In secondary jobs, production processes tend to involve simple, repetitive tasks, which many of the virtually infinite supply of untrained people can often learn quickly and easily. Anyone may enter this segment of the economy, and young workers typically begin their work careers here. If they don't like the job, they can leave. There is high turnover, and workers from a reserve army and from similar jobs easily replace the ones who leave (or are fired) as in the secondary labor market, management treats workers like interchangeable parts (Devine, 1999). Employers
concerns with motivation and morale are minor and the relatively greater job turnover in the secondary segment is not as costly to employers as it would be to primary employers, because substitute labor is readily available.

**Segmentation by Sex**

A principal feature of the secondary segment is that women regularly (though not exclusively) occupy it. Certain jobs within labour markets have generally been restricted to men, others to women. Distinctions are often visible between vertical and horizontal forms of segregation within “manual” and “non-manual” occupations (Charles and Grusky, 2004). Men predominate in the primary sector and populate the most-desirable (i.e., professional and managerial) occupational groupings of the “non-manual” occupations (predominantly managerial, professional, sales and service jobs). Male dominance is also apparent in desirable manual jobs (crafts and trades). Horizontal segregation persists in non-manual jobs and women’s labour is concentrated in these. Wages in the female segment are usually lower than in comparable male jobs (Charles and Grusky, 2004).

Despite the positive effects that women’s entry into paid work has produced, gender inequality remains as long as there is an economic advantage in perpetuating it. Women's assimilation into manufacturing work in the secondary segment reflects gender discrimination as women predominately populate low paid jobs in a few industries. Even in countries that have a high percentage of women in the work force, work in the highest-paid sectors of manufacturing continues to elude women. Men still work across a wider range of industries and hold the most lucrative jobs. Huge inflows of women into the labour force has not resulted in a smooth integration of women into men's jobs but has instead reconstructed the gender divisions of labour that separate men's work from women’s work and gender has proved to be a particularly resilient dividing line between workers. Globalization has shown how gender inequality has grown in an environment where exploitation of labor in general has become intensified (Pun, 2005; Wright, 2006; Caraway, 2007).
2.9 Male And Female Occupational Characteristics

A basic proposition of gender theories is that the secondary position of women in the labour market is caused by, and is a reflection of, women’s inherent inferior position in society and the family. Although it is being challenged in some societies, taking care of the home and children is still considered women’s primary obligation in many societies, while the responsibility of earning for the home is supposed to lie with men. The fact that these societal perceptions of gender have little bearing in the daily lives of many men, women or families does not reduce their influence on people’s perceptions and their contribution to gender-based discrimination against women (Anker, 1997; Elson, 1999).

Many societies perceive that success in professions dominated by one sex is achieved by personal characteristics typical of that sex (Cejka and Eagly, 1999). Ideas about gender are formed by observations of women and men in the roles that they normally play in daily life with a belief that the domestic role requires feminine qualities and that employment roles require masculine qualities. This promotes the assignment of domestic work to women and paid employment to men (Eagly & Steffen, 1984 cited in Cejka and Eagly, 1999) and in turn many of women’s paid professions are also considered as similar to the domestic role (Cejka and Eagly, 1999).

Barron and Norris (1991) explain that five characteristics typify the workers of the secondary sector and that in most labour markets women consistently personify this group:

i) Dispensability, ease of removal from a redundant job
ii) Easily identifiable physical characteristics that differentiate the workers from those of the primary sector - like sex, race or ethnicity
iii) Lower interest in education and training and job experience
iv) Low-economism - a lower concern for economic rewards as compared to other rewards, and
v) Low solidarism - the degree of collective organization and action that distinguish a group.
Anker (1997) explains how characteristics of “female” occupations mirror the common stereotypes of women and their supposed abilities, and consequently create “female jobs” and “male jobs”. Anker lists five “positive” stereotypes for women: a caring nature; skill and experience in household-related work; greater manual dexterity; greater honesty; and attractive physical appearance. If these characteristics are considered true, women are “qualified” for occupations like: “nurse, doctor, social worker, teacher, maid, housekeeper, cleaner, cook, waiter, launderer, hairdresser, spinner, weaver, knitter, tailor/dressmaker, midwife, sewer, typist, cashier/bookkeeper, salesperson, accountant, receptionist, street vendor and shop assistant” (Anker, 1997).

The five “negative” stereotypes for women are: disinclination to supervise others; lesser physical strength; lesser ability in science and mathematics; lesser willingness to travel; and lesser willingness to face physical danger and to use physical force. As these characteristics are not generally considered widespread women’s traits in the workforce, they consequently become typical “male” occupations and help “disqualify” women for the occupations that entail managerial and supervisory characteristics (Anker, 1997), thus maintaining them more largely in the secondary sector of the segmented labour market.

**Wages based on masculine and feminine characteristics**

Researchers (Anker, 1997; Glick, 1991; Cejka and Eagly, 1999) find that wages and earnings correspond positively to the belief that certain occupations require masculine personality characteristics and reward them with higher wages. High wages are associated with occupations that favour masculine characteristics and consequently in such a society the occupations that have male features command higher wages. Women thus face the daunting reality of a social structure in which high wages and esteem are associated with occupations that are believed to require masculine personal characteristics, and lower wages and condescension are connected with feminine personal characteristics (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Elson, 1989).
One example is women’s assumed physical traits of smaller more nimble and dexterous hands that are deemed more suitable to certain kinds of work. In many parts of the world, women are hired for their supposed docility, “nimble fingers” and attention to mind-numbing detail. Their hands are small and they work fast with extreme care. Women’s labour is particularly in demand for work that involves repetitive movements, attention to detail, implies standing (or sitting) still for long periods or time, and utilizes manual agility – the so-called ‘nimble fingers’ argument (Elson and Pearson, 1981). As these are considered feminine traits, it in turn explains the lower wages that women are paid in occupations that are predominantly occupied by women as argued by Glick (1991) Anker (1997); and Cejka and Eagly (1999) and explains the theory that “nimble fingers” make cheap workers (Elson and Pearson, 1981).

But as Elson and Pearson (1981) argue, women do not inherit “nimble fingers” from their mothers in the same way that they may inherit the colour of their eyes, skin and other physical attributes. They are instead a consequence of the training of tasks deemed socially appropriate to women that they receive from their mothers within the homes. As this training is received within the privacy of the home, often under the heading of “domestic labour” and is thus unseen, it may be considered attributable to nature; consequently, the jobs that make use of it are classified as ‘unskilled’ or ‘semi-skilled’. This in turn rationalizes the lower wages that women are paid in occupations that are predominantly occupied by women.

2.10 Local and spatial segmentation

Jamie Peck extends segmented labour market theory to emphasize the importance of local spaces. Peck critiques the theory as being “space blind”. As (Hiebert, 1994 p. 9 cited in Peck,1996, p. 79) states: “Segmented labour market theory is aspatial, implying the same processes operate at all places simultaneously” and with more or less the same effects. Peck argues that “space” and the “local” are important in understanding how particular shapes emerge within labour markets. Peck explains that particular structures are created within local labour markets through an interaction of local institutions that are both socially constructed and relational. The
allotment of specific social groups to different segments of the labour market is a response to time and space and social norms operating within these spaces. Different social norms that exist in the local spaces create the variations in the nature of the labour markets.

Peck argues that the labour market is not an insulated institution, but a combination of numerous institutional dynamics. Intricate sets of rules govern the labour market, which develops in a constant and interactive manner with other social institutions, operating within particular local spaces. Thus for example, the education and training organizations, the welfare and social insurance schemes, and the industrial relations structure reciprocally influence each other and the labour market.

“Space is not a container of different labour market segments but the medium through which different segments of are forged” (Hanson and Pratt, 1995, Pg. 204). Segmentation is the result of the interaction of several fundamental institutions, which all influence and are influenced by each other within specific places and spaces. For example the state, (through employment contracts, welfare provision, and training and education) the family and sphere of social reproduction, demographic factors, social norms concerning the participation of different groups in wage labour, gender, race and class, all influence segmentation.

Peck’s extension of labour market segmentation theory is important for my research as it helps to explain how particular structures are created in different places. Peck argues that labour markets develop locally. Specific institutional patterns and their resultant distributions of power effect the construction and mobilization of labour, and these differ by place. Each place has its own set of social rules regarding gender, race class (etc.) and these in turn interact with national and international systems resulting in disparate outcomes.
Hanson and Pratt (1995) argue that social, economic and geographical boundaries are overlaid and intertwined and distances and mobility substantially influence segmentation along the lines of gender. Many women, especially those with heavy household responsibilities, are dependent on extremely local employment opportunities. Household strategies reflect and reproduce traditional gender relations, and women who have the heaviest domestic obligations have been found to work close to home. When women commute long distances for work, arrangements need to be made to offset their daily absence. Their husbands, who also commute, do not appear to share this pressure. Household obligations hinder women’s mobility, which effectively constrains women’s employment options, as they must look for work close to home, and significantly stimulate segmentation along gendered lines.

**Restricted mobility between sectors**

A key feature of the segmentation theory is that a restriction of movement exists between the segments. The working poor are typically stuck in the secondary labour market segment, finding it difficult if not impossible to rise into the primary segment (Reich, Gordon, and Edwards 1973; Harrison and Sum 1979). Economic mobility between the two sectors is sharply limited, and hence workers in the secondary segment are essentially often trapped there. Secondary segment workers are barred from the primary sector largely by institutional restraint and the social construction suggested by Piore (2002) (such as discrimination and other social rules) and by a simple lack of good jobs (Piore and Safford, 2007).

Labour market scholars argue that capitalist institutions find labour market segmentation functional to perpetuate capitalist hegemony (Reich, Gordon, and Edwards, 1973; Harrison and Sum 1979). Segmentation prevents potential movements against employers (such as unionization) by dividing workers; it limits workers own aspirations for mobility by creating "fire trails" across vertical job ladders: workers recognize that separate segments have different criteria for access and remain confined to their own segments; and distributing workers into segments sanctions disparities in authority and control between superiors and subordinates. For
example, institutional sexism may support the authority of male foremen (Reich, Gordon, and Edwards, 1973).

**Globalization and the development of the secondary labour market**

In many ways globalisation has been a story of the relocation of production to areas of the developing World where a suitable labour force is available, and consequently is a story of the feminisation of labour (Elson and Pearson 1981). The relocation of particular parts of the production industry in the last 30 years or so created factory processes which are standardized, repetitious, call for very little modern knowledge, and are highly labour-intensive (Elson and Pearson 1981). Consequently the process created a vast secondary market that was also deemed ideally suited to the employment of women because the jobs to be done are largely regarded as 'women's work' and these labour markets are feminized.

Feminization of a particular labour market arises because available employment and labour options tend increasingly to characterize activities associated, rightly or wrongly, with women; characteristics connected with women’s pattern of work or “feminization” typify those that feature in the secondary sector of labour markets and include the type of contract, the form of remuneration, the extent and forms of security provided, and the access to skill (Standing, 1999). The ensuing pattern of employment thus tends to result in an increasing proportion of women occupying the secondary segment jobs of that labour market (Caraway, 2007; Standing, 2009).

During the last decades of the 20th century, global industrialization generated millions of new factory jobs in developing countries that created an increase in the secondary segment of the labour force throughout the world. Although men historically outnumbered women in formal sector work in manufacturing, women reached near parity or beyond in many countries in the short space of time of just one or two decades. Women now constitute a significant share of the working class in developing countries, especially those that have experienced dramatic industrial expansion based on export-oriented growth, and these markets are increasingly feminized (Pun, 2004, 2007; Wright, 2006; Caraway, 2007; Harvey, 2010; Wolf, 2013).
2.11 Homework, Monopsony and Mobility

Another global phenomenon of secondary labour markets that relates mostly to women is homework. A large part of my research sought to understand why so many women in Pakistan are ready to work within their homes for much less pay, rather than going to factories.

The term “home-based workers” refers to workers who carry out remunerative work within their homes (Chen et. al., 1999). Associated with arduous, poorly paid work and exploitation of the most disadvantaged groups in the labour market, wherever it is found, homework tends to occupy the margins of the formal economy (Peck, 1996). Its domestic location, low “visibility” of the workers, coupled with the fact that there is usually something illegal about homework (such as evasion of taxes and employment legislation) means that it represents an almost clandestine form of employment (Allen and Wolkowitz, 1987, cited in Peck, 1996).

However, for many women, home-based work remains a critical form of employment (Chen 1999). In many countries especially in Asia, homework comprises a significant segment of urban employment, particularly for women (Chen and Sinha, 2016). Many women perform their productive tasks for the labour market between and alongside their domestic tasks, essentially combining production and social reproduction. Consequently, homework’s contribution to the economy often remains largely invisible and undervalued, and in the case of women, is often dismissed as an extension of their domestic work.

Recent years have seen growth in this mode of employment as research shows women working at home are occupied in a very wide range of activities. They “stitch garments, shoes and footballs; weave textiles; roll incense sticks, cigarettes and cigars; thread flower garlands; prepare food items; assemble electronics, automobile parts and pharmaceutical products; and do laundry, hair-cutting, mechanical repair, clerical and professional work” (Chen and Sinha, 2016 p.1).

Analysts of the economic rationale of homework (Peck, 1996; Chen and Sinha, 2016) have emphasized the following three factors:
First, homework results in savings to capital on both variable and fixed production costs. The fixed costs associated with operating a factory, for example rent, light, heat and building maintenance, workplace equipment and transport are passed on to homeworkers and most have to assume the non-wage costs of production. Holding down wage rates and managing to avoid payments for overtime, sick leave and holidays accomplish savings on variable costs. Additionally, homeworkers absorb many of the risks of production (delayed or cancelled orders, unreliable supply of raw materials, delayed payments, rejected goods).

Second, in the homework labour environment, employers are able to achieve heightened levels of production flexibility. Many homeworkers are sub-contracted and produce goods for firms up the value chain (which may be local, national or international). Homeworkers are paid piece rates (i.e. only for actual output), they can be dismissed and re-engaged as required and employers are able to adjust purchases of labour power in accordance with their immediate production needs.

Third, homework serves as a de-unionization strategy. Homeworkers’ spatial diffusion and social isolation makes collective organization very difficult, if not impossible. Additionally, the existence of a pool of homeworkers also presents a bargaining advantage to employers when dealing with unions within the factories

**Monopsony**

A monopsony exists when there is one buyer and many sellers. It describes a condition in which there is only one buyer for the product of a large number of sellers. A classical monopsony occurs when a firm has market power in the employing factors of production. The typical labour market example is a “company town,” mining or mill town in the early days of the Industrial Revolution or the coal-mining communities in rural areas where a single employer dominates employment (Manning, 2003; Ashenfelter, Farber, and Ransom, 2010).
Whereas monopoly refers to the case of a single seller confronted in a market by many buyers, monopsony refers to the case of a single buyer confronted in a market by many sellers (Ashenfelter, et.al. 2010). In a monopsony, a large buyer typically dominates the price action and is able to force prices to decline (Bhaskar, Manning and To, 2002). One buyer interacts with many would-be sellers of a particular product and as the only purchaser of a good or service, this single entity is assumed to have market power over terms of offer to its sellers. Thus it results in a market where a single buyer substantially controls the market as the major purchaser of goods and services. While the term “monopsony” does not refer specifically to the labor market, the labor market is the primary locus of work on monopsony.

Standard competitive models assume that individual firms are price takers in the labor market. However, Robinson (1933 cited in Manning, 2004) who first devised the term “monopsony”, provided an alternative illustration wherein individual firms have market power that enables them to set wages. Initially, monopsony control was believed to exist predominantly in specific labor markets where a single firm bought labor in an insulated labor market, comparable to a monopolist in a product market (Staiger et al. 2010). Theorists now typically describe monopsonies in terms of firms’ and employers’ wage setting power and ability to determine price action. A firm with monopsony power can pay lower prices for its inputs (i.e. what it buys). Reduced competition gives employers power to dictate wages and employers often have some degree of monopsony power in labor markets (Manning 2011; The Economist 2016). In labor markets, a monopsonistic employer can pay a lower wage than would prevail in a competitive market without losing all its workers to competing employers. In the labor market, it also leads to redistribution of market power from workers to employers (Furman and Orszag 2015).

Economic explanations of monopsony generally refer to a single “firm” in the market that demands labour. Additionally, Manning (2003) has described the features of a “thin” labour market. Even if a market has several employers, if there are few jobs or job openings, the labour market is effectively “thin” from the perspective of workers.
In a “thin” labour market or monopsony the rate of job opportunities determine the share of market power between employers and workers: lower levels of job offers lead to more market power for employers (Burdett and Mortensen, 1998; Manning, 2003). Furthermore, in a classic monopsony a “thin” labour market may also include situations in which there are many employers, but they collude in wage setting so that there are only a few effective employers in the labour market (Bhaskar, Manning and To, 2002; Manning, 2003).

Theoretical observations of monopsony have generally been directed towards firms and organizations that have monopsonic power. Little to no theoretical attention has been paid to features of monopsony that may operate in other labour markets that do not have firms at their centre, like the labour market for homeworkers. While most theorists have centered on firms and organizations as monopsonic employers, I extend the term to include a single contractor or middleman (or woman) with monopsony power to demand labour from homeworkers.

Manning (2003) argues that there are very few (arguably none) labour markets in which there is literally only a single employer. Hence, he maintains that in reality the classic definition of monopsony being that of one buyer and several sellers rarely exists. As workers always have some ability to move location, the ‘mono-’ part of the prefix should not be taken too literally. Manning’s extension of the definition of “thin” labour markets included areas where there are very few potential employers within ‘reasonable’ distance of workers, which from the viewpoint of a worker, makes the labour market ‘thin’. Within these conditions, workers will go to work with nearby enterprises. However, Robinson (1969) noted the importance of worker mobility constraints as a source of monopsony (cited in Ransom and Oxaca, 2010). Some workers may have very little to no mobility at all, and these workers are in fact unable to move to areas with greater job opportunities. Homeworking women of the garment industry of Pakistan provide an illustration of such workers.
Understanding theories of monopsony are important to my research as they explain how labour is recruited from homeworking women in the garment industry of Pakistan. The theories also provide some insight about how capital works to set wages and keep them to a minimum. I argue that in this labour market immobility creates labour market monopsonies that operate in their classic form and I disagree with Manning’s (2003) observation that a classic monopsony does not exist. In fact I argue that the dictionary definition of monopsony is evidenced in the single middleman/woman who recruits labour from homeworking women in Pakistan; these women, through their lack of mobility, have very limited access to markets. Integral to theories of monopsony as argued by Manning (2003) is that workers always have mobility and can move from places of low employment opportunity to those that have better prospects. Theories of mobility however offer a different perspective.

**Mobility**

Theories have traditionally described mobility as physical movement on the one hand and a change in social status on the other (Uteng 2011). A simultaneously geographic and a sociological construct, mobility is no longer restricted to the limited definitions of speed and distance. Instead it is has become an enabling factor, which is a pursued rather than assured ‘good/commodity’ (Uteng 2011).

Adey (2010) argues that mobility is a lived relation, an alignment to oneself, to others and to the world. Hence mobility is a concept that performs and holds together a series of types of relation. Massey (2005) also maintains that ‘space is the product of social relations’ and that our mobility helps or works ‘to alter space, to participate in its continuing production’ (cited in Adey, 2010, p. 20). The nature of social and spatial mobility is interconnected. As Massey (2005) explains, a change in geographical/spatial mobility arrangements can alter the individual arena of options and actions, thus constructing varying milieus of social mobility.
As such, mobility is now associated with the wider discussion on identity formation, freedom, rights and self-determination. Houseman (1979) maintains that mobility is a requirement for freedom. Developing a ‘capability approach’ to freedom, Sen (1999, 2002a) similarly argues that the opportunity to choose between alternative sets of capabilities reflects a person’s advantage, and capability to function. Conceptions of freedom include a person’s ability to move about in geographical space. Thus the opportunity to travel that physical mobility provides, may improve individuals’ choices of what to do and where to do it. Hence mobility provides greater prospects for education and training, the freedom to work in different locations, access to information and access to final goods and factor markets, which all become more available to those who have mobility.

Sager (2006, p. 465) notes: “The link between mobility, freedom, and rights is long recognized and well established. Evidence for this is found, for instance, in Article 13 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948. Its first paragraph declares that ‘everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state’… The connection between freedom and mobility is easily seen, as high mobility implies a high level of freedom of choice to travel, which in turn is a prerequisite for self-decision on what activities to participate in”.

However, there is an overwhelming distinction between men and women in their ability to overcome distance (Hanson and Pratt, 1995). Men’s greater mobility allows them to surmount distance and affords them opportunities that may be denied women with less mobility. Opportunities available in a geographic area may thus be different for women and for men, due to their mobile/static situations. Women and men, through the disparities in inclination and capacity to travel – i.e. their mobility – define the relevant geographic area, and the opportunities provided therein, differently.

Mobility is a key factor in women’s ability or inability to both access, and progress
within a labour market. Women’s labour force participation depends on the availability of suitable jobs in the “right” locations (Hanson and Pratt, 1995). Constrained mobility is an important device used in isolating women from both employment opportunities and also from power and involvement in the body politic. Hanson and Pratt find that despite inhabiting the same spaces and localities, men are able to travel greater distances to work while women are not. For instance, women situated in suburban residential areas are less likely to travel long distances to urban workplaces. The same distance that poses no problem to men may be an insurmountable barrier for women and may serve to restrict women’s entry and progress in the paid workforce. Hence it is women’s mobility that defines when, where and in what capacity they can work.

Analyzing how mobility enables/disables/modifies exclusionary processes affecting women in particular, theorists have found that many societies (especially non-western) oppose the mobility of women thereby limiting their access to basic services like education, work, and health as well as to the more intangible fundamentals of participation and information (Uteng, 2011). Hence controlled mobility decreases women’s economic opportunities by restricting their choice of work location, their access to final goods and factor markets, their access to information relevant to their work and the freedom to combine jobs in the informal sector (Hanson and Pratt 1995; Mayers, 2005; Uteng, 2011).

The next section discusses the nature of “space” and explains how space is historically constructed to be socially, politically and relationally responsive.
2.12: Part III  Space, Power and the Female Body

Geographers are largely in agreement about the difficulties of attempting to explain “space” in terms of spatial regularities or to understand it in relation to laws that outline and regulate spatial developments. Although “space” as a term, is hard to define, many geographers explore how spatial patterns are the outcome of social processes (McDowell, 1996, 1999). Depending on their status in the social structure, people are disparately positioned in space, with different abilities and opportunities to overcome the effects of distance (McDowell, 1996). For example, globalization, the power of multinational capital and global telecommunications has brought about radical changes in local and global relations, but the benefits of these transformations are available to individuals in the different spaces relationally, and in accordance with their social position in a particular society.

Characteristics of “space” inform this research. Social processes define spatial patterns, and the women of the research group display different capabilities to overcome the effects of space and distance and access economic development opportunities based on their social positions in society. Examining the research data through the theoretical lens of “gendered space” is thus critical to understand some of the forces and mechanisms that operate in the construction of gendered labour markets and their impact on women.

**Space constructed relationally**

The relational definition of space highlights that all social relationships occur somewhere and result in connections between people and places. Vast intricate networks create “space” and these networks are relations at every scale from the global to the local (McDowell, 1996). As Foucault argued: “We are at a moment…when our experience of the world is less that of a long life developing through time than that of a network that connects points and intersects with its own skein” (Foucault, 1986:22). Massey (1992: 97) states: “interrelations between objects occur in space and time; it is these relationships themselves which create and define space and time”. 
There are fundamental inequalities in the spatial spread of individuals; for some, the “network of points” referred to by Foucault is a trap whereas for others the network and connections offer a path to greater freedom. However, as feminist geographers have documented in numerous case studies in the last decades (Brydon and Chant 1989; Hanson and Pratt 1995; Katz and Monk 1994; Folbre 1994; McDowell, 1996, 1999; Massey, 2005), and as discussed in part in the section on mobility, it is often women, whatever their social position, who have the most spatially restricted lives.

Ideas and ideology are constructed by practices and sets of practices in a particular place and time that are connected to systems of social meanings and commonly held beliefs of that place (Marx, cited in Alcoff, 1996; Sharp, 1996). Ideology and ideas including those of gender, are not determined by nature but are created by repetition and are socially constructed (Alcoff, 1996; Sharp, 1996). These ideologies, are thus created within specific social and historical situations, are constructed and negotiated spatially and are embedded in the spatial organisation of places (Duncan, 1996).

Judith Butler (1993, p. 145) describes the social construction of gendered identity by arguing that gender is constituted not by “a founding act but rather a regulated pattern or repetition” and this occurs in a particular place and space.

Feminist writer Judith Butler argues in fact that gender is performatively constituted; that our gender is not a core aspect of our identity but rather a performance, how we behave at different times. In “Undoing Gender” (2004), Butler argues that gender is performed without one being conscious of it, but the performativity is not "automatic or mechanical". She argues that culturally imposed ideas that originate from social norms prompt particular performances that are generally based on whether a person will be accepted if he or she differs from normality. Gender and the woman’s place are thus scripted according to the norms that exist in a particular place and time, i.e. particular spaces. Society and culture create gender roles, and these roles are prescribed as ideal or appropriate behaviour for a person of that specific gender, within that specific space.

In this model, gender ideology is that set of practices that organizes, regulates and defines relations between men and women, including sexual activity, reproductive
activity and gender-based roles of all types (Alcoff, 1996). That this is spatially
defined can be seen by looking at the differences that emerge across space - variations
are not only gender differences but cultural and historical distinctions within gender -
and can in part at least be explained by looking at the construction of identities in
different places (Alcoff, 1996; Duncan, 1996; Sharp, 1996; McDowell, 1996, 1999).

Space becomes gendered in two ways - the activities that are conducted within it, and
the power relationship that exists between the genders that occupy it. Activities
carried out within spaces are often delineated as male or female. Female specific
activities such as gathering have customarily been devalued and believed to be
inconsequential to the evolution of culture or the development of society (Alcoff,
1996). This devaluing of women’s activities (as also described by segmented labour
market theorists in the previous section) is given weight by considering them to be
driven by “natural instinct”, “subject to few alternatives, ultimately uninteresting, and
thus unnecessary to analyse” (Alcoff, 1996, p. 19).

Mind – Body Dualism

Nancy Duncan (1996) and Linda Alcoff, (1996) explain the under-rating of female
activity in terms of “mind-body dualism”. As Alcoff (p. 22) states, “mind-body
dualism is a central feature of the masculinist formulation of reason”. The “mind” is
the domain of “reason”, is described almost as being independent of the body and is
the territory of the male. It is given masculine attributes, or at least is defined as the
opposite of what are generally considered female characteristics. The body on the
other hand, is described as the antithesis of reason and instrumental in hindering the
attainment of knowledge because it casts up emotions, feelings and desires that
interfere with rational thought. Traditionally women are associated with the body
rather than the mind as women are more generally believed to be more influenced by
bodily distractions, hormonal cycles and are considered emotionally volatile (Ibid).

The paradigm of reason portrayed as bodiless works to rationalize the exclusion of
women from the domains of academy, science and knowledge. It infers a lack of
credibility, coherent and logical thinking and allows for a domination of the feminine,
women, and women's traditional concerns.
Mind-body dualism, where the mind is “male” and the body “female”, is manifested in physical space as public and private (Duncan, 1996). Public and private spheres are gendered - the public in essence is traditionally the domain of “the disembodied, the abstract, rationality, critical public discourse, citizenship, society, justice, the marketplace, waged labour production, the state, action, militarism, heroism and transcendence” (Duncan, 1996). The private as an ideal is conventionally connected and attached to “the domestic, the embodied, the natural, and the family - care, a haven, unwaged labour” and the like.

Historically women are retained in the private sphere. Considered to lack the capacity for rational objective thought, they have been kept away from political processes, academia and any institutions where disembodied objectivity and independence may operate. They have instead been kept in the private where natural, domestic and bodily functions are carried out. Excluded from the public sphere, any women who manage to find entrance here do so according to male rules. Men have been granted legitimacy in the public domain due to their assumed affinity with the mind and rationality; they have a sense of belonging to the “public”. Even today, men have greater mobility between public and private circles and also enjoy greater physical safety as they move between the two spheres (Valentine 1989; Duncan, 1996). Men are less encumbered by the responsibilities of the private - as caregivers of children and the elderly - than most women are.

The Public/private dichotomy parallels concepts discussed in theories of mobility. Mobility involves processes that are largely differentiated along structural lines related to gender, class, race, caste and so on, within society (Uteng 2011). Theorists (Butler, 1993; McDowell, 1996; Massey, 2005) suggest that performative repetitions construct the concept of gender, which is dynamic but historically, geographically, culturally and politically distinct. In many societies public/private dichotomy cultivates the mobile/static. In these (particularly non-western) societies masculinity has come to be coded as mobile and femininity as static.

But the genderization of space does not end here. There is not a neat, orderly separation that exists between the mind/body that constructs the public/private,
thereby specifying which gender each domain belongs to. Alcoff, (1996) argues that
gender systems are not the legacy of nature; they are the legacy of a power struggle
and the power relationship that exists between the genders that occupy a particular
space.

**Feminine Space is porous (vulnerable, permeable, weaker) space**

If the public is associated with masculinity, exhibiting masculine characteristics, it
should follow that the private - the home - is where the woman is presumed to hold
greater authority and power. This is hardly ever the case in reality however. Power
hierarchies are at work in all spaces and express themselves by creating “weaker” or
“stronger” spaces where “weaker” is vulnerable, permeable and ultimately
encroachable. The home is designated as a private space and relatively unregulated
sphere. The home, while engendered as female because it is private is however,
traditionally subject to control of the male head of the household, habitually the
husband or father. The well-known saying: “a man's home is his castle” shows the
critical and historical link between maleness, masculine authority and its spatial
expression in the form of private property (Duncan, 1996).

If all resources were distributed equally between masculine and feminine places
spatial arrangements may not be so susceptible to power hierarchies. Yet that is rarely
true. The "masculine knowledge" conveyed in the public sphere - like schools and
workplaces - is typically granted higher status than the "feminine knowledge"
associated with the dwelling (Spain, 1993), which is awarded lower status. Spaces
gendered as feminine, like the home, are weaker because of their permeability and
vulnerability and are ultimately susceptible to encroachment by the male. In this
private space the personal wants and needs of the male head can easily impose upon
or negate the rights and needs of the women and children that share the space with
him. The private is a place where men have traditionally dominated their families and
the privacy to do so has been carefully protected (Duncan, 1996).
Spatial control and identity

The attempt to confine women to the domestic, private sphere is both a specifically spatial control and, through that, a social control on identity (Massey 1994). In some cultural contexts it is also a crucial means of women’s subordination. As seen in theories of mobility, in many societies even today, women’s mobility is restricted. Women “going out” to work are considered a threat to society and the social order and it isn’t so much 'working' as *going out* to work, which posses the risk to the traditional structure. As Massey (1996) suggests while a woman becoming economically active may give rise to some concern because she now has access to her own independent income, the *spatial separation* of home and workplace may in fact generate greater anxiety. When a woman manages to get away from the spatial confines of the home it poses a threat in at least two ways: it may undermine her willingness to perform her domestic role – as home maker and caretaker of domestic affairs; and it gives her entry into another, public world - 'a life not defined by family and husband' giving her an altered social identity (Massey, 1994).

Spatial change may produce altered social identity, which in turn may create a relational change. Since space is created relationally, and power is also a relational concept (discussed later) the concept of “woman” has an influence on this relational structure. The “concept of woman” (Alcoff, 1996) mediates the relations between man and his others - other men, nature, his own self. Women are defined in relation to men - as daughters, helpmates, wives, mothers, caregivers of men. Women mediate the relationships between men, establishing status vis-a-vis other men - the beautiful model on a rich man’s arm is for other men to see, the woman who is not allowed to leave the home and go to work, (as in the Pakistani context) indicates the man’s power to restrain and control her. This in turn suggests that a vital role of “woman”, through their nature, their relationship and their position in space, is to hold in place an entire social system of relations and practices: relations between men, their power and hierarchical standings, customs within their environment and the very concept of “man” himself (Alcoff, 1996), and may provide some answers to the resistance towards woman’s altered identity.
2.13 Foucault’s concepts of Power and the Gaze

Another way to understand Pakistani women’s position in the labour market is through an examination of concepts of control and power. As argued earlier, power relationships create and perpetuate gender systems. Foucault’s definitions of power provide a distinct theory offering some insight to how power and power systems and hierarchies are created in particular spaces. Foucault describes power as a relation not a thing which is thus not simply repressive or oppressive, but productive and pervades every level of the social body. As such, power exists everywhere and comes from everywhere; it is exercised throughout the social body, operating at the micro levels of social relations, acting as a type of relation between people, a complex form of strategy, effecting entire networks, practices, the world around us, and, it has the ability to subtly shape another's behaviour (Mason, 2010; Dino, 2011). Power "reaches into the very grain of individuals, touches their bodies and inserts itself into their actions and attitudes, their discourses, learning processes and everyday lives" (Foucault 1980, p. 30). As feminist scholar Susan Bordo (1993, p. 117), argues, power is created through “the network of practices, institutions, and technologies that sustain positions of dominance and subordination in a particular domain”. Power works from below, its central mechanisms are not suppressive, but constitutive: bent on creating forces, making them grow and ordering them, rather than one devoted to inhibiting them, making them submit, or destroying them (ibid).

These theories and concepts of power are important to this research as they help to understand the position (or lack thereof) of power that women in Pakistan’s labour market operate from, and to explain how power is generated and exercised in this society. Foucault’s description of the gaze (explained ahead) demonstrates the tangible production of power and control over women in the Pakistani context.
The Gaze

This research draws heavily on Foucault’s notion of the gaze. Using Jeremy Bentham’s model of the “Panopticon”² Foucault explains how power is created and distributed throughout modern society. The Panopticon:

"is an important mechanism, for it automatizes and disindividualizes power. Power has its principle not so much in a person as in a certain concerted distribution of bodies, surfaces, lights, gazes; in an arrangement whose internal mechanisms produce the relation in which individuals are caught up" (Foucault, 1977, p. 202).

Foucault places much importance in the use of the “gaze” as the crucial mechanism in the creation of power. It is through the panoptic, all seeing “gaze” that power is produced. Through the panoptic gaze, individuals are constantly aware of being watched; with this awareness they adopt particular patterns of behaviour that are acceptable to the “overseer” (the one gazing). The constant perception of the possibility of being watched regulates behaviour as individuals begin to internalize the gaze and “watch” or surveil themselves. Eventually, through this “self-policing”, every movement, every action and even every thought will be in accordance with the requirements and dictates of the surveyor. Foucault (1977) argues that the surveillance of bodies through the “inspecting gaze” is a force that creates power and control over individuals.

As Foucault explains,

“There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints... Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze against which each individual under its weight will end by interiorising to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual person..."
exercising the surveillance over, and against himself” (Foucault, 1977: 156)

The power of “gaze” in Bentham’s Panopticon, according to Foucault, has the ability to make individuals abide by and conform to the rules and parameters operating in society. Living under the constant threat of being watched - surveilled - people will begin to monitor their every action themselves. Eventually such an arrangement ensures that they internalize the gaze of the panoptic tower and police themselves:

"He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection" (Foucault, 1977: 202-203).

With this policing, each individual, through “self-surveillance and self correction” will both adhere to and perpetuate the norms that dominate society, and maintain and conserve the acceptable standards – gender among them - of that society.

**Power is learned through the body and the gaze**

Foucault argues that discipline is the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour, and is a mechanism through which power is manifested. Foucault is particularly concerned with the relations between political power and the body, and describes various historical ways of training the body to make it socially constructive (Bordo, 1993). He shows how the body has been historically disciplined to make it socially constructive and that it is through the body that lessons about the power structure are learned. Through routine habitual activity, our bodies learn what is conventional and what improper, which gestures are prohibited and which permitted, how infringeable or inviolable are the boundaries of our bodies, how much space around the body may be claimed, and so on. “These are often far more powerful lessons then those we learn consciously, through explicit instruction concerning the appropriate behaviour for our gender, race, and social class” (Bordo, 1993 pg.16). Through the body and the practices and bodily habits of everyday life, knowledge is learned and power is produced. Although modern power is non-authoritarian, non-conspiratorial, and non-orchestrated; yet it nevertheless produces and normalizes
bodies to serve prevailing relations of dominance and subordination.

**The internalized gaze**

Foucault’s conception of power helps scholars examine how the “gaze” has the ability to control the body through a subordinated internalized “policing”, even as it becomes the device that maintains its own subordinate position. For example accepted societal norms are intimated to individuals, and through a simple method of indicating to individuals an image of how to be a subject, the panoptic gaze has an intrinsic impact upon the subjectivity of the individuals in its field of view (Kripps, 2010). This helps to explain how, through this form of power wielding, women internalize processes, monitor and police themselves, and behave in accordance with accepted gender norms. The subordination of women is “inevitably bound up with the structure of the look and the localization of the eye of authority... she carries her own Panopticon with her wherever she goes, her self image a function of being for another” (Copjec 1994: 13 cited in Kripps, 2010).

My research demonstrates this theory as in Pakistan’s labour market an extra level of vigilance is expected of, and taken upon by women. Women’s subordinate position in society and seeming acceptance of the status quo is not a conscious compliance wherein they recognize that they are tolerating forces that regulate their subjectivity, it is instead an unconscious maintenance and perpetuation of the norms (of subjugation) of which they are a part.

Feminist scholars have used Foucault to understand mechanisms of femininity, and the social construction of gender where women seem to voluntarily embrace the norms and standards that control them and their frame of existence, ultimately becoming a part of the “forces that sustain her own oppression” (Bordo 1993, pg.117). Bordo extends Foucault’s theories of power and discipline to understand how standard contemporary practices influence women and force them to conform to conventional norms of femininity. Although it may seem that women freely choose to do so, Bordo finds that this is a forced conventionalization. Bordo’s examination of the body in contemporary society demonstrates how the “body” has been
constructed conceptually as a “thing”. Tracing back to ancient Greek times, the body has traditionally been seen as merely physical, animal, and a trap for the soul and the spirit, which would otherwise be free to pursue the heights of mental intellect (Bordo, 1993). As bodies are trained and shaped, they are impressed upon by the stamp of prevailing historical forms of masculinity and femininity. Female bodies become docile bodies (ibid.) whose forces and energies once trained by external instruction, internalize the practice making it an internal process of regulation, subjection, conversion and improvement. Portrayed as a trap, the concept of the body is a construct with negative connotations and, similar to Alcoff (1996) and Duncan (1996), Bordo argues that men have been associated with the mind and women with the body.

Bordo draws on Foucault to show how the body is the instrument through which power is enforced and control administered. It is through the body that various ideals can be expressed and power is wielded when women are encouraged to attempt to attain an ideal. For example Bordo’s 1993 study of anorexia and women in the western world suggests thinness, achieved through rigorous diet and exercise regimens that are now standard in the west, showcase the ideal of beauty and slenderness through the body. Women are encouraged to strive for this ideal of slenderness. Examining the ways through which society creates, identifies, understands and delimits the female body Bordo illustrates how, as women are traditionally associated with the body, controlling the body is also the means through which women’s subordinated positions are maintained. In the creation of power, the female body is offered to the viewer as a spectacle, an object of sight, a visual commodity to be consumed (Bordo, 1993). When the body’s functions, shape, clothing, location and movements are subject to constant scrutiny and made to conform to a particular ideal that is championed as the norm, it becomes an instrument through which societal control over individuals is meted out.

Foucault points out that dominating forces that construct the norm are not random or haphazard; particular historical forms, within which certain groups and ideologies have dominance, design them. In the modern context, this dominance is sustained not through the passing of decrees or laws from above – as sovereign power is exercised – but through “multiple processes of different origin and scattered location, regulating
the most intimate and minute element of the construction of space, time, desire, embodiment” (Foucault cited in Bordo, 1993, pg. 26). The gaze, Foucault concludes, “is at once collective and anonymous” – carrying instructions from everyone and everywhere and yet from no one and nowhere (Kripps, 2010).

Through the knowledge that their body is under constant observation and surveillance women act and behave in accordance with the creeds and ideologies of the groups that have dominance in their sphere. Such ideas help explain the reproduction of standard feminine practices of a culture, practices which train the female body docility and obedience to social demands. The social construction of femininity as “delicacy” and “domesticity” is as clear an example of the production of a socially trained, docile body as Foucault ever articulated. The woman’s mobility or the lack of it, her capacity to speak her mind, or her loss of voice, her ability or inability to leave the home, her feeding of others while starving herself, her taking up space, or whittling down her body and willingly contracting the space she occupies (Bordo 1993) – all have symbolic meaning all have political meaning and are very rules governing the historical construction of gender.

It is important to note that the “sphere” may differ between different women. Theories of intersectionality demonstrate how different but interrelated discriminatory forces act upon individuals. Intersectionality theories show also that while a number of factors effect individuals, they do not act upon everyone identically and not all individuals are subject to the same forces in the same way. For example not all women are subject to the gaze uniformly. Different women undergo differing levels of subjection depending on their individual sphere of reference. These modifications may occur due to age, level of education, social and financial status etc. Thus the gaze’s ability to create power is not uniform across all sections and all members within a society and has varying levels of influence.

**Power is extended through the gaze**

Martina Löw (2006) develops Foucault’s theory of the gaze in her explanation of the gendering of spaces showing how the constraining, almost compulsive gaze men cast
at female bodies is always bound up in a complex of power and knowledge. Space is affected through the organization of perceptions, and in particular of gazes and the body techniques that accompany them. Löw’s research explores the means by which the gaze invades space and spatial intrusion takes place. It is exclusively the gaze that can tangibly ignore boundaries, extending one’s own space into someone else’s. Löw describes how men extend their own space into the territories of women by using the gaze, and when the gaze crosses boundaries, it is social power and domination that take over. Both men and women gaze, and yet this type of seeing, observing and being observed, is infused with power and is gender-specific. Women take notice of men’s gazes – men talk about their gazes. Women seek to hide from these gazes, but seldom do women’s glances at male bodies evoke the same reaction. Men do not exhibit the “abashed covering-up/hiding/looking-the-other-way responses that reproduce power relations” (Löw, 2006).

Of course, not all women are disconcerted, abashed or humbled by the gaze. Some women court it and like most men, do not display signs of distress and embarrassment when gazed at. Often these women are then considered “liberated” i.e. free from social conventions or traditional ideas, especially with regard to sexual roles. The power of the male gaze can vary across different cultures. In some societies these liberated women may be viewed as impure, and having questionable character. Hence in these societies women’s response to the gaze can define them, allocate their position within society and determine whether they are included amongst those that abide by the norms of the “good” or are excluded from their company.

**Resistance**

Foucault’s theory of the production and reproduction of power includes the concept of resistance. Foucault argues that resistance co-exists with power - whenever power is created, resistance to that power is also born (Bordo, 1993 Krips, 2010). Power relations are never smooth but are always constructing new forms of resistance, which are perpetual and unpredictable, and thus any power and authority is precarious because as soon as there is a power relation, no matter how oppressive the system, there is a possibility of resistance.
Foucault uses the metaphor of the battle to describe resistance - as in battle, the points of opposition maybe numerous and volatile but the struggle of the oppressed - the “embodied” - is also relentless. Resistance is directed against particular historical forms of power and subjectivity and generates a continual creative escape from location, containment, and definition (Bordo, 1993; Kripps, 2010). Foucault also rejects the politically gloomy claim that systems of oppression are perpetuated, i.e. that even in their acts of resistance, the oppressed act in accordance with the same fixed and regulated range of patterns taught by existing powers and eventually conform to the status quo that is being protested (Krips, 2010). Instead, he argues, transformations will emerge, even if only gradually, through local and often minute shifts in power.

**Female body as national identity**

The creation and establishment of national identity and national character is a process that is built through symbols, reinforced and customized through repetition and the acting and reenacting of rituals. Each symbol and ritual constructs and adds to national character and national identity (Sharp, 1996). Whereas the female body is often a prominent symbol of nationalism and honour, Sharp (1996) argues that the articulation of national identity through gender, particularly the female form, has not been given enough importance in geographic discipline. Many societies refer to the nation as the “motherland” and female bodies are frequently used as its’ symbol. Prevention of foreign penetration or sullying of the “motherland” is crucial to state security. The protection of the nation is paramount; and the symbol of the nation - in these instances the motherland and the woman - is to be protected by masculine agency (Sharp, 1996).

Feminist theories of mind/body dualism can be extended using the theory of woman as national identity. Mind/body dualism explains the gendering of the public/private and its correspondence to masculinity/femininity. I argue that it takes an additional form. In traditional societies like Pakistan, the private is a place that is considered pure, a place where piety can be preserved. Concepts of purity and piety are essential fundamentals of national identity in Pakistan and these concepts are embodied in the
woman and her body. Pakistan’s president General Zia-ul-Haq (military dictator 1977-88) introduced the concept of “Chador aur char diwari” (the veil and four walls). With this concept the burden of transforming Pakistan into a model devout Islamic society, where piousness was a national characteristic, was placed squarely on the shoulders of its women. For their own protection and to safeguard men from their “lustful” presence, the woman’s place was explicitly designated to belong within the four walls of the home - the private sphere. Thus in order to ensure and maintain the piety of self, family, community and nation, Pakistani women should be happy to remain within the confines of the four walls of their house; should they need to venture out of their home, it was best for them to do so with a male relative escorting them - ensuring women’s protection by masculine agency (Singh, 2011; Lahoud and Johns, 2012).

Massey (1994) demonstrates in her study of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century English districts, that women leaving the home to go to work was cause for alarm because it allowed the woman to escape household duties, giving her an identity not associated with husband or father. Such conditions still exist in many traditional societies like Pakistan. Female labour market participation is still very low, but in this society, an additionally alarming situation is thought to be created when the woman leaves the home as now the characteristics and traits of national identity embodied in the woman’s body - piety and purity - are also in jeopardy. In such a society the protection of these concepts is possible only if the woman remains within the space that is allocated for her - the home, the private - once out of it she is excluded from being considered part of the company of the “good” and the “pure”.

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3 Pakistan’s president Zia-ul-Haq (1977-88) sought political legitimacy through a program of Islamisation whose primary consequence was to render more vulnerable the lives of Pakistani women. Women, were enjoined to embrace Chador aur char diwari (the veil and the four walls of the home). Under his chadar aur char diwari policy, women were told to stay behind four walls and discard their South Asian dress, including the highly popular sari, in favour of top-to-toe Arabic Chador. In his Law of Evidence, Zia proposed that the testimony of a woman was not equal to that of a man. In legal matters, two women would have to stand witness against the testimony of one man. The status of women was thus arbitrarily cut in half by Zia.
2.14 Social Exclusion and Inclusion

Dominant socio-political discourses, formal and informal institutions and accepted social norms are some of the factors that construct societies and the spaces within them. The nature of the constructed spaces can in turn determine how inclusive, exclusive or prohibitive these spaces maybe to the different sectoral members and social groups inhabiting them. Theories of inclusion and exclusion help to understand the construction of prohibitive spaces.

Social exclusion has been defined as ‘the process through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society within which they live’ (European foundation, 1195, p.4, cited in Rawal, 2008). First coined in 1974 by René Lenoir (Secrétair d’Etata l’Action Sociale of the French Government), the term “socially excluded” has grown to cover a remarkably wide range of social and economic problems which Sen (2000a) believes are key to understanding the concept of poverty.

Social exclusion is a set of processes, including those within the labour market, by which individuals, households, communities or even whole social groups are pushed towards, or kept within the margins of society. It encompasses not only material deficiency but also more broadly the denial of opportunities to partake wholly in social and civil life (Democratic Dialogue 1995, cited in Peace, 2001). Aasland and Flotten, (2000) consider several variables as contained in exclusion: 1) Exclusion from formal citizenship rights; 2) Exclusion from labor market; 3) Exclusion from participation in civil society and 4) Exclusion from social arenas. Exclusionary forces involve lack of access to factors such as means of communication, vital social systems, housing, public amenities, social security, health services, education services and social citizenship and lack of mobility (Peace, 2001). A form of discrimination, the roots of exclusion are to be found in unenforced rights and market failures (Mathieson et. al. 2008).
Mathieson *et. al.* (2008) argue that the concepts of inclusion and exclusion provide insights into the nature and effects of discrimination, deprivation and poverty. Focusing attention on exclusionary forces and processes can expose the factors that drive inequality, power relationships and agency, revealing some of their causes and effects.

Theorists explain the deprivations caused by exclusion in terms of who and how individuals and groups may be affected. Silver (1994: 541) notes: ‘people may be excluded from: a livelihood; secure, permanent employment; earnings; property, credit or land; housing; the minimal or prevailing consumption level; education, skills and cultural capital; the benefits provided by the welfare state; citizenship and equality before the law; participation in the democratic process; public goods; … humane treatment, respect, personal fulfillment, understanding’. Exclusion develops from the heart of the economy, politics and society. Room (1995) and Estivill (2003) add that inadequate social participation, lack of social protection, lack of social integration and lack of power causes individuals, groups and communities to be increasingly separated and left in a position of inferiority in relation to centres of power, resources and prevailing values. The lack of participation of individuals in society in general and labour markets in particular is a key feature of theories of exclusion (Curran et al., 2007).

Essentially, excluded persons or groups are seen to be in a situation of disadvantage (Rodgers et. al. 1995). This disadvantage may be effected through lack of income or material possessions, their inability to participate, either at all or fully, in the labour market, and they may be disadvantaged in terms of the extent of their legal rights. Amartya Sen (2000) also provides a related perspective arguing that social exclusion focuses attention on the disadvantages arising from being excluded from the shared opportunities enjoyed by others. He draws parallels with the eighteenth century writings of Adam Smith, according to whom: “the (in)ability to appear in public without shame” is an important deprivation in itself.
From the perspective of gender, the concepts of inclusion and exclusion have considerable analytic potential. They can focus attention onto the interaction between numerous exclusionary practices functioning along structural lines related to gender, (as well as ethnicity, class, race, caste, etc.). Similar to theories of intersectionality, exclusion/inclusion are caused by a multitude of interrelated processes operating on gender: the workings of state, market, civil society, the family, and community agents/institutions etc. Dominant players at the community and household levels determine the social norms that govern gender roles and relationships. They operate not only in labour markets but also in other factor markets and under other social, economic, and political policies/laws/regulations; and they may work at the local and national levels as well as the international level (Carr and Chen, 2004).

Consequently, prevailing gender norms and processes create gender inclusive or gender exclusionary and prohibitive spaces, translating into gendered patterns of employment opportunities. For example in the case of women, lack of mobility, cultural restrictions, and time (domestic responsibilities) may be processes with prohibitory effects. In many communities, traditional barriers may prohibit women from going out of their homes to work. For some women, having primary or sole responsibility for household duties, including childcare, also prevents them from working outside their homes or immediate areas of residence, excluding them from certain employment opportunities. Women face more constraints than men and labour markets may be segmented along the lines of gender. Barriers mostly relate to exclusion from factor markets (e.g. lack of access to land, credit, training, technology, infrastructure, information on markets and prices). These may contribute to the concentration of women in home-based activities and to labour-market segmentation by sex within the formal and informal economies alike (Carr and Chen, 2004).

**Social Inclusion**

In the majority of the literature the nature and meaning of “inclusion” is often only implied (Rawal, 2008). Commonly thought of as ‘mainstream’, included is generally defined indirectly or negatively as whatever is not excluded. Thus the ‘mainstream’
are those that are *included* in things that people might be excluded from: for example labor market, economy, society, culture, citizenship, etc. Rawal (2008 p.172) argues, “social exclusion is the datum point against which social inclusion is both empirically measured and conceptually defined”.

While an indirect or inverse definition of inclusion may be customarily accepted, this research explores how systems and processes function very specifically to ‘include’ specific sectors of society into particular areas and spaces. For example in a gendered labour market, certain systems deliberately operate to *include* women in particular jobs. These processes do not merely exclude women from specific spaces but actively seek to include them in certain others.

I combine theories of precarious work with theories of inclusion to understand some of these factors. As discussed, the forces of globalization have altered labour markets around the world especially in developing countries, and while these trends have certainly led to the creation of new employment opportunities for many women, enabling them to become integrated into the global economy, the resulting jobs often have characteristics of feminized labour markets. Typically, in many of these jobs, especially those in the manufacturing sector, wages are very low, working conditions are bad, contracts are rarely written, and benefits such as maternity leave, sick leave, annual leave or health insurance are unusual (Carr and Chen, 2004; Pun, 2004, 2007; Wright, 2006; Caraway, 2007; Harvey, 2010).

Forces of inclusion actively work to draw women into these jobs. Many firms actively pursue a female workforce for their factory jobs – as they are generally considered docile and unlikely to join unions or lobby for better wages and working conditions. These firms customarily terminate employment once a worker gets married or becomes pregnant, excluding them from the workplace, and seek to include other women in their place. The position of homeworkers is even more precarious. Firms and employers exploit the circumstances and (im)mobility of the more isolated homeworking women and include and maintain them in even more precarious positions. Normally paid less than those doing the same work in factories,
many women now included in homework may have once been employed on better terms in factories which laid them off - excluded them - to save costs (Carr and Chen, 2004 etc.).

This research explores how theories of inclusion and exclusion are closely connected with theories of mobility. In recent years, differences in mobility have been linked to the problems of social exclusion (Lyons, 2003; Cass et al., 2005; Sager, 2006). Although inclusion and exclusion refer more broadly to disadvantage, injustice, alienation and lack of freedom, the literature on social exclusion often deals with the right to participate in major social arenas such as employment, health care, and education, obtaining resources, and benefiting from opportunities (Sager, 2006). Forces that act to curtail mobility of individuals based on social categories like gender may also be responsible for creating social exclusion. Together, (and apart) they can have prohibitory effects and create gender prohibitive spaces. For example, theories of mobility describe some of the restrictions and barriers that women encounter that either may prohibit them from leaving their homes, or at least travel far from home, for work. It is not a coincidence that most homeworkers are generally women. Prevailing gender norms habitually condition women to assume the triple workload of paid work, domestic chores and care work (Chaudhary and Sher, 2014). This, combined with factory location and distances that women may find difficult to travel, as well as inflexible work hours, restricts their mobility. Hence mobility, or the lack thereof, is a substantial factor that enables or prohibits women from being included in particular spaces and consequently excludes them from certain jobs.

Additionally, Foucault’s theories of power, control and the gaze, can extend theories of exclusion and inclusion, as well as mobility. This research explores how processes of exclusion and the construction of gender prohibitive spaces are a by-product of forces of power and control as described by Foucault. As discussed, Foucault argues that the gaze is an instrument that can make individuals and societies behave in particular ways that are acceptable to those who hold power. This research explores how through the use of the gaze women in the research may be manipulated and
controlled and be either included or excluded from particular spaces. I examine how women are constantly under the gaze, and are relentlessly watched, or surveilled: when leaving the home, walking on the streets, in the factories etc. Essentially the gaze can act as a force of power and control that is seen to either include these women from certain spaces or prohibit their entry and presence in others. Thus Foucault’s theories of power and control are interrelated with and can extend theories of inclusion, exclusion and mobility.

Conclusion

Understanding Pakistani women’s labouring role in the garment industry brings us from an examination of the structure of the labour market as a socially constructed institution to an exploration of embodied social gendered norms. This brings me to examine gender from the scale of the nation state to the local labour market, to the body. As Peck, (1996) argues, the geographies of labour markets are complex. Heterogeneous labour markets are outcomes of the interaction of different institutions, formal and informal, operating in specific spaces, that construct particular shapes. As a socially constructed institution the labour market evolves based on demographic factors, social norms including the participation of different groups in wage labour, extant systems of social reproduction and mediations by family, firms and the state; traditional and current beliefs about the role and position of gender, race, class, age (etc.) and these beliefs’ impact, both on the individuals ability to develop their skills and to work, and the sector of the labour market they are able enter.

Examining gendered social spaces allows us to recognize how they are constructed and the forces that operate within them. “Space” is gendered as an outcome of social, political and relational processes and power is designed and wielded by groups and ideologies that have historic dominance. The nature of inclusive, exclusive and prohibitive forces within social spaces can regulate and establish power structures and arrangements, which in turn determine positions of the different social categories, including gender.

The next few chapters will employ the theories described above to explain the
construction of the labour market in gender prohibitive or inclusive spaces. Theories of institutionalism will help to understand how formal and informal institutions interact to create, develop and maintain norms within societies and to recognize how they shape economic processes and markets. These theories help to explain the construction of labour markets and how they may take distinct shapes in different parts of the world, despite many having ostensibly similar legal laws and rules. Institutions do not exist in silos but are influenced by the formal and informal rules of other institutions. In Pakistan, for example, the case under study, informal (and formal) rules operating within homes, communities, and the workplace greatly influence the presence and position of women within the labour market. Examining these positions through the lens of institutional economic theories helps to understand particular labour markets’ constructions, shapes and structures.

Similarly, theories of the segmented labour market help to explain the position of women in the segments of the garment industry. While it is established that women are commonly associated with the secondary segment, and that this is increasingly feminized, the secondary sector of Pakistan’s garment industry is further bifurcated with women principally occupying the lower tiers of this segment. Feminization of the labour market of Pakistan’s garment industry has assumed a different shape as men (predominantly) occupy jobs that are globally considered “women’s work” (stitching) thereby contradicting justifications that women’s “nimble fingers” make women more suited to this work. In this segmented labour market all skills, even those like stitching, that globally are deemed more suited to women’s “nimble fingers”, are given male attributes. Homeworking women operate in a monopsony. The fact that capital forces take advantage of exploitable precarious positions by paying them much less than their counterparts in the factories is not lost on these women.

Theories of “space” and “power” are used to explain how women in the case under study navigate and negotiate their positions within the spaces they inhabit. Women’s absence from industrial settings in Pakistan corresponds to the general deficiency of women in the formal workforce. Woman’s contribution to the fields of agriculture and as homeworkers remains largely ignored and unaccounted for in workforce statistics. But the scarcity of women in industry is essentially a manifestation of the
traditional institutional practices that inhabit Pakistani society. This gendering of spaces, in the home, the streets, within transportation and in the factories plays a large role in women’s limited presence in the workforce.
Chapter III

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses, explains and rationalizes the methodology used to examine gendered constructions of labour markets within an industrializing economy. My aim is to justify the choice of particular methods and show how these methods are combined in relation to my research. I state the reasons for choosing Pakistan's garment industry and its related actors within the cities of Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi as my case study. A synopsis of the garment industry in Pakistan is provided. I explain how I gained access to the garment sector workers and the elites within the government and NGO sectors. I reflect in depth on my “positionality” which is instrumental towards this access and in obtaining meaningful data. I offer a synopsis of the mechanisms applied, and discuss why qualitative methods of semi-structured interviews, focus groups and discussions comprise the main body of my research. Finally I discuss how I analyze the transcripts and how the material is incorporated into this thesis and briefly describe how secondary data is used.

3.2 Case Study Research

Examining constructions of an institution like the labour market requires a comprehensive and exhaustive investigation that can be undertaken through the case-study method. Involving an up-close, in-depth, and detailed examination of a subject of study (the case), as well as its related contextual conditions, case studies have long been important tools of natural and social scientists (Yin 1994). Case studies examine the structure of an institution, an organization, a region or a city and through investigating complex phenomenon in its specificity - in its real life context - allows for our understanding to move from the specific to the general. I found the mechanisms of case studies suited my aim to study the complex systems in which labour markets develop specific shapes and structures. Case studies are appropriate research tools when asking “how” or “why” questions, when there is little control over
behavioral actions, and there is a focus on contemporary events. My study and research questions are of this nature and, as Yin argues case studies “are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on contemporary phenomena within some real-life context” (2003a, P. 1).

Yin also argues that case study research is an exploratory process which is important for building theory. Case studies are “useful tools for much of the hypothesis testing research on social phenomena that has gradually moved out of the laboratory into the field and thence to the policy arena” (Yin, 1994, p. 12). Yin (1994) asserts that if done correctly, the case study can both construct a preliminary theory related to the topic being considered and can also be used to test that theory. Thus, conducted with care, case studies can explore theory context and develop a relationship with the literature. In order to understand particular social phenomenon about the evolution of institutions, my questions examine and contextualize specific phenomenon through particular theoretical lens.

The discussion that follows both justifies the empirical context of this thesis and states why this is necessary to explain the processes of labour market construction in Pakistan.

**Process of selecting Case Study**

As Yin (2003a) argues, case studies can construct and build theory and therefore in selecting a particular case study an essential first step is to identify a gap in our current knowledge and understanding. Crucial points to keep in mind are: what is missing in the literature, what gap is the research trying to fill and how is this research original. So this is what I set out to explore.

Commenting on western theorists’ mindsets that their theories can be universally applied, Linda McDowell (1996, p. 22) states: “On the margins exist the voices of those multiple others, subjugated peoples of the Third World, women, people of colour...[who] reveal the particularity of the universal claims of Western theorists”.

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While geographic research has recognized the need to study “the structure of space”, “institutions” and “sectors of the segmented labour market” to further our understanding of labour market construction, much work centers on the global north, or in specific countries of the global south. When Gray (2004, p. 23) states that the “decline of manufacturing and the growth of the service sector continue to be two of the most fundamental changes” in the economy in the last quarter century, she is talking about industrialized countries, not developing ones. Similarly although research on industrializing economies does exist, it often presents findings of one of the low-tech, intensive labour markets as universal and representative of all others.

For example, Harvey (2010) asserts that Globalization processes of the last few decades have given rise to a dramatic mobilization of women who now form the backbone of the global workforce; and several researchers have examined the gendering of labour markets in developing countries. Pun, (2005, 2007), Wright, (2006), Kwan, (2007) and others study some of the institutional (state and corporate) practices at the ground level and find them aimed at guaranteeing that a constant stream of temporary, young women workers enter the manufacturing workforce and source the secondary segment of many South and South East Asian labour markets. But in their portrayal of “factory fathers”, “satanic mills” and “dormitory regimes” Wright, Kwan, Pun and others tend to describe feminizing characteristics and large-scale incorporations of women as universally applicable to the industrializing world. Relatively few however have explored the conditions that prevent women from entering industry in the developing world, particularly in Pakistan. In Pakistan social traditions do not generally enable young girls to venture far from home or live in dormitories away from their families in order to work. In fact, the structure of the labour market in Pakistan exhibits very different patterns that are indigenous and intrinsic to the region.

Although there are some studies on the male labour force and child labour in Pakistan (Ghayur 1996; Ray, R. 2000a,b; Rosati, and Rossi, 2003; Basu and Zafiris, 2003; Khan et. al. 2007), Pakistani women have been largely overlooked in academic research. This neglect limits our understanding of the challenges these women face,
and denies us insights into the dynamics and distinctions existing within labour intensive markets. While studies of women occupying labour intensive industry have centred on China (Wright 2006; Pun 2005, 2007), Mexico (Wright, 2006) Bangladesh (Kibria, 1998; Rashid, 2006; Mottaleb and Sonobe, 2011; Habib 2014) Sri Lanka (Lynch, 2007) etc., surprisingly academic literature has largely ignored situations in Pakistan, and the country’s female workforce has been essentially discounted as either indistinctive or as uninteresting.

This research investigates this gap. I research how Pakistani women navigate the interface between global market forces and themselves. I examine the circumstances that allow or disallow women from improving their economic status through working in industry and why, they may find it still possible to work at the same jobs at home rather than go into a factory. I explore how women within the workplace are denied access to the mainstream jobs and kept to the periphery and why their labour and their output is undervalued.

### 3.3 Unit of analysis - The Garment Industry

I selected the garment industry because it allows me to investigate in-depth the development of feminization of the labour market in response to the impacts of globalization and the mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion within labour markets. It enables an exploration of the institutional influences and constructs that shape labour markets in industrializing economies, and the nature of precarious work, segmented and multi-tiered labour markets.

As shown in the introductory chapter, Asia has become the garment factory for the world (ILO, 2015). In 2014, the developing Asia–Pacific region accounted for $601.1 billion (60%) of global exports of garments, textiles and footwear, which marked an astounding rise from $178.3 billion (43.8 %) in 1995. Asian economies encompass three of the world’s top five garment exporters, and 10 of the top 20.

Overall, in Asia, women are the main drivers of the garment industry and predominantly occupy most of the jobs in garment and apparel production. The share
of women workers in this industry ranges from nearly 60% in Indonesia and Malaysia, 80% in Cambodia and Vietnam, to almost 90% in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka (UNDP, Pakistan, 2013; ILO, 2015). By contrast, as the table shows, in Pakistan the industry is dominated by male workers, mirroring the wider challenge of low female participation in the overall economy. Additionally in Pakistan the secondary segment is the dominant segment of the labour market. Six out of every ten Pakistani employees experiences precarity, is vulnerable to or at risk of lacking “decent work”⁴ (ILO, 2015). Although Pakistan has ratified 36 International Labour Conventions, including the ILO’s 8 fundamental conventions, labour regulation and standards have historically been weak (ILO Pakistan, 2015).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ILO 2015, ILO 2017 Asia-Pacific Garment and Footwear Sector Research

The Garment Industry in Pakistan

Pakistan’s garment industry presents a unique study not only because it offers a low tech, labour intensive labour market - many developing countries have similar characteristics - but because it offers a unique case as one of the only countries in the garment making world that does not have women working in high percentages.

⁴ “Decent work” – includes opportunities for productive work that delivers fair income, security and social protection, freedom to organize and participate in the decisions, and equality of opportunity and treatment for women and men.
Pakistan in fact has the lowest global percentage of females working in the industry. I selected this industry because it allows me to investigate the working practices of individuals, the recruitment and retention practices of factories and the institutional (state/firms/home) constructs that shape this distinct market. Additionally, because it is an extreme, it may make visible the often hidden social structures and forces that can promote or hinder female participation in developing countries.

Pakistan is the world’s sixth most populous country and has the ninth largest workforce, estimated at 184 million (ILO, Pakistan, 2015). Throughout its 70 years of existence, agriculture has remained the largest source of employment. In non-agricultural sector, 70% of employment exists within the largely unregulated, informal economy.

The textile and garment industries are arguably the most important industries of the country. Pakistan’s industrialization began with the development of its textile sector, especially spinning and weaving, shortly after its independence in 1947. As cotton is the second largest agricultural product (after wheat), and the country’s most important cash crop, the industry’s economic importance quickly grew. Pakistan is currently the fourth largest producer of cotton in the world and accounted for nearly 7% of world cotton output in 2017. It has the third biggest spinning capacity in Asia.

In 2017 almost 9% of Pakistan’s total GDP was constituted by the textile sector (which comprises GTF - garments, textiles, footwear, and leather). The industry accounted for one-quarter of industrial value-added goods and, as the second major source of employment (after agriculture), employed 40% of industrial labor force (Pakistan Economic Survey 2017-18). Furthermore 60% of the country’s exports are textiles and garments with a high level of exports to the European Union and the United States (Adhikari and Yamamoto, 2008; Hussain et. al. 2012; UNDP, 2013; ILO, 2015).
Importance of textiles to Pakistan’s economy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Contribution of textiles to National Economy (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share in GDP</td>
<td>8.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment (share of industrial labor force)</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share in national exports</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share in FDI</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share in industrial value addition</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share in large scale manufacturing</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pakistan Economic Survey 2017-18, ISBOB Punjab 2017, State Bank of Pakistan

The garment sector is a significant component of the textile value chain in Pakistan, (which also includes spinning and weaving), and has the largest number of units and share in exports. Its share in national exports is 23% and constitutes 40% of textile exports.

Importance of Garments in the Textile Value Chain in 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number of units</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Production</th>
<th>Exports (US$ Billion)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ginning</td>
<td>1,260</td>
<td>20 million bales</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinning</td>
<td>517*</td>
<td>13.414 million spindles</td>
<td>199,000 rotors</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaving</td>
<td>124 large 425 small</td>
<td>170 integrated 28,500 shuttle less 400,000 power looms</td>
<td>1 billion sq meters cloth</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finishing</td>
<td>10 large 625 small</td>
<td>4.8 billion sq meter cloth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garments (Woven)</td>
<td>50 large 2,500 small</td>
<td>670 million pieces</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knitwear</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>350 million pieces</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Towels</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>10,000 Towel Looms</td>
<td>53 million pieces</td>
<td>0.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthetic fabric</td>
<td></td>
<td>636,000 tons per annum</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Pakistan Readymade Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association; APTMA. Figures for 2016-17 taken from Pakistan Economic Survey 2017-18 and TDAP.

Pakistan’s garment industry is however, comparatively younger than textiles, with the major existing factories established during the late 1980’s and the 1990s. But due to its labour intensive nature relative to the more capital-intensive textile sector, the apparel manufacturing industry in Pakistan is the single largest industrial employer in
the country. The garment sector’s portion of the country’s total labor force is 2.4%. The textile and garment industries collectively are crucial to Pakistan’s labour market as they are the country’s largest employers overall after agriculture.

Employment in Major Industries in Pakistan 2014-15

Source: Labour Force Survey 2014-15

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1 The apparel-manufacturing sector employs over 2 million people (Labor Force Survey 2014-15)
Garment and textile factories are primarily located in Pakistan’s Punjab\(^6\) province due to Punjab’s importance as both a cotton growing region as well as its greater significance as a more established industrial region. The Punjab province is the largest economy in Pakistan. Punjab’s share of Pakistan's GDP was 54.7% in 2000, 59% in 2010 and 61.2 % in 2016-17 (Tahir, 2018). Punjab has relatively more advanced industrial frameworks than other parts of the country and is the largest contributor to the garment sector.

Lahore is the capital city of Punjab and an important industrial centre. In 2015 Lahore’s industrial economy was 17% of Punjab and 8.3% of the national economy

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\(^{6}\) Pakistan has four provinces: Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
Lahore is one of three cities (Lahore, Sialkot and Faisalabad) that form the major industrial cluster of Pakistan’s garments industry in the North making the garment sector a vital employer in the region. Each city tends to specialize in specific products: Lahore mainly produces denim goods while Faisalabad concentrates in hosiery items (knitwear). Sialkot is more diversified, exporting sports and technical wear garments in both knitted and woven categories (Khawar et. al. 2018).

Female participation, factory size and scale
Despite the lowest female participation rate compared to global standards, the garment industry is still the most female intensive industry in Pakistan. In fact, 84% of total female workforce participation in industry in Pakistan is in the garment sector. i.e. this sector has the most women working in all of Pakistan’s industry despite being the lowest rate in the world. Even within the overall textile sector, garment manufacturing firms employ the highest share of female workers compared to textile, footwear and leather industries (Khawar et. al. 2018).

Employment in Garments, Textiles, Footwear and Leather by Sex: 2010-2015

Garment factories in Pakistan are divided into small, medium and large-scale. Large-scale factories generally have over 500 and often above 700 workers, medium sized
factories employ 200+ workers and small-scale factories regularly house up to approximately 100 workers. The garment industry is also bifurcated between manufacturing units that produce for the local market and those that produce for export. Manufacturing for exports generally takes place in large-scale factories, with goods for local use being produced in medium and small units.

All garment-manufacturing units in Pakistan are locally owned and operated. While factories engaged in export often supply to many global brands and corporations, no global corporations have established their own factories in Pakistan. Thus many factories manufacturing for export, however large they may be, often operate as supply chains of global brands and companies.

Location of the factory and size seems to have a direct relationship on the proportion of women employed in the organization. Karachi, the most urbanized city of Pakistan, has a higher proportion (28%) compared to Faisalabad (17%) and Lahore (11%). Lahore being less gender friendly compared to Faisalabad is a surprise as Lahore is a larger and more urbanized city (Khawar et. al. 2018).

The share of female employees is the highest in medium-scale garment enterprises, followed by small and large-scale firms. For instance, in the formal sector, there are 4 males for every female in medium scale firms, compared with 27 males for each female in large-scale firms and 5 for one female in small units (Khawar et. al. 2018).

**Male/ female employment ratio**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry/size</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Textile</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garment</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 Statistics for the number of factories engaged in local or export manufacturing are not available.
Homework

Garment industry homeworkers are organized in clusters. Clusters are found in the outskirts of the main cities or within residential areas of the industrial zones that factories are located in. Contractors or middlemen generally distribute and collect work from homeworkers. Homeworkers produce goods for local supply; factories engaged in export do not employ these workers to produce their goods.

Research Group

The research group comprises garment factory women and men and homeworkers of the secondary segment of Pakistan’s industrial labour market. The factories are located in the urban cities of Lahore and Karachi. These workers belong to the low-income class (just over $2/day) and are engaged in employment that is often irregular and precarious. The women of this class/socio-economic background tend to live either in the city outskirts where housing is cheaper, or in the industrial centres where commuting is economical. The education level of women (and men) of this group is low and many may be illiterate. Most women learn stitching within their homes while men learn this skill in local tailoring enterprises.

This case study has several factors that enable an in depth analysis of my research questions. First, being a large established industry there are many firms I could potentially approach. This was important considering the time constraints for data collection. With almost a third of the country’s employed labour force, there is a large workforce (of men and women) that can be potentially examined and that are employed within the formal as well as informal sectors. Second, I chose an industry where despite the scarcity compared to global statistics, there are still more women working in garment factories relative to other manufacturing enterprises (like cement, fertilizer, edible oil, sugar, steel, tobacco, chemicals, machinery, food processing etc.). In fact, 84% of Pakistan’s total female industrial workforce participation is in the garment industry. Third, as I wanted to examine homeworking women as well as employees of factories, the garment sector provides a large source of workers who are employed in the informal sector of the industry i.e. a high number of informal
homeworkers of the labour market are engaged by the garment industry, and many of them are women.

Fourth, this is an industry that has very distinct characteristics of precarious work and segmentation. It comprises of primary (managerial) and secondary (factory) jobs, and in many instances both segments are housed on the same premises. Essentially, the primary segment is not included in my scope of research, but being able to speak to elites within the industry’s primary segment was important to obtain a more thorough perspective of the research questions. Similarly, in order to address some elements of precarious work and a multi-tiered segmented labour market and concepts of intersectionality, understanding the secondary segment employees’ view of their managers (and vice-versa) is also important.

The research should not be viewed as a study of the Pakistani garment industry per se but rather as a study of a workforce that operates in gender prohibitive or inclusive spaces, the role of formal and informal institutions in constructing these gendered spaces and their subsequent impact on the position of women in a society. Examining the nature of inclusion and exclusion can reveal a lot about the socio-political and economic geographies of a particular labour market, reflecting which features and practices are held valuable and which may be displaced over time.

3.4 Research Design

Location
The fieldwork for my research is conducted in Pakistan, in the cities of Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi. These cities are chosen as locations for a number of reasons.

Lahore is the main focus for factory and homeworkers due to its importance in the garment sector and the relatively more advanced infrastructural frameworks already in place. A number of garment factories (including export oriented factories contracted by leading world brands) operate in Lahore and its surrounding areas and
the State run Lahore Garment City\(^8\) is also located here. Furthermore homeworking women engaged by the industry are clustered in particular locales of the city. Lahore thus constitutes the base for research with garment industry factory workers and homeworkers as well as factory management and elite.

Karachi is considered the financial capital of Pakistan and the hub of manufacturing, industrial and economic activity. The most developed urban city of Pakistan, Karachi factories are known to have the largest number of women working on their premises. Similar to Lahore, homeworking women are found in clusters in the outskirts of the city. I intended for Karachi to be the second base for the research (after Lahore) but as discussed ahead, the law and order situations in the city did not permit this. However, I managed to meet with some home-based workers of the Karachi industry.

Islamabad is the capital of Pakistan and houses federal institutions like the Ministry of Textiles and the Ministry for Human Resource Development, as well as the ILO, Pakistan. Islamabad provides the site for my interviews with federal government officials and the ILO, Pakistan.

3.5 Access and Positionality

Getting in

I identified a garment industrial cluster in Lahore, which forms the basis of the study. However, gaining access to the factory and the workers was not easy. In order to interview the professional elites and non-elites I knew that I would have to contact the appropriate people, introduce the research in an appealing way, and try to gain the trust of my interviewees. This is important both to stimulate candid discussions, and to connect me with other enterprises. However a key challenge facing my research was how to best use my own networks to gain access to the relevant people in the

\(^{8}\) Lahore Garment City is a project of the Ministry of Textile Industry, Government of Pakistan. An institutional infrastructure of public-private partnership, the project’s aim is to attract foreign/local investors to invest in the garment sector of Pakistan and increase its exports of value-added products. The Project targets foreign/local investors who would prefer to hire state of the art manufacturing factory space rather than invest their capital in land, utilities and construction. The garment city provides ready-made factory space, an in-house training centre, testing laboratory, conference and exhibition halls, buyers, offices and other facilities. A second Garment City exists in Faisalabad.
industry. I started by using my personal contacts, who either work in some capacity within the garment sector, or others who are in government departments and have various dealings with the factories.

**Positionality**

I have worked with the Government of Pakistan for more than ten years as a Customs and Excise officer and have significant contacts within Pakistan’s Customs and Excise, and Income Tax Departments. This both facilitated as well as hindered entry to the factories. It was helpful as I requested a (former) colleague at the Income Tax Department to try and introduce me to the chosen sample factories with whom she may have contacts. However, as she initially began her requests to the factory management by introducing me as an erstwhile Customs and Excise officer, the factory representatives were reluctant to allow me entry for fear that it was some sort of ploy by the Government to learn about their financial (and other) workings. My friend then decided to introduce me with only the most relevant occupational characteristics - as a Ph.D. student researcher of the garment industry - and this proved acceptable to the factory representatives. They agreed to interviews with me and allowed me to meet with their workers. Once I met with these managers, and put them to ease about the nature of my research, they were willing to ask their colleagues at other factories and helped arrange visits to them. I stressed that all firms and individuals who participated would have full confidentiality and anonymity (unless they desired to be cited). I managed to visit five different enterprises (including two export factories). I had 15 focus groups of 5-7 women each with a total of 95 factory floor workers. I also had 13 interviews with members of the management.

Research participants included individuals on multiple levels of the firms, comprising the elites including CEOs, managing directors, production managers, style and design managers and factory-floor managers. The non-elite workers on the factory-floor included stitchers, croppers, packers, and quality control.

My connection with government departments was instrumental in gaining access to some of the highest governmental representatives like the Federal Secretary of Textiles, Pakistan. I interviewed the Federal Secretary and he also arranged an in-
depth visit to the “Lahore Garment City”, an important cluster of garment factories in the outskirts of Lahore. I also interviewed a key representative of the ILO, Pakistan.

Personal factors are also important and influential for this research. I am a Pakistani and have lived part of my life in Pakistan, in Lahore and Karachi. I know three languages spoken in Pakistan – English, Urdu and Punjabi – and as discussed ahead, being able to converse in official as well as colloquial languages was important to elicit crucial information from the research subjects, both elite and the non-elite. I found that being able to shift between the languages also made the interviewees more comfortable.

Secondly and also very important is the fact that I am a woman. As a Pakistani woman I gained access to other Pakistani women without having to overcome orthodox reservations regarding gender that exist in this traditional society. Women (and the men in their families) are more reluctant to have other men talk to or engage freely with women in this society. My gender thus helped with access to both women as well as men (who share fewer of these reservations and are often more ready to talk to other women).

Having lived part of my life in Pakistan I am also very immersed in the culture of this society and have shared experiences with the research participants, including those relating to gender that are discussed in this research. I have made every attempt to remain objective during my fieldwork and not have leading questions etc. but the shared experiences with other women have been used to advantage because of my immediate understanding of the issues that research participants discussed. For example, when women talked of being harassed on the streets and in buses etc., because I can relate, they were more open and forthcoming in providing information.

Having lived and studied in elite institutions of USA and UK was also instrumental in my being given audiences with government officials and factory elite. Being introduced as a researcher from the University of Cambridge was, to some extent, helpful as the elite research participants took my work seriously and gave me a considerable amount of their time.
Access to Homeworkers

I attended a “Homeworkers Conference” held in Lahore in September 2016, which was a collaboration between the ILO (Pakistan), UN Women (Pakistan) and a local NGO called “HomeNet”. While I obtained some secondary data from these organizations, the CEO of HomeNet also agreed to arrange visits for me to two clusters in the outskirts of Lahore where homeworking women are particularly engaged in garment making work. I made several visits to these areas and was able to both interview and have focus groups here. I conducted 13 focus groups of 5-9 women each, and four individual interviews, which enabled access to 105 homeworking women. Visits typically occurred within the homes of the women. I went to several different homes to conduct interviews and focus groups, and other women of the same neighbourhood were requested to join us at their neighbour’s house. Each focus group normally lasted from about an hour to an hour and a half. Interviews ranged from 45 minutes to an hour.

Breaking the ice

Some of the most interesting and enjoyable parts of the research process for me were my meetings and interaction with the female garment workers. This includes sessions in the factories as well as homeworking women.

The respondents and I have much in common. All of us are Pakistani women. We look similar, and wear the same kind of clothes i.e. the traditional “shalwar-kameez” or baggy trousers and long tunics. We speak the same language and were also relatively the same age.

My first introduction to the factory women was during their lunch break, which they took in the factory canteen. Meeting them during lunch was suggested by a manager whom I had interviewed a day earlier, who advised that a unique and intimate discussion can ensue between people who “break-bread” together. Men and women have separate lunch and break hours in the factories in order to preserve aspects of segregation and allow for privacy. Thus my first meeting was in a relatively private
space with just women present. This enabled a more open and frank discussion without apprehension for the ladies of being overheard by men or their managers.

Initially there was a feeling of class divide between the workers and myself. This was true especially with the first group of respondents. I got the feeling that they considered me someone from a different social and economic class that would perhaps talk down to them. To overcome this, I played up the fact that I am a student, unemployed, and thus have no income or at least live on a small stipend and my savings, and therefore appreciate the value of money. I had my very small voice-recorder and my laptop with me, which were used with their permission, to record them. As I demonstrated my unemployed/student status and began to eat the same food as they were, the women relaxed and started to speak. I explained my research to the respondents and once they grasped what I sought to understand they were quite forthcoming with their answers.

Interestingly, once the women started answering my questions they encouraged each other to speak. One worker was particularly forthcoming about the desperate circumstances that caused her to work in a factory. She even began to cry, which brought tears to my own eyes as well. I believe the women recognized my genuine desire to understand their predicaments and they opened up with their stories.

These ladies took me to the factory floor and introduced me to another group of workers who were stitching on machines. I talked with these women as they continued to work. One lady took a particular liking to me and even ordered a bottle of Coke for me to drink. I did not want her to spend her money on me but the other ladies started joking that this particular woman made the most money of them all and encouraged me to make her spend some of it. The ladies engaged in, and included me in, friendly banter. The developing relationships enabled frank and open discussions of my questions.

My rapport with homeworkers was slightly different as playing down class differences was more difficult. They could see I had driven up in a car and also that I was paying for their refreshments etc. as we talked. But again class did not prove an insurmountable obstacle. I met the homeworkers in August, which is an extremely
hot month in Lahore. Temperatures range around approximately 40° C to 45° C. As we sat together on the floor on straw or cotton rugs and mats, a pedestal fan was switched on. Soon after however, the electricity, responding to the city's energy-saving program, was switched off at the main grid\(^9\). We suffered for two hours through the sweltering heat together.

I believe language was also an important tool in making homeworkers comfortable. We all speak the provincial Punjabi (with some Urdu), which is a very informal language that can potentially inspire intimacy. The colloquial nature of our talk in the vernacular made respondents comfortable and forthcoming with their observations.

There was an unspoken question of what I, in my capacity, could do for them. This went unvoiced for a while until one woman asked me to open a factory for females in the vicinity. I told her I wished I could but that I don't have the money to. She joked that I should sell my laptop and set up the factory with the proceeds. We all laughed but there was certain wistfulness in their demeanor that I think seeped into and was recognizable in my own as well.

Additionally, I shared some of my own experiences of harassment on streets and on public transport, which made me more relatable to them. This made talking about their difficulties in going out to work easier. We also shared anecdotes about how we deal with our husbands and in-laws as married, Pakistani, workingwomen. One young woman even spoke about being physically abused by her husband and we as a group quietly sympathized and commiserated with her. The atmosphere within the homes of the homeworkers became very inclusive towards me enabling quality data collection.

**Karachi - law and order situation**

The main site for data collection was Lahore but I had also planned to collect data from industrial settings in Karachi as Karachi factories have a greater number of women on their premises and many homeworkers. However, the law and order

\(^9\) Due to Pakistan's energy crisis, electricity is switched off at the main grids in most cities at regular intervals often for two or more hours at a stretch, for up to 12 hours per day.
situations in the city prevented me from doing so. The stability of Pakistan is often shaky and there is a high threat from terrorism and sectarian violence throughout the country. This personally impacted me when I was carrying out my research in Karachi. In Karachi, every time I had prearranged visits to factories and/or areas of homeworking women, and had made appointments with relevant individuals and factory representatives, I was not able to attend them as a “law and order situation” (bomb explosions and/or shootings) was reported. There were consequently increases in security force presence and restrictions on movement within the city. This happened every time I tried to perform any fieldwork activities in Karachi and I had to curtail my study here. Instead, I requested a group of homeworking women to meet with me at a safe place (where I was residing) and arranged for their transportation for the purpose. They agreed to my request and I was able to conduct one focus group in Karachi with 10 homeworkers. This visit lasted about one and a half hours.

**Design**

The case study design comprises of primary and secondary data sources and observation methods. The manner of my research is complex as it undertakes the examination of multiple actors that comprise research “upwards” - through an elite set of actors like government officials and corporate and industry representatives, where power differentials can affect access (Hughes, 1999; Cormode and Hughes, 1999) and research “downwards” – through factory workers, with possible added problems of access to women, especially if they work from their homes. Given that my research encompasses both the elite (those with power) and the non-elite (those with less power), the investigative approach requires “qualitative descriptive research to look at individuals, a small group of participants, or a group as a whole” (Hughes, 1999).

To obtain as complete a picture as possible, I employ a variety of case study methods combining detailed fieldwork including semi-structured interviews, focus groups and discussions. Focus groups and discussions were conducted with the factory-floor and home-based workers. Semi-structured interviews and discussions were conducted with factory management and government and NGO officials. This forms my main source of primary data. I had also intended to use questionnaire surveys with the elites, but as discussed ahead, was unsuccessful in doing so. Secondary data comprises of analysis of existing documents, reports and data.
3.6 Qualitative methods

Given the nature of this research with its substantive interest in individual work experiences, qualitative methods are the ideal data collection process. Bryman asserts, “the way in which people being studied understand and interpret their social reality is one of the central motives of qualitative research” (2015:8). In my research I feel that detailed and in-depth semi-structured interviews, focus groups and discussions are valuable tools to this thesis as a means of eliciting information on men’s and women’s labour market experiences. I feel the use of these methods allows for research participants to speak more comfortably and in-depth about a particular issue or experience, enabling me to obtain a better understanding of their lived social realities.

As Yeung states, “since quantitative data is not sensitive to variations in experiences at the individual social actor level, they are not necessarily valid measurement of the rationale and behaviour of the social actors” (2003: 448). My research questions require a detailed investigation of people's personal experiences in order to get depth, nuance, complexity and roundness in data, rather than surface patterns that a quantitative approach might provide (Mason, 2002).

There are a number of reasons why I decided to use semi-structured qualitative interviews and focus groups for my research. To provide a thorough investigation into the gender divisions within Pakistani firms, I needed to understand as Sayer, (1992) argues, the context in which behaviour occurs, as well as the mechanisms through which it occurs. Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 27) assert that interviews offer, “the opportunity to unpack issues, to see what's there about what lives inside, and to explore how they are understood by those connected with them”. As a qualitative approach can describe the form or nature of what exists and is adept at looking at how things operate (ibid), it enables me to examine people in-depth. While interviewing participants and conducting focus groups, I asked questions to try and explore what lies behind, or underpins a decision, attitude or behaviour. Therefore because the research questions being asked within this thesis require a great depth of insight into the working practices and experiences of individuals, qualitative collection methods including semi-structured interviews and focus groups are appropriate to the aims of this research. Through these a greater understanding of social realities are gleaned.
and better insight into some of the mechanisms that are involved in individuals decisions, attitudes and behaviours obtained.

Through the use of these methods I am able to study individual and collective working practices and through that unpack issues and uncover intrinsic concerns. For example explorations of family dynamics reveal the lived realities of women and the consequent impact on the choices they make; some participants talk about the minutest body movements and eye contact at work, which are intrinsic to choices they make about their own behaviour and actions. Because the interviews are semi-structured, and focus groups informal, these discussions obtain insights about how participants understand their lived realities and social existences.

**Interviews and focus groups**

The core of my research subjects were participants from the secondary segment of the garment industry, i.e. garment factory workers and homeworkers. Primary segment workers were some elites including factory owners and management, and government, NGO and ILO representatives.

**Interviews**

My intention was to have interviews with elite officials, which included federal executives within the Ministry for Human Resource Development, Ministry of Textiles, representatives of ILO Pakistan as well as garment sector industry associations. Interviews were also intended for industry management and employers and some workers.

I created semi-structured interview questions that are broad and loosely structured, and served more as a *guided conversation* following the intent of the research questions. This served as a draft for moving closer to eliciting experience and meaning from participants (Silverman, 2000). The purpose of the interviews is to
explore the views, experiences, beliefs and/or motivations of individuals and obtain detailed insights on specific matters pertaining to the research.

Interviews are considered particularly appropriate for exploring sensitive topics, where participants may not want to talk about certain issues in a group environment (Silverman, 2000). Hence this method is appropriate to my research, especially with the elite participants. Thus as regards the factory management, as the questions involve issues regarding their workers, the managers were more comfortable talking in individual settings rather than amidst a group. The interview style and questions were broad and loosely structured (i.e. required more than a yes/no answer) helping to define the areas to be explored. I used Britten’s (1999) approach and tried to provide participants with some guidance on what to talk about, but being open-ended, the structure enabled the “discovery or elaboration of information” (Britten, 1999; Gill et al. 2008) that is important to participants but may not have previously been thought of by myself. This is particularly important in this research, as for example, participants discussed certain behavioural patterns that I had not thought of, which provide insights into why women do not work in more lucrative jobs. Using the semi-structured interview also allows digressions within the conversation in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail, which enables collection of robust data. I tried to put respondents at ease, build up confidence and rapport and generate rich data.

Focus Groups

Focus group research has the potential to draw upon respondents’ attitudes, feelings, beliefs, experiences and reactions about a particular topic. Compared to individual interviews, which aim to obtain individual attitudes, beliefs and feelings, focus groups can elicit a multiplicity of views and emotional processes within a group context (Morgan & Kreuger 1993; Gibbs, 1997). This is important due to the nature of my research. The group settings of focus groups enables an examination by both participants and myself, and uncovers issues and discovers some more intrinsic processes and mechanisms that drive or dissuade women from either working outside of their homes, or if in factories, remaining in the jobs that have lower pay and status. Additionally, focus groups extract information in a way which allows researchers to realize why an issue is salient, as well as what is salient about it (Morgan 1988;
Kitzinger, 1994; Gibbs, 1997). So following a guided conversational approach, the focus group questions prompt discussions to gain information about individuals’ views and experiences on the various issues of a topic.

Another benefit of focus groups is the interaction within participants. Being more informal, the focus group setting allows for candid discussions between participants that provide insights into how participants understand their own situations. This is particularly important as I am trying to understand some of the existing norms that dictate and structure the workings of the labour market. The interaction enables participants to ask questions of each other, to agree or disagree with each other and offer alternate explanations about issues and, as Kitzinger, (1994) and Morgan (1988) suggest, re-evaluate and reconsider their own understandings of their specific experiences (Morgan 1988; Kitzinger, 1994; Gibbs, 1997).

I know that focus groups can be difficult to assemble, and tried to get as representative a sample as possible. Focus group discussions were conducted with groups of garment sector workers within the factories and within the homes of homeworkers. Consequently I had some focus groups exclusively with factory men, some exclusively with factory women and some with home-based women workers.

**Focus Groups for Women**

Separate focus group discussions with female workers were arranged keeping in mind the traditional Islamic values of modesty and gender segregation prevalent in Pakistan. I felt that women in the society under study are likely to be more comfortable in their own group and probably speak more freely without men present. Additionally, due to existing societal traditions of gender segregation, I felt that many home-based women might not be permitted (by male members of their household) to take part in focus groups if other men were present.
All focus group discussions followed a guided conversational approach. Sequential questions were asked but the participants were able to provide detailed comments and elaborations. Workers were asked about their working conditions and practices, employment processes and their issues and concerns within the labour market. Workers’ insights of the reasons for workplace disparities between men and women that exist in the labour market were explored.

By its nature focus group research is open-ended and cannot be entirely predetermined (Morgan 1988). As the moderator I understand that I have very little control over the interaction and must allow participants to talk to each other, ask questions and express doubts and opinions; my main task was to keep participants focused on the topic and elicit information.

**Online survey questionnaires**

At the beginning of my fieldwork activities, I intended to develop and use online survey questionnaires with the elites of different factories. I telephoned individuals in worker and employer federations who may have access to employers and after being passed from one to the next on the basis of ‘relevance’ one individual finally suggested that I create a survey and offered to distribute it to employers within his clientele. I developed a survey for employers and managers using “Qualtrix” and sent him the link and survey questionnaire. However despite several attempts to contact him again he did not take my calls. I decided then not to go with online surveys as a method for data collection.

**Documents and Secondary Data**

I developed a macro-perspective on the labour market through an over-all assessment of the organizational structure and labour composition of the firms in the target area by analyzing secondary data. Data on employment figures, gender statistics, recruitment processes, wage and compensation distribution procedures and home and factory based working arrangements provide details about the different related institutions. I consulted data from the Department of Labour (Government of
Pakistan), the Statistical Bureau of Pakistan and national and international statistics from the ILO, Pakistan, and reports of Workers and Employers federations. I also obtained relevant information from some women’s organizations and particularly from those working with homeworking women. Some of this material includes newspaper stories, project evaluation reports, public fact-finding reports, Internet documents, and surveys published by labour institutions and women’s organizations.

An advantage of using data from the ILO, UN Women and the Statistical Bureau, Pakistan as well as some NGOs is that there is a recognized reliability and validity of the information that is provided, which saves time and expense of collecting my own data and also allows for corroborating findings (Bourque and Clark, 1992). However, in order to guard against bias within the secondary data, it is important to be aware of why the information is gathered by that organization. In this case the documents I use are considered for where and how they were sourced and questions, such as those suggested by Hoggart et.al. (2002) like: Are there blatant errors in the document or does it seem consistent? Are there different versions of the record available? Does it spring form a dependable source? For what purpose was it created? were asked when assessing them.

3.7 Empirical analysis, development of theory and writing up

Analyzing my data, theory building and writing was an iterative process. The first step was to transcribe all my interviews.

Language

It is important to mention that all interviews/focus groups with firm and home-based workers were conducted in Urdu and Punjabi, (national and provincial languages of Pakistan) as these are the languages the men and women could easily converse in. Conversely elite interviews – firm, NGO and government representatives - were largely in English, but with smatterings of Urdu and Punjabi also. The bi- and tri-lingual nature of these interviews is because I tried to conduct them as semi-discussions, keeping them conversational and informal so that the respondents could
voice their true opinions. They were then transcribed and translated as closely as possible into English. Where a direct translation from Urdu/Punjabi to English evades me, I choose a word with the closest contextual meaning to what is being said. Transcribing (and translating) the interviews and focus groups was an extremely labour-intensive task and took three and half to four months to complete.

I then analyzed the transcripts sentence by sentence, giving each idea a name that represented a phenomenon. Time had been spent in the planning stages to think about my core research questions and develop the interview questions that enable me to investigate them. Accordingly I had already split my interview questions into groups. First I explore the individual’s work history that includes why they are working, how they were recruited or found/got a job, what difficulties they tackle in getting to work and any specific problems they encounter at the workplace. The second set of questions explore matters around firm and management and the issues management has in recruiting and retaining workers (particularly women); primary/secondary market characteristics and how individuals navigate between the sectors are also explored. The third segment looks at institutions and the industry as a whole and is more specific to overarching institutions - the state, corporations and firms and their role in developing a labour market.

In order to investigate my research questions and analyze my research data, I use qualitative data analysis technique suggested by Taylor and Bogdan (1998) in which they suggest that qualitative investigation should combine identifying themes and discovering new insights, while also taking into account how the data fits into current theories. The first approach is a technique used in grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), described by Taylor and Bogdan (1998: 137) as “discovering theories, concepts, hypothesis directly from detail rather than from a primary assumption, other research or existing theoretical frameworks”. The second method I use to make sense of my interview/focus group data is analytic research and involves seeing how my data fits into prevailing explanations of social phenomenon. The advantage of combining both approaches is that it allowed me to both refine and refute existing theories (Taylor and Bogdan 1998).

So as to go through the data systematically, I took the most commonly recurrent
sentences and viewpoints and put them into groups. Moving back and forth between the research questions, interview data and theories, I categorized the groups into themes. During the fieldwork, it became apparent there is a micro-level construction of “space” which grew to become the most significant theoretical framework for this research because it highlights how individuals navigate the physical spaces they inhabit. In my research this proves to be the most important theme showing how individuals, and women in particular, traverse the interface between themselves and the labour market and the nature of the difficulties they experience.

My analysis extends to all my interview data, in order to investigate new themes and insights. To analyze my case study I rely on ‘theoretical proposals’ because as Yin argues these “propositions would have shaped your data collection plan and therefore would have given priorities to the relevant analytic categories” (2003 a: 112). These theoretical propositions helped me decide what data to focus on in depth but as empirical findings emerged and themes began to be more defined, I was responsive and amended theoretical assumptions accordingly. For example as mentioned, the construction of ‘spaces’ in the society under study is gendered and women's position, power and mobility within these gendered spaces are closely intertwined. As a key strength of qualitative methods is that they can explore unanticipated issues as they emerge (Yin, 2003), I began to explore this new insight in greater depth, because this was not a preconceived idea before I undertook my empirical research. In this manner, producing this thesis was a continual process.

**Writing**

James (2006) advocates a fourfold approach for writing up. First, I selected material based on themes and experiences stressed as most important, and which best confirms and/or contradicts previous analyses. Second, I selected suitable quotations that either exemplify views of many workers or are contrasting in someway and use quotations from as many different participants as possible in the final write-up. Third, after each quotation I describe the positionality of the actor, such that “the reader might then draw their own conclusions regarding the possible biases and allegiances shaping a respondent’s testimony, and hence the quality and meaning of the quotation used” (James, 2006: 301). Finally, I try to highlight the complexities and contradictions of
many of the quotes to exhibit important variations between workers, as well as between the workers and the elites.

**Conclusion**

Examination of the gendered construction of the labour market in Pakistan demanded high levels of time, resources and patience. Qualitative methods (semi-structured interviews, focus groups) help me in capturing the complexity of processes as well as allow for flexibility and responsiveness to new ideas when investigating working practices, job seeking, recruitment and retention practices, skill development and the institutional influences, formulations and formations of the industry and market.

Qualitative semi-structured interviews and focus groups are especially useful to understand people's motivations and analyses of their own and others’ circumstances. Fielding (1993: 157) suggests that “it is by listening to the interviewees talking that it is possible to gain some insight into their worldviews and see things as they do”. Accordingly, the challenge is not to make speculations about behaviour but to seek to capture the uniqueness of human experiences. The methodology I employ is fundamental for my research process because it values “peoples knowledge, values and experiences as meaningful and worthy of exploration” (Seale, 2004:182). It also enables me to examine voices and experiences that may have been overlooked or misrepresented i.e. those of women in this society, and to capture meaningful processes and context across the research project.
Part Two
Section I

Chapter IV
Role of Institutions

4.1 Introduction

What is a constitution? It is a booklet with twelve or ten pages. I can tear them away and say that tomorrow we shall live under a different system. Today, the people will follow wherever I lead. All the politicians ... will follow me with tails wagging.

General Zia-ul-Haq, President of Pakistan (September, 1977)

The above quotation by an erstwhile military dictator of Pakistan demonstrates the tenuousness of certain institutions. The constitution of a country is in many ways considered sacrosanct, yet even this formal, written document has very little power, as the quote shows – can be torn up – and a different system put in its place. The state, a formal institution itself, can manipulate other institutions and systems, both formal and informal, to its advantage but equally, can be reciprocally controlled. Theory suggests that formal institutions are significant in providing shape and structure to societies. But these formal institutions are essentially ineffective and easily displaced unless fortified by informal systems, beliefs and norms that are fundamental to the operation of a society.

Theories of the institutional construction of the labour market explain that formal and informal institutions may work in collaboration as well as in contradiction to construct, structure and develop a labour market. As institutions shape the actions and practices of sets of individuals in a particular community (Hodgson, 2006) they generate distinct characteristics and features and produce diverse labour markets.
“Institutions” can be specific official bodies of the government and public services, as well as non-official rules and conventions such as customs and behaviour patterns important to a society. Different institutions have particular and unique features, and thus each labour market is shaped, defined and regenerated in accordance with the institutions that both create it, and that operate within it.

This chapter explores some of the formal and informal institutions that shape the labour market in Pakistan. I argue that sometimes formal and informal institutions work to reinforce each other while at other times they may contradict each other. Endeavouring to understand why so few women work in industry in Pakistan, I examine how formal and informal institutions interact to promote or constrain gendered patterns in Pakistan’s garment industry.

Drawing upon theories of institutionalism, this chapter will primarily examine two different institutions (state and firms) and at specific scales. Geographic processes operate at different scales within institutions. For example, states can be broadly examined at various scales:

State - National/Federal
   Provincial
   Local
Similarly the firm can be examined at different scales:
Firm - International corporations
   National companies
   Local factories

Different scales of geographic phenomenon interact, and institutional patterns seen at one level may often be observed at other scales. There may also be fluidity of movements across scales, while at other times there may be a jumping of scale (Flint, 2016) (e.g. global → local, bypassing national scales) as is seen in a local firm’s interaction with international corporations and buyers.

This thesis examines the state primarily at the federal (national) level; firms are examined both at international and local scales.
Section I explores the state (federal) and its construction of gendered identities within the labour market of Pakistan and argues that formal laws, rules and regulations are instrumental in creating a gendered labour market. It demonstrates how the state (a formal institution) has used informal institutions and women’s position within them to its own advantage. Section II examines the institution of the firm. Also formal, this chapter shows the firm as an institution with competing and contradictory institutional norms. I argue that while the firm can often benefit from utilizing different formal and informal institutions, at times the firm may find these institutions to be less favourable and profitable. Additionally, drawing from theories of social production and reproduction this chapter demonstrates the resilience of informal institutions within the home. An evaluation of traditions, beliefs and customs that influence and stimulate gendered arrangements within the labour market is made.

4.2 Section I: The State

Laws and public discourses that originate from the state can influence how gendered identities are constructed (Showstack-Sassoon 1987; Waylen, 1996). Gender inequalities are often subsumed within the state, but through part of a dynamic process, gender relations are also partly constituted through the state’s mechanisms (Waylen, 1996). The state may regulate gender and sexual relations by instituting policies pertaining to the family, population, the labour force and labour management, for example through employment policies, the provision of child care and policies for education (Mohanty, 1991; Blake 2014). The garment industry of Pakistan demonstrates incorporation (and sometimes the absence) of many of these institutional regulations.

The ILO, Pakistan identifies that the State of Pakistan has not introduced or adopted an employment policy for women.
How has the State helped the women who work in the industry?

“No actual policy (for women employment) has been developed by the State. The provinces are solely responsible for dealing with women’s development. Recently, the federal government has made a “model law” for equality of opportunity - trainings included, for equal wages for equal value of work - for men and women, and for no discrimination on the basis of minorities, sex, creed, religion, ethnicity etc. and sent it to the provinces. It was sent out in 2014 but so far no province has taken [implemented] it or complied with it, [they have] not even answered the inquiry. One province, the KPK (Khyber Pakhtoon Khwa\(^{10}\)) sent a reply saying that the existing laws in their provinces are already in compliance with non-discrimination...but women hardly come out of their homes in the KPK to go to work so there’s hardly a need for compliance there anyway.”

(Saad Gilani, Senior Programme Officer, ILO Pakistan, male, age 60)

As the quote above demonstrates, in Pakistan the federal state has never developed a policy for the employment or advancement of women. Although a “model” law for non-discrimination against women in the workplace was forwarded for implementation to provinces by the Federal government, no compliance has so far been seen. Vossen (2012) argues formal rules give a state the right to rule over its subjects. When a state passes an ordinary law, it is legally equipped to enforce it and its subjects have reason, and an obligation, to obey that law. This quote demonstrates that the state in Pakistan has made little to no effort for women’s development at any scale. Even when the federal state created a “model law” there has been either no implementation at the scale of provincial governments, nor has any pressure on them to comply been applied at the federal level. Thus as there has been no effort by the state to push for its enforcement, the law has not passed onto becoming “embedded in the shared habits of thought and behaviour” that, as argued by traditional Veblenian theorists, is necessary for a formal institution to work.

The State of Pakistan is signatory to ILO core conventions that call for equal opportunity, equal wages for equal value of work and non discrimination on the basis

\(^{10}\) A province in the north of Pakistan
of sex, but there has been no concrete implementation of these by transferring the concepts into working policies. Without the passage and enforcement of an ordinary law, there are no grounds, as Vossen (2012) argues, for the state to expect compliance. Thus no steps are taken towards improving women’s employment.

Homeworking women corroborate the ILO’s view and regard the Federal state as apathetic towards developing women’s employment opportunities. The following is a typical response:

Does the government do anything?

No, they just come and get votes when it’s election time. They’ll do something that’s visible. Like our councillor installed a water tank. But not anything that will improve employment or anything.

(Rubina, Homeworker Gulberg Town Lahore, female, age 30)

Providing further evidence of the state’s disinterest in women’s development, the above quote supports Waylen’s (1996) argument that gender identities and inequalities may be formally constructed by the state. Both the quotes above show the state has formally maintained gender inequalities through inertia and non-action.

When a state or formal institution does pass laws or create policy, unless they are embodied in individual dispositions they are meaningless (Hodgson, 2006). The ILO senior officer speaks about “commands” being given during a GSP 11 Plus (Generalized System of Preferences) Treaty Implementation Cell meeting, held at the Pakistan Prime Minister’s office, where women’s labour force participation and the wage gap were discussed:

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11 The Generalized System of Preferences, or GSP, is a preferential tariff system which provides a formal system of exemption from the more general rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Pakistan benefits from a generous tariff preferences arrangement with the European Union, (mostly zero duties on two thirds of all product categories) under the GSP+ aiming to support sustainable development and good governance. In order to maintain GSP+ Pakistan has to keep ratification and effectively implement 27 core international conventions on human and labour right, environmental protection and good governance.
“We talked about how high the gender wage gap was (in Pakistan) and there was an order passed by Nawaz Sharif (Prime Minister) that within the next ten years the gap should be less than 10%. But just passing an order doesn't do anything, there’s been no implementation and they make a sweeping royal command that is put in the minutes of the meeting. And then they moved to the next point.”

(Saad Gilani, Senior Programme Officer, ILO Pakistan, male, age, 60)

Pakistan stands at second to the bottom of the Global Gender Gap Index, 2015, i.e. 144 out of 145 countries in the world (Hisam, 2016). Women are paid 23% less than men for similar work. In the quote above the ILO representative speaks of the way state officials take recourse in rhetoric rather than action. The quote shows that if laws and orders passed by formal institutions are not implemented in a way that they become habitual or “embodied in individual dispositions” as argued by Hodgson (2006), then “formal” or not, they have inconsequential effects. They are “mere declarations” or “proclamations”, rather than effective social rules. As the quote demonstrates, when informed of statistics of the gender wage gap in Pakistan, the Prime Minister passed an executive order declaring that it should be cut by more than half within the next ten years. No implementation measures or enforcement methods were discussed to determine how this figure is to be achieved and no plan of action for making the directive a reality is laid out. A proclamation such as this may eventually become an effective rule but only, as Hodgson (ibid.) suggests, through additional powers, such as persuasion, legitimization, or enforcement. Consequently, legal or “formal” laws such as the declaration made by the Prime Minister in this quotation, that do not have resilient “informal” backings or do not become norms, are what Hodgson calls unsupported legislative declarations that have inconsequential impact, rather than real institutions.

Historically in Pakistan, policies to promote women’s economic and social equity have not been high on the state agenda. Pakistan's regionally diverse social orders, customs and institutions have together with the state (Jalal, 1991) kept women in subservient positions. Researchers (North, 1991; Assaad, 1993; Hodgson, 2006; Lauth, 2015) have found that informal institutions are often more dominant than formal ones and that without the backing of informal rules and customs very little change can be made by formal institutions, even seemingly powerful ones like the
state. The Federal Secretary for Textiles Pakistan, explains the formal institutions of state and informal customs have competed in Pakistani society and argues that archaic customs and their informal rules create and perpetuate women’s weaker positions.

“As far as human resources is concerned the work in the garment sector is ideal for women and throughout the world (the garment sector) is being run by women. But not here. It’s our traditions ... These are wrong traditions ... in our society there are very old thinking patterns. Centuries old traditions are given the position of holy religious decrees whereas they have nothing to do with our religion (Islam). This is the biggest draw back for our progress. Unless we open our minds it’ll stay the same... Things are changing little by little but once something’s got into the mind it’ll take time to get it out.”

(Amir Marwat, Federal Secretary of Textiles, Pakistan)

In the quote above the Federal Secretary identifies the garment industry as an ideal work environment for women as demonstrated by women’s overwhelming presence in garment factories around the world. He draws attention to the continued importance of traditional and time worn customs that function as informal rules and conventions surrounding gendered labour. So deeply ingrained are certain informal customs and rules operating in this society that they are considered sacrosanct. Despite being informal, they have become habitual, are ingrained in individual behaviour, and as theorists have argued, have subsequently assumed the position of powerful institutions. The quote establishes the theory that institutions and their rules must be ingrained in individuals’ belief systems to have lasting impact. The age-old customs, being deeply rooted in people’s minds, have greater impact than a formal passage of law can immediately have.

The Chairman of a garment industry has similar views and blames the position of women in Pakistan on traditional sanctions imposed by the clergy:
“In order to improve society there needs to be a lot of education. Another thing against the freedom of women is the clergy - the clergy is very strong here and even the government. is at a loss of what to do with them. But the clergy are criminals the Holy Prophet never allowed what they preach.”

(Ismail Khurram, Chairman, Comfort Factory Lahore, male, age 65).

The above quote is indicative of many respondents who feel members of Pakistan’s clergy reinforces age-old traditions and by sanctifying them, makes them inviolable. Even a formal institution such as the state is often ineffective in dealing with the clergy’s reinforcement of traditional beliefs. The Chairman explains that the customs supported by the clergy have nothing to do with Islam, and the traditions and rules are not a part of formal religious instruction, but due to lack of education, nobody is ready to challenge them. Once again it is informal, unofficial rules imbedded in the customs of society that hold sway and the state is unable to change them by just passing a law to that effect.

Another reason the Chairman gives for the government’s apathy to instigate changes that empower women, is the government’s fear of losing its “vote-base” or constituency of uneducated men.

“Because of the economic conditions everybody needs to work - wives, husbands, daughters, sons ... But egos are hurt, and the superiority rights of men are challenged but that needs to change. Unless there is a change in feelings and beliefs of superiority, nothing will improve... we’re getting (women) to do hard labour in our homes and fields. So the government has to act. But they will do nothing. But they will not do anything because they have a vote bank of uneducated men. The vote base for both (political) parties is uneducated men.”

(Ismail Khurram, Chairman, Comfort factory Lahore, male, age 65).

In the quote above, the industry chairman draws attention to many theorists arguments that when women work outside the homes, even when it is need based, they gain access to their own income and may begin to enjoy freedoms that evolve from a separation of home and workplace. Feminist writers of the global north (Alcoff, 1996; Duncan, 1996; McDowell, 1996) have explained women’s access to freedoms
drawn from waged work and separation from home cause alarm for male heads of households who then resist changes. Theory suggests that many women in the developing world, particularly those of traditional societies such as Pakistan are “subsumed within the household headed by the individual male” (Waylen, 1996, p. 16). The household is a private, domestic area and is considered to lie outside of the domain of state jurisdiction and interference. Furthermore any laws and rules surrounding relations between men and women can become an area of contestation when attempts are made to alter the existing pattern of power relations especially in the household (Waylen, 1996).

These theoretical arguments are applicable to situations in Pakistan. In Pakistan the continued stability of the family unit, the power relations that exist within it and more specifically the social control of women are a fundamental part of the social order (Jalal, 1991). Any attempts made to change power relations within the social order, like encouraging women’s empowerment through economic activity, might be controversial and challenged by the male members of a household. In Pakistan’s political elections, men vote more than women and thus are the “vote-base” or main constituency of political parties vying for election to government. Women comprise a much lower percentage of the electoral process and many of those who do vote are often likely to cast ballots similar to their husbands. If state and political parties seek changes that effect power relations within the homes and award more power to women, they may have to deal with negative reactions from men. Affected men may withdraw their support from political parties attempting to change power dynamics within their homes, which would lead to unfavourable electoral outcomes. Consequently, in this society, it is not in the strategic interests of state political parties to change existing social structures, and women’s position and conditions continue to remain the same. Even during eras of military regime, when elections and votes are not a consideration, state rulers have not tampered with the intrinsic beliefs upholding the existing social order and women’s subjugated positions within them. In fact, benefitting from the fact that informal institutional rules are more powerful than formal, the state under particular military regimes has used informal institutions to its advantage. It has upheld gendered power relations maintaining the social control of
women conserving the stability of the family unit, and the informal beliefs surrounding these as a means to legitimize its rule.

State creates specific laws

In addition to the state and Pakistan’s political parties utilizing and preserving informal institutions and rules for their own specific protections and benefit, the state has also passed legislation that retains women within the home and augments sexual discrimination in the workplace. Laws for work hours and timings, and laws in effect in the 1950s and 1960s forcing women to resign from their occupations after contracting marriage are prime samples (it is difficult to ascertain whether the law came first or whether it simply gave legality to a norm). And perhaps nothing provides a more concrete example of the state’s role in navigating beliefs in society than the laws passed during the military regime of General Zia-ul-Haq (1977-1988), who proclaimed himself divinely ordained to steer Pakistani society to a condition of moral purity (Jalal, 1991). Legislation\textsuperscript{12} created during Zia’s time essentially cut women’s legal status in half, instructed them how to dress to be perceived moral and sought to confine them to the walls of their home, severely restricting their mobility.

Conceptions of freedom include a person’s ability to move about in geographical space (Sen 1999, 2002a; Sager, 2006). Sen’s (1999, 2002a) ‘capability approach’ to freedom, stipulates that the option to choose between different sets of capabilities reveals a person’s advantage, and capability to function. Thus the opportunity to travel that physical mobility provides, can improve individuals’ choices. Zia-ul-Haq’s conceptions of morality confined women to the home, thereby imposing a restriction on women’s mobility. This effectively reduces the greater prospects that mobility affords – potential for education and training, the freedom to work in different locations, access to information and access to final goods and factor markets - which are all more accessible to those who have mobility (Sen, 1999, 2002a; Sager 2006; Uteng, 2011).

\textsuperscript{12} Many of Zia’s discriminatory laws for women persist today like the informal embracing of \textit{chador aur char diwari} (the veil and the four walls of the home), and the Law of Evidence, which arbitrarily cut women’s testimony and status into half.
State laws have helped shape and structure the gendered patterns in contemporary Pakistani labour markets. For example formal laws in Pakistan legalize different working hours for women and men in factories. The law stipulates that women must not work in factories beyond 7pm unless factory managers provide transportation to take them home. Thus, if the factory requires workers to work beyond 7pm, as many do, the nature and type of work in which women can be engaged becomes limited. In most garment factories, stitching jobs are paid at piece rate i.e. the compensation for stitching a particular item is agreed upon between management and workers, and workers are paid based on the number of items they manage to stitch in a day.

Factory work-hours mostly range from 9am to 5pm with overtime stretching to 7pm. As factories become more established however, and receive more orders from buyers, management often extends working time to be able to complete assignments. Many factories have either created work “shifts” or extended working times for factory employees. Consequently the regular work hours that originally ended at 5pm are extended to 7pm, and often now stretch to about 10pm. Workers, particularly male stitchers, are generally happy to work for longer hours and either be paid “over time” rates\(^\text{13}\), or, through working longer durations, to complete a larger number of items and be compensated per piece accordingly. However, many women do not find staying late at the factory easy. Factory managers explain the extensions of work hours into the night as being a key reason why many women do not work at stitching jobs in garment factories of Pakistan.

“\textit{We are in a labour intensive environment. So the work doesn’t end at 5pm. Often people work till 10pm, sometimes all night. For females, working so late into the night isn’t an option. We have to have them leave at about 7pm that’s the law as well.}”

(Farooq, Comfort Factory Lahore, manager, male, age 48)

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\(^{13}\) Generally one and a half times the hourly rate.
Women from factories in Pakistan also agree they cannot work at more lucrative stitching jobs because the work timings for these stretch to 10pm. Many women who held stitching jobs had to quit when the workday extended to later in the night.

“There used to be a lot more (women working in stitching). When we first started out there were more females but slowly it dwindled down to much less. When the job nature and factory structure changed to shifts, girls started leaving. They could do the day work, but not the evening and night. The girls couldn't stay late.”

(Yasmeen, Nishat Textiles Export Factory, Lahore, stitcher, female, age 35)

“In the beginning they told us that the place was primarily for women. In one (stitching) line you could often see mostly women, if there were 60 in a line, only 4-5 were men, the rest were women. But when the process (work timings) changed the women quit. There were no shifts in the beginning. There wasn't that much work it (factory) was just starting you know, so just the general day shift. But then work increased and people had to sit late.”

(Riffat, Nishat Textiles Export Factory, Lahore, floor manager, female, age 27)

But why did they start leaving?

“The timings changed – for stitching there was one shift, but that was stretched to 8 or 9 o’clock. The stitching requires late sittings - maybe 10 o’clock or so and that was tough on the girls. So they had to leave. Some also left because they got married, or other domestic problems.”

(Riffat, Nishat Textiles Export Factory, Lahore, female floor manager, age 27)

The above quotes demonstrate the unavailability of women to work at more lucrative jobs like stitching due to work hours that extend into the evening or night. This is an example of how formal and informal institutions interact to constrain women. Formal institutional frameworks, including the factory management and the state, have acted to limit women occupying jobs that they are otherwise capable and willing to perform; informal institutions relating to home and family add additional influence. As the two respondents state, the factory employed women as stitchers and there was a time when women occupied a large percentage of factory stitching lines. But as
orders grew, in order to complete them, management required work hours to extend late into the evenings, placing women at a disadvantage. The law states that women cannot work in factories beyond 7pm, unless transport is provided. Coupled with this, are the informal rules (discussed later) that demand that women be back in their homes before nightfall and take care of their household duties.

As the quotes show, women are perfectly capable of working at the more lucrative stitching jobs. There was no complaint about the quality of their work or the work environment, but stretching the shift timings to beyond 7pm caused a problem. While the respondents did not directly state that compliance of the law made them leave, stretching work hours beyond what was acceptable or suitable - both officially and unofficially - forced women to leave the more lucrative stitching positions. Pakistani factory women’s mobility is curtailed if no official (factory) transport is available to them after 7pm, which prevents them from working at the more lucrative positions and jobs. The quote of the male manager shows that factory management will have known that stretching timings beyond 7pm without providing transport to women amounts to breaking the law. They will also be aware of the difficulties that women face due to unofficial and unwritten rules that demand that women return home before nightfall. Thus, the factory management’s decision to stretch the working day without making arrangements for women’s mobility interacts with the formal and informal rules that serve to regulate and limit women’s economic occupations/opportunities and become forces of exclusion.

Another example of how national state law, a formal institutional structure, limits women’s occupational status and increases gendered labour market segmentation is the legal ban on married women working in the public service sector – a law that was effective in the 1950s and 60s in Pakistan. Although this law was eventually repealed in 1973 when the constitution assumed responsibility to ensure full participation of women in all spheres of national life, and women were allowed to join the higher echelons of Pakistan’s civil service, the onetime law remains a powerful constraint on women’s economic activity after marriage. Having rooted itself into the norms of society, the law’s informal influence remains powerful even decades after its repeal. As the following quotes demonstrate, many factory managers and women workers,
including home workers, speak of women having to leave their jobs after they get married:

“Before, here (in the factory), there were more women working now it’s much less. A lot leave when they get married.

(Asma, Nishat Textile Exports Lahore, stitcher, female, age 35)

“There is a training facility here (in the factory) for women to train for 3 months but then if they get married they often leave, many times their husbands or in-laws don't agree to her continuing to work after marriage, so they have to leave.”

(Ashraf, Nishat Textiles Export Factory Lahore, floor manager, male, age 50)

As the quotes above show, many women who work before marriage quit their jobs after getting married. The contradictions between formal and informal institutions are apparent as although there is no longer any legal compulsion on women to leave jobs after getting married, informal systems operating in society still influence them to do so. This reinforces Hodgson’s (2006) belief that by structuring, constraining, and enabling individual behaviours, institutions have the power to mould the capacities and behaviour of agents in fundamental ways: they “have a capacity to change aspirations instead of merely enabling or constraining them” (Hodgson, 2006 p. 7).

Additionally, in Pakistan, when most girls get married they traditionally leave their parents’ home and go and live with the husband and the rest of his family, in their home. This is often referred to as the “joint-family system”. Alluding to theories of power dynamics operating within the male dominated (husband’s) household, the factory floor manager explains that not just the husband, but the husbands’ family, i.e. the girls’ in-laws, may also object to their daughter-in-law’s working status. Thus within this power dynamic, many women, despite undergoing training and having lucrative stitching jobs, are forced by their husband and their in-laws to resign after marriage.

A floor manager at a factory substantiates the contradictions between formal and informal institutions and the power relations functioning within homes.
“Most of the ones (women workers) who get married leave the job after that. Men – their husbands - don't tolerate it and make their wives quit their jobs. It also happens that men won’t marry girls if people find out that the girl works at a factory. That’s the truth”.

(Mr Latif, Nishat Textiles Factory, Lahore, floor manager, male, age 60)

Gendered power relations operating within homes, and informal rules that award a position of power to a male and his household - husbands and their families - over girls, are evidenced in the above quote. Although the law requiring women to resign jobs after marriage is discontinued, women have to abide by the informal laws effective in their households. If men “cannot tolerate” their wives working, women abide by the unofficial rules functioning within the home and resign from their jobs.

It is difficult to ascertain whether the 1950-60s law barring women from working in government service after marriage caused a change to existing behaviour, or whether it simply gave legality to a social practice. The contradictions between formal and informal institutions are apparent however as although there is currently no legal compulsion on women leaving jobs after marriage, informal systems at work in society force them to. “Formal” institutions always depend on non-legal rules and inexplicit norms, as embodied in informal institutions, in order to operate (Assaad, 1993; Hodgson, 2006). Extending this, social rules in practice may be given official status through legal sanctions. As institutions are a special type of social structure with the potential to change agents; formal institutions evolve with help from the informal (North, 1991; Assaad, 1993; Hodgson, 2006). Drawing from this, once informal institutions evolve (perhaps, as in this case, with help from the formal) and are integrated into tradition and practice, reversing them is not an automatic process as they are now incorporated in custom and habit.

Thus, as the research shows, even today, despite there being no binding legal requirement for women to leave their jobs after marriage, Pakistani women respond to what Huntington, (1965) and North, (1996) call the structures and mechanisms of a social order that are "stable, valued, recurring patterns of behavior". While informal
institutions do not carry the weight of law, they, like formal institutions, create a solid structure to society.

Theories of inclusion and exclusion and concepts of mobility help to understand how formal and informal institutions interact to restrict women’s entry, and/or presence within factories. Illustrating the European Foundation’s definition of social exclusion (1195, p.4, cited in Rawal, 2008), the formal and informal institutions described above act as “process(es) through which individuals or groups are wholly or partially excluded from full participation in the society within which they live”. Formal laws passed by the state, regulations and policies adopted by firms and informal traditions, customs and norms in society interact to become forces of inclusion or exclusion within the workplace.

For example the state’s laws restricting work hours for women, and the firm’s need to extend hours to complete jobs without providing means of mobility, are formal rules that act to exclude women from factory work and particularly the higher paid jobs. The informal norms wherein women are expected to be within the four walls of their homes, especially in the evenings and night, interact with the formal rules to produce these exclusory effects. Many women still abide by the erstwhile formal law that prohibited women from working once they were married. Although no longer a formal institution this law has become an informal norm that serves to exclude women from economic opportunities.

Forces of mobility have similarly exclusionary and prohibitive results. As mobility is described as a pursued rather than an assured “good” (Uteng 2011), which can have enabling effects, those that have access to it can advance both socially and economically. Thus women who are deprived of mobility, through for example, the expectation that they will remain within the four walls of their homes in order to maintain their piety, are denied access to this “good” and hence opportunities for advancement. The formal and informal rules that deny or curtail women’s mobility act to exclude them from full participation in the society within which they live, and inhibit their economic advancement.
4.3 Skill Development

In addition to the legal apparatus, Mohanty (1991) argues that (along with other social institutions), the state regulates gender and sexual relations by instituting policies pertaining to education and skill development. As discussed earlier Pakistan’s legislature lacks a comprehensive policy for women’s development. However training institutes for women exist and many of these are for development of women’s garment making skills. However the government training institutes do not appear to be training women for industrial garment work. Any training provided to women in these institutes equips them for work on a household sewing machine, which is of no practical use in the industrial factory environment. Several factory managers and floor managers explain this situation.

What training are government training centres running?

“Obsolete training that has nothing to do with industry. The machine is the household machine and completely different form the industrial machine. She can have a diploma from there but is useless to us. She is jack-of-all-trades cutting, sewing but master of none. There is no actual (factory oriented) skill development. Maybe they’re preparing her for homework but not industry. Even if she knows how to cut, she can’t work the industrial cutting machines.”

(Naseem Khokhar, Human Resources Manager, Style Factory Lahore, male, age 40)

In the technical training centres, (government or private) nobody, no teachers, trainers, administrators have ever come to the factory and seen what’s going on here either to guide the students about the environment or to train for what’s required. The machines that are in the training centres aren’t those that are used in the factories... they are home machines. The girls that are learning are trained for the home - there is no market-oriented training for them.

(Khalid Chaudhry, Manager, Comfort Factory, Lahore, male, age 55)
As the quotes above show, an “industry-institute gap” exists in which the institutes that provide garment-making training do not develop skills applicable for the industrial workplace. Pakistani women and girls are provided training in institutes, which may be either government or private enterprises, but the machines that they are taught to stitch on are household machines, not industrial machines. Thus any state enabled training that is being provided by the institutes is not geared towards equipping these women to work at industrial factories, but at home.

Further evidence that the skills women learn in the institutes are not meant to prepare them for industry but for the home is provided by the manager’s description of practices at training centres. There is no attempt by training institute administrators to learn about industry requirements to ensure teaching and training meet industrial standards. Likewise the institute makes no attempt to ascertain what skills are required to work at a factory in order to develop students’ marketable skills for factory work. Thus the garment industry training institutes functioning in Pakistan, whether governmental or privately run, provide training that is obsolete to industry, consequently cultivating in women the skills that only equip them to work within the home.

To a large extent, the garment training institutes generally train women. Men’s skill development largely takes place in tailoring enterprises (discussed in chapter 6) and then in factories. Another manager explains that training is critical to work in a factory.

“Training is essential. And there are no industrial training centres. The training that is provided in the centres that exist is on the regular home machines that are completely different from the industrial machines. Industrial machines have particular specifics - the needles, the thread, the thread count, how many stitches per inch. In regular situations, you know what I mean, on household sewing machines, one garment is stitched on one machine. In industrial, one procedure is done on one machine and then passed on to the next for the next procedure. So there are specifications, regulations and procedures that you need to follow, it needs training.
You won’t find training institutes that even give training for industrial stitching, plus even less to females.”
(Shamaila, Production and Design manager, Nishat Textiles Lahore, female, age 28)

In your experience, are women keen to be trained?

Yes, they want to be trained. Yes, because, when you come to any kind of industrial work you need to be trained and women do want the training. If you go outside you’ll see a lot of women applications who want to work here. They know how to sew in their homes and want to work here to get a regular monthly income. But they’re not trained.”
(Shamaila, Production and Design manager, Nishat Textiles Lahore, female, age 28)

As the quotes above show, industrial stitching performed in a factory is very different from home-based work, and training is essential for garment factory workers. Furthermore the manager believes that women are willing and keen to be trained. Many women know how to sew and work in their homes and want to earn a regular income at factories. They are aware that they do not possess the skills needed for industrial stitching and are keen to be trained for the lucrative stitching jobs. However, alluding to the occupational discrimination faced by women, the manager maintains that even if institutes did prepare their trainees for a factory-based environment, she felt they would not be inclined to teach industrial skills to women.

Thus while the Pakistani State does not have an established policy for women’s development, it has set up training centres intended for women’s learning and advancement and many of these provide training for stitching and garment making. However the State manages to regulate gender and sexual relations via these institutes. All training that is provided in these institutes is designed to equip women of the society under study with skills that keep them in the home. These women are taught to sew on household machines, which enable them to work as a tailor, and garment maker, but only within the confines of their home, or home based environment where these machines are generally in use. Industrial skills that may equip them to work in factories are not provided. Thus skills that may encourage women’s advancement and enable them to leave the home to work in an industrial
environment are kept from them. In the event that women do choose to work based on the training provided, they must do so from within their home.

4.4 Section II The Firm

The Firm and the State
Numerous theorists (Lobao et. al. 2009; Strange, 2009; Lall, 2014; Stiglitz, 2014) highlight that in many instances the nation state’s power is challenged from below and above. With the reduction of barriers of entry to markets and the growth of the multi-national (MNC) or trans-national company (TNC) in the economic institutional structure, power arrangements between existing institutions have shifted, with substantially increased authority assumed by firms. The state has in many instances abdicated its legislative function and this declining authority is reflected in a growing diffusion of authority to other institutions and associations, notably firms. This is a fundamental reminder of the important interaction of different institutional players.

The Federal Secretary of Textiles, Pakistan, substantiates this theory and speaks about different firms who manipulate government policy to suit their needs. APTMA (All Pakistan Textile Mills Association) is an alliance of textile exporters and is arguably the most powerful industrial lobby within Pakistan.

“Here APTMA has a very big hold on the industry and policymaking...whatever policy has been made is always in accordance to APTMA which is a very powerful lobby with a lot of money; they did not allow any other sector to grow – whatever policy was made, was made to favour them. For example a few months ago, we imported yarn “super fine quality” from India that was used in garments. The garment makers wanted that import to continue but APTMA made such a noise and demanded imposition of an extra regulatory duty (RD) of 10%. The other group was very upset because we raised the cost of raw material by 10% but there was nothing we could do.”
(Mr Amir Marwat, Federal Secretary of Textiles Pakistan, male, age 65)
“Now the government has made textiles zero rated, they (APTMA) neither give tax nor receive refunds... this change was made in the budget for 2016/17. Their sales-tax have been zero rated which means they neither give nor get refunds for tax and duty...you see they complained of liquidity issues. Even their machinery is zero rated custom duty.”

(Mr Amir Marwat, Federal Secretary of Textiles, Pakistan, male, age 65)

In the quotes above the Federal Secretary explained how particular firms and institutions have a powerful stronghold on the state’s ability to pass laws and make rules. Textiles are Pakistan’s largest export and APTMA (All Pakistan Textile Mills Association), the lobby comprising of large textile export firms, is the most powerful manufacturing-exporting institution in the country, which substantially and critically influences government policy. These firms manipulate state regulations to suit their own interests often to the detriment of other industrial sectors’ growth. In the past, as well as now, many government policies are created to favour them. Even taxes, levees and duties have either been imposed on other associated industrial sectors (notably the garment industry), or have been discontinued on APTMA’s products to bolster their exports.

The situation described parallels conditions in many poor countries, where states were once the masters of markets, but now rely on capital - firms, and economic institutions - to integrate their economy into the global economy (Stiglitz, 2014). In such circumstances, as with APTMA’s pressure on the government, the state is often ready to comply with the requirements of capital (firms, economic institutions), and create policies and strategies including different business laws and regulations, taxes and levies and labour costs and rates, that benefit capital (Gross, 2004; Seidman, 2004; Hoffmann, 2006; Kepler, 2006 Strange, 2009).

Along with the growth of capital and firms’ influence, richer states also assume positions of authority over developing countries that may seek development aid or trade concessions to enter their markets. For example, Pakistan was awarded the
“Generalised System of Preferences (GSP\textsuperscript{14}) Plus” status in 2013 by the European Union, granting Pakistani products duty free access to the European market. Certain international rules and regulations, including occupational safety and health and environmental standards etc. must be complied with by industry (and state) to maintain the preconditions of the trade concessions. Pakistan has also ratified international conventions detailing among others, safety and health and labour and environmental standards. Obligatory compliance with particular standards has sometimes altered the power balance between developed and developing countries.

“GSP means that you have duty free access to European markets. Because of this GSP Plus status we have to be compliant with the international rules and regulations - safety and security of workers, welfare, environment friendly, etc. I’ve found that the factories that are exporting based on GSP, are more compliant to the their (European) clients than with our (Pakistani) laws.”

(Mr Amir Marwat, Federal Secretary of Textiles, Pakistan, male, age 65)

In the quote above, the Federal Secretary draws attention to how local firms may sometimes experience conflict due to the altered power balance between developed and developing countries. Highlighting the power shift between state and firms, the Federal secretary holds that the local factories manufacturing in Pakistan who supply to European clients, are more inclined to comply with rules, guidelines and industry codes because it is required by their clients than because Pakistani law stipulates it.

Factory owners and managers in the garment industry further confirm this phenomenon.

“Yes, and also we are required by the brands to train. They can audit us and often have surprise audits, to check. There is greater compliance of (rules of) the brands that we supply to, than the Pakistan government. We do this more under pressure of

\textsuperscript{14} Pakistan benefits from a generous tariff preferences arrangement with the European Union, (mostly zero duties on two thirds of all product categories) under the GSP\textsuperscript{+} aiming to support sustainable development and good governance. In order to maintain GSP\textsuperscript{+} Pakistan has to keep ratification and effectively implement 27 core international conventions on human and labour rights, environmental protection and good governance.
the buyers than the law of government. Everything is written in the law, but the compliance is more because of the buyers that we supply to.”

(Khalid Chaudhry, Manager, Comfort factory Lahore, male, age 55)

The importance of international firms and brands and the influence they hold over local companies in Pakistan is evidenced in the above quote. The factory manager says that training is provided to employees within their factory and admits that this is a requisite of the brands they supply to. The manager’s affirming that buyers can conduct random audits provides further evidence that the different scales that institutions operate at makes a difference to the balance of power between them. The institution of the firm may operate at international, national and local levels and international firms exhibit the power to control the workings and operations within local companies. Local firms are inclined to follow the directives of international firms as they enable local companies to enter international markets. Additionally as the manager explains, factories that supply to international clients are more willing to abide by their brands’ industry codes, codes of conduct, and rules than by the laws of the Pakistan government. The institutional scale of the international firm exhibits greater influence as one set of institutional rules (the firm’s) trumps another set (the state’s). This demonstrates that economic globalisation, especially the expansion of international trade and the growth of international firms with supply chains in poorer countries, has challenged the sovereignty of the state. Internal supply chain companies are more disposed to follow the rules of international firms’ than they are to obey the laws of their own state. For example, as the quote demonstrates, the company may invest in training employees because it is a requirement of international buyers. Rules and regulations are generally present in Pakistani law but the factories feel greater pressure to comply with buyers’ official procedures than because they are in state law.

As the data demonstrates, the power of buyers can influence the manner in which local factories operate and therefore may have the capacity to stimulate gender equity within the workplace. As local factories at the behest of international buyers/corporations must meet safety and health concerns, it may be expected that if buyers make demands for equal opportunity for women, gender equality may be promoted within factories. However, this research finds that international buyers do
not make demands for increased hiring of women. This demand is not made as international firms realize the difficulty of hiring women due to the functions of informal institutions within this society. As the next section shows, informal institutions constrain women’s employment opportunities and employability with prohibitory effects, and despite attempts by firms, informal institutional rules are often insurmountable.

4.5 The Firm and Women

Harvey, (2010) and Wolf (2013) argue that the mobilization of women over the last three decades has made them an integral component of the global manufacturing workforce. Around the world capital has encouraged the influx of women into paid work in the global economy (Wright, 2006; Pun, 2004, 2007; Caraway, 2007; Harvey, 2010; Wolf, 2013). Women now constitute a significant share of the industrial working class in developing countries; especially those countries that have experienced dramatic industrial expansion based on export-oriented growth and these markets are increasingly feminized (Pun, 2005, 2007; Wright, 2006; Caraway, 2007; Harvey, 2010). Scholars (Standing, 1999; Caraway, 2007) enumerate a range of features that ostensibly make women the ideal workforce in the current global capitalist economy: women are cheaper to employ than men, assumed to be docile and easily malleable and willing to work long hours in dead-end jobs.

While Harvey (2010) argues that women form “the backbone” of the global manufacturing industry, comparable patterns are not found in industry in Pakistan. As already discussed, women’s presence is scarce in Pakistani factories but this is not reflective of attempts made by firms to try and hire the “ostensibly ideal workforce” but rather a failure of such attempts. Many garment industry factory managers speak of trying to hire women to work in their factories.
Does the company want to hire women? Isn’t there a feeling that she’ll just leave anyway so why hire them?

“Its actually the other way around. They (factory managers) ask me to bring women-preferably trained, but they’ll also train - because they think that once a girl is set, she won’t leave. A man is more likely to leave and shift to a better or different job quicker, but not the girl. So they would actually prefer to hire women, who generally stick and don't job hop.”

(Riffat, Nishat Textiles Exports Lahore, senior officer and store manager, female, age 27)

As the quote above shows, factory managers and owners task this female store manager to recruit women to work at the factory. The assumption is that once a woman has adjusted into a particular job, she will make a more reliable worker (all else remaining constant), will stick to that job - and is less likely to leave. Men contrarily, have been found to “job hop” more frequently and will shift to better or different jobs more quickly. Thus the quote substantiates theories that women are considered to be more passive and “willing to work long hours in dead-end jobs”.

Other factory managers also explain why women in some ways, make better workers than men, and why firms want to hire them.

“The working capacity of women is considered better than men. Men will get up for every break they can - tea, cigarettes, any distraction; women sit and just work, they don't get up as often or take so many breaks. So we opened a women’s training center to train women to come and work here.”

(Raza Bukhari, Manager, Lahore Garment City, Sumdar Industrial Estate, male, age 35)

The quote above further supports arguments that women are considered “ideal” workers in manufacturing and that firms are more inclined to hire women because they are considered docile, compliant and easily malleable. The control that management can have on women is not as easily applicable upon men, as men are considered more difficult to regulate. Compared to women, men are more easily
distracted away from work and waste more time. Thus the company often prefers to hire women than men because of women’s perceived greater controllability.

Other managers summarize the many efforts their firms made to try and hire women to work at their factories.

“We try and get more women as well. We go and have campaigns for women to come and be recruited. We go in the areas where the new factory is being set up. We send people you know, other women, to talk in the surrounding areas to let women know about the facilities and the environment that will be provided (at the factory) and also the benefits to her and her family... We provide transport - separate vehicles for women so that the parents are also satisfied that their girls are going in safe vehicles.”

(Shuja, Nishat Exports Lahore, Floor Manager, male, age 47)

As the above quote shows, firms go to great lengths to try and recruit women to work in the factories. Demonstrating globalization’s effect of drawing hitherto rural and peasant populations to work in the industrial sector, many new factories in Pakistan are set up in semi-rural districts. The floor manager talks about company recruiting campaigns targeting women in the semi-rural areas surrounding a factory. Company recruiters, primarily also women, are tasked with going into the nearby areas to try and talk to women and explain the advantages of working at the factory. Management makes every effort to hire women, appealing to them with information about the positive environment and the benefits to themselves and their families. They provide safe transport (which is one of the big issues facing women going to work) so that they and their family are content knowing that the women are travelling securely.

Firm managers also speak about training campaigns for women conducted by their companies, which met with little success.
“We set up a training facility for women to train and work here. Can you believe we couldn't get 200 women to come and be trained for stitching? Even our female staff went to recruit and convince women to train so they could work here but there was very little response.”

(Qamar Raza, HR Manager, Style Factory Lahore, male, age 35)

As the quote demonstrates, the firm established a training facility for women to train as stitchers. However, they were unable to recruit women for the enterprise. (Although this quote seems to contradict arguments made earlier that women want to train and improve their occupations, the previous quote described more specifically the women who have either already decided that they will work at factories, or those who are already employed in the industry, but work at the lower paying jobs. The arguments made here, refer more specifically to firms’ attempts to recruit and train women who have never worked in industrial environments.)

As the research shows, firms want to include women in their workforce and hire them to work at the stitching facilities. In fact, as in many instances firms find that women make more ideal workers for manufacturing jobs than men, they would prefer to hire women instead of men. But as discussed next, firms’ recruitment campaigns in Pakistan have not been able to surmount the resilience of informal institutional norms operating in this society.

4.6 Section III Social Reproduction and the Home

Theories of social reproduction explain women’s position in the household and highlight the beliefs (especially informal) held about women and their responsibilities in the family (Folbre, 2016). This theory helps to explain some of the informal beliefs and attitudes surrounding women’s work and their absence and exclusion from waged occupations in Pakistan. Social reproduction theory is used by many writers to refer to the activities and attitudes, behaviours and emotions, responsibilities and relationships directly involved in both the maintenance of life on a daily basis, and
intergenerationally (Laslett, and Brenner, 1989). In much of the feminist argument, renewing life (social reproduction) is a form of work, a kind of production, as fundamental to the perpetuation of society as the production of things (Humphries and Rubery, 1984; Bhattacharia, 2013, 2017). Women are still largely responsible for caring for themselves, their children, and other members in the household both inside and outside the money economy and as Folbre (2016) argues, women carry out and internalize some very expensive preferences of care and concern for others. Even if wealth and development have offered stand-ins for some of these tasks - prepared foods, domestic assistance, childcare services, etc. still, these things have not changed gendered divisions of labor or the social relations of production and reproduction (Folbre, 1994; Luxton, 2006).

In Pakistan, informal customs around social reproduction constantly reinforce the idea that it is the women’s role to manage and coordinate all aspects of the household’s functioning and well-being. All the research respondents - factory managers, homeworking and factory working women - speak about women’s household and domestic duties constituting a major barrier for them to leave their homes and join the formal economy.

“Look at our villages the woman gets up to work - feeds kids and husband. Then all day she’s out in the field cutting grass for the cow/buffalo/goat. Then she goes to get firewood. Her husband comes back and rests after work. She doesn't, after getting everything done, feeding family she goes to sleep and rises the next morning again at about 4am. So we’re getting her to do hard labour.”
(Mr Ismail Khurram, Chairman, Comfort factory Lahore, male, age 65)

“The social system in our society looks down on women working (out of the home). The females in our social circles have primary responsibilities for their homes, which, when they come to work, they don't automatically get rid of. They are responsible for everything in the home.”
(Mr Farooq, Comfort Factory Lahore, Manager, male, age 45)

In the quotes above the factory Chairman speaks of the enormous physical labour performed by women working in agriculture and in homes in the villages illustrating
how physically taxing these duties can be. This demonstrates that Pakistani women are responsible for all aspects of social reproduction and homemaking work – cooking and feeding the family, cutting grass to feed cattle, collecting firewood etc. thus substantiating theories argued by Folbre (1994, 2016) and others that find women obligated to cater to all responsibilities and relationships directly involved in the maintenance of life on a daily basis. Women enjoy little to no respite from a very strenuous daily grind, which the Chairman equates to hard manual labour.

In the second quote the factory manager confirms the Chairman’s views saying that in the society they are a part of, all domestic duties are the responsibility of women. Even if a Pakistani woman finds employment in waged work, gendered divisions of labor or the social relations of production and reproduction remain the same within the home. These women are not able to shed their household duties and will now be responsible for both jobs.

Both factory going and homeworking women of this research have similar responses:

Do your families help, with kids etc.?

“No. My kids were really small when I started. They would be sitting in the streets when I came home.”
(Sumaira, Nishat Textiles, Lahore garment factory worker, female, age 46)

“It’s like our minds are in two places at once. We are constantly thinking about the home and kids, while working and thinking about finishing the work as well. The best thing would be if the work ended at 5(pm). Then we can hurry up and go home, and take care of the kids, cook and feed them before they go to bed ... Ahead, winter is coming, the days will get shorter, it’ll be even tougher as the kids may just go to sleep hungry if we don’t get home in time. It’s tough.”
(Fauzia, Nishat Textiles, Lahore, garment factory worker, female, age 38,)

The quotes above demonstrate some of the informal beliefs and attitudes surrounding Pakistani women’s work wherein they are solely responsible for taking care of their children and their homes. Pakistani women are responsible for all aspects of child
rearing and household chores. Nobody else, even husbands or other family members, despite many of them living in “joint family systems” referred to earlier, help them with these duties in any way. Children may be completely uncared for and even go unfed if their mother is not there. These quotes reinforce what many feminist scholars (Folbre, 1994; 2001; Katz, 2001) describe as the gendered division of labour within the institution of the household, which assumes that women are accountable for most of the work of reproduction, including child-rearing, food provisioning and preparation, cleaning, laundering, and other tasks of homemaking. Traditional norms still reflect greater expectations for women than for men (Folbre, 2001). With complete onuses placed on the shoulders of Pakistani women, it is very difficult for them to leave the home for long periods and go to work.

Hanson and Pratt, (1995) argue that many women, especially those with heavy household responsibilities, are dependent on extremely local employment opportunities. Household strategies reflect and reproduce traditional gender relations, and women who have the heaviest domestic obligations have been found to work close to home. When women commute long distances for work, arrangements need to be made to offset their daily absence. Their husbands, who also commute, do not appear to share this pressure. Household obligations hinder women’s mobility, often forcing them to remain within their homes or immediate surroundings. There is an enormous difference between men and women in their ability to overcome distance. Men’s greater mobility enables them to surmount distance giving them opportunities that may be denied women with less mobility. Furthermore, these beliefs are institutionalized - they are so ingrained in women’s minds that no matter where women are (at work) they are constantly thinking about their responsibilities and chores in the home.

Further evidence of the deeply entrenched belief that women are solely responsible for all aspects of social reproduction is provided by homeworking women themselves. Many women choose not venture out of their homes to work because they feel their sole duty is to take care of the house.
“Like I do a lot of stitching and make a lot (of clothes) but I stay at home. The main thing is to fulfill your household needs. My main duty is to take care of the home, even if we don't have more than one meal a day, I shouldn't go out and get work. Whatever God wants to give us He will give us. I don't let my girls go out as well. They help me at home after school sometimes. But otherwise they stay home.”

(Nasreen, Kaemari Town Karachi, homeworker, female, age 55)

The quote above confirms that the widespread conviction that women are solely responsible for managing and executing all aspects of social reproduction has assumed the position of an informal institutional belief, with exclusionary effects. These beliefs are processes that do not merely exclude women from specific spaces (like places of formal employment) but actively seek to include them in others (the home). Curran et al., (2007) argue that the lack of participation of individuals in society in general and labour markets in particular is in fact a key feature of theories of exclusion. Pakistani women's mobility is severely constrained by the belief all processes of social reproduction are their responsibility. As the quote above shows, so ingrained is the belief, that these women may not only immobilize themselves but also to deny mobility to their daughters, perpetuating the belief system and also limiting potential opportunities for economic progress to the next generation of women. Without the ability to leave their home and go out to work these women have no access to labour or factor markets and are unable to move into areas of higher employment. In the quote, this homeworker believes that her main purpose is to fulfill her household duties and make sure all these needs are met. She argues that her chief responsibility is to take care of the home, and she has taught her daughters similarly, perpetuating this social norm. Even concrete, tangible requirements like sufficient meals in a day are considered secondary to abiding by the informal rule that immobilizes women, makes them remain within the home and tend to their household duties, and excludes them from the benefits of participating in the labour market.

Thus firms’ institutional attempts to recruit women to work in factories are defeated by the informal institutional beliefs functioning in this society. Competing and contradictory institutional norms override the various efforts firms undertake to employ women.
4.7 Discussion and Conclusion

**Formal and Informal Institutions**

In her book “*Disposable Women and Other Myths of Global Capitalism*” Melissa Wright (2006) describes methods in China where the State and capital forces have together, employed formal and informal institutions operating within society to create a particular type of labour market. Young Chinese women in their late teens and early twenties, travel from the countryside and villages into industrial areas and cities to work in factories that are now an indelible part of the industrial landscape of Southern China. Grounded deeply in a traditional system, girls in Chinese society occupy a position of subservience and the landscape of the factories mirrors traditional norms. The entire enterprise is aimed at guaranteeing a constant supply of temporary, young, obedient women workers (Pun 2005, 2007; Wright, 2006).

Ngai Pun (2007) investigates the social reproduction of migrant workers housed in dormitories in China that she names the “factory dormitory regime”. Irrespective of industry, location, or the nature of capital, migrant workers that dominate employment are mobilized from the countryside and accommodated in industrial dormitories within or close to factory compounds. Endorsed by the State, the dormitory labour regime represents an absolute lengthening of the working day and an easy access to labour power throughout the day and night. Formal and informal institutions are employed by the state and factory management to generate a shrewd form of control over workers’ lives within these dormitories.

Caitrin Lynch’s, (2007) book “*Juki Girls, Good Girls*” examines Sri Lanka’s “200 Garment Factories Program” (GFP) established by the State initially to counter youth protests of unemployment. But responding to accusations that the State was targeting young rural women and altering traditional Sinhalese values, the Sri Lankan state changed tack. Declaring that the program was intended to preserve women’s morality by eliminating the need for women’s urban migration, the mantra used by the State to boost women’s entry to the garment factories became that good girls are respectable women who embody traditional expectations of women’s behaviour, and additionally, are good industrial workers.

Systems like the “dormitory regime” the establishment of the “disposable third world
woman” and the “200 Garment Factories Program” demonstrate how formal institutions such as the state and firms employ informal institutions, social norms, customs and beliefs to their own advantage. These formal and informal systems function as “processes of inclusion” that work to specifically ‘include’ women into particular areas and spaces and into particular jobs. Large populations of female workers have been encouraged to enter industry by the state and firms, and have been frequently manipulated through the use of informal belief systems and patterns operating within their respective societies.

Research of the garment industry in Pakistan described in this chapter demonstrates that some similar arrangements exist in Pakistan. However, it essentially reveals contradictions within theories that suggest that globalization and a combination of formal and informal institutions has produced large-scale mobilization of women into labour markets of the world, as comparable situations are not evidenced in Pakistan.

This chapter answers the research question:

To what extent do institutions (federal state/firms) influence gendered patterns in Pakistan’s garment industry?

➢ To what extent do formal and informal institutions interact to promote inclusion or exclusion of female workers in Pakistan’s garment industry?

This chapter shows that institutions have a significant influence on the gendered structure of the labour market of Pakistan’s garment industry. The study demonstrates that the Pakistani state and firms have attempted to employ informal institutions to benefit themselves, with varying degrees of success. However the state and firms’ formal and informal norms do not always reinforce each other, but can be contradictory and full of tension. Additionally, while the literature often assumes the state is now under the control of capital (Stiglitz, 2004; Wolf, 2010) this research shows the tensions that can prevail and co-exist.
Hodgson (2006) and Lauth (2015) argue that the importance and durability of institutions fundamentally arises from the fact that they can create stable expectations of the behaviour of others. As they shape the behaviour of a set of individuals in a particular community by imposing form and consistency on human activities, institutions enable ordered thought, assumptions, and action and govern living behavior while also shaping future behavioural expectations (Lauth, 2015). When people act according to rules, they have a social belief that when particular circumstances arise, they are to behave in specific ways, and that others will do the same (Hodgson, 2006). It is through expectations of this behavior that individuals and organizations (including state, firms, etc.) are able to manipulate outcomes to suit their needs.

Unofficial rules create informal institutions, such as customs, taboos, traditions, codes of conduct, and social sanctions (North, 1991; Assaad, 1993; Hodgson, 2006; Lauth, 2015) and apply to all types of activity - social, cultural, political, and economic. Beliefs and attitudes are entrenched in the mind-sets of people and are internalized by society participants, leading to deeply rooted social practices. In particular, in Pakistan the state has regularly utilized prevailing social norms, customs and beliefs about the position of women in society to validate its legitimacy to govern. Contrarily firms have been hindered from mobilizing women to enter their workforce by these same norms, customs and beliefs.

In the research presented, the Pakistani state has constructed and reconstructed gender inequalities through policies (or the lack thereof), by enacting or repealing certain laws, or offering specific skill development programs that maintain women within particular statuses and positions and exclude them from others. Political parties as well as military regimes ruling in Pakistan have capitulated upon the prevailing informal beliefs, customs and traditions that constrain women and maintain that they should occupy subservient and secondary positions in society. These beliefs primarily deny women mobility and keep them within the home. Maintaining the power structures that exist within the family unit, and more precisely, preserving the
social control of women is accomplished through insignificant policies for women’s development, laws that force women to quit jobs after they get married, (effects of which continue to endure long after they were repealed) and denying them income opportunities by limiting their working hours in factories. Contradictions between formal and informal laws are particularly apparent in an examination of the repealed law stated above requiring women to resign upon contracting marriage. Despite more than 40 years since this gendered law was revoked, its continued influence is evident, having now assumed the status of an informal rule navigating gender relations.

Interactions between formal and informal rules reflect particular interests that are served by maintaining and perpetuating institutional norms and conventions. Waylen (1996) argues that political identities of women are subsumed within male-headed households. A chief concern of Pakistani political parties is ensuring that men, who form political party’s electoral constituencies, are satisfied that gender power relations prevailing within their households remain unchallenged. State policy makers employ informal rules and conventions to achieve this. Additionally, military regimes in Pakistan have also employed informal institutional norms for their benefit. Military regimes have striven to be perceived as protectors of traditional values and as women have largely embodied these values, the regimes have promoted women’s retention within homes and in inferior positions.

The firm on the contrary, has not managed to manipulate to its advantage the informal institutions functioning within Pakistan. Harvey (2010) describes the phenomenon of capital mobilizing women to enter the paid workforce and populate the manufacturing industry in particular. But in Pakistan despite manufacturing firms’ best efforts to employ women to join their workforce, very few women have been recruited, and at 28%, the population of women in the Pakistan garment factories remains the lowest in the world (ILO, 2015, 2017). As is seen it is largely informal institutions, norms and customs that have functioned as forces of exclusion and prevented capital forces from benefiting from female employees in Pakistan’s factories.
Lauth (2015) argues that informal institutions reproduce themselves, cultivate more and more value and generate behavioural expectations. While informal institutions do not carry the weight of law, they, like formal institutions, create a solid structure to society. Rogers (2005) argues that formal and informal institutions largely coexist and either compliment or compete with each other and Assaad’s (1993) examination of formal and informal institutions found that the influence of informal institutions was often more significant.

Research in Pakistan’s factories described in this chapter supports this theory. Firms have campaigns and promotions to recruit women to work in factories, go to areas surrounding the factories to try and talk to families into allowing women in their households to join the factory workforce, training programmes are arranged to train new staff for lucrative stitching jobs etc. but these efforts have not countered the resilience of informal beliefs operating in the communities. Some informal beliefs hold that women embody societal traditions and must be protected by immobilizing them and retaining them within the walls of their home. Other customs hold that women are duty bound to perform all household tasks of social reproduction and that these responsibilities must be paramount in their lives. Many Pakistani women feel they cannot neglect their domestic obligations, and therefore should not leave the home to take on other jobs. These belief systems severely curtail women’s mobility, denying them opportunities to advance within the labour market and society. These informal institutional beliefs are serious obstacles for firms who have been unable to recruit large numbers of women workers in their factories.

**Retreat of the state**

Around the world, globalization and the growth of multinational and transnational firms have generated conditions that weaken the sovereignty of the state. The onset of globalization and in the light of investment needs, the state’s power to set standards, rules and regulations and protect its workers has weakened, especially within poorer, developing countries. In many instances the balance of power has shifted to multinational and transnational corporations and from poorer states to richer ones (Strange, 1996, 2009; Christopherson, 2002; Seidman, 2004; Wolf, 2010; Bieler,
2012). Additionally, poorer states are more likely to acquiesce to demands of more powerful states and big corporations as, through aid and foreign direct investment, these more powerful institutions play a crucial role in development, and help to integrate their country’s market into global markets (Stiglitz, 2004; Hoffmann, 2006; Kepler, 2006).

As shown in this chapter, local firms operating in Pakistan confirm theories of the retreat of the state in terms of the diminishing value of the state’s laws, rules and regulatory compliance. As the data demonstrates, local firms are extremely compliant in enacting their buyer’s rules and codes of conduct – often more than they are with the laws of their own country. Additionally, the state of Pakistan has responded to demands (by the EU) to ratify international conventions for continued GSP Plus status, which awards Pakistani products duty free export to European markets. This reinforces arguments of Lall (1995) and Stiglitz (2004) that many developing countries often conform to conditions and directions imposed by more powerful actors external to the state.

Social production and reproduction

A third institution that contributes to preventing or restricting women from inclusion, exclusion and/or progressing in the labour market is the home. Through the lens of theories of social production and reproduction, this research has undertaken a partial study of the institution of the home.

Social reproduction theory helps to understand the heavily gendered activities, behaviours, actions and responsibilities that take place on a daily basis within the home. In many parts of the world, these household responsibilities and activities are often deemed women's work. Women are believed to be primarily responsible for chores of child rearing, nurturing, feeding, clothing, washing, cleaning and all other housework. These conditions reinforce Katz’s (2001) and Folbre’s (1994, 2001, 2016) arguments regarding women’s roles in the process of social reproduction.
Social reproduction responsibilities play a crucial role in limiting women's participation in the labour force in Pakistan. Many factory women detail some of the difficulties they face when they leave their homes and go to work. Household duties and child rearing are often paramount amongst them. Most women of this research group are considered solely obligated to perform all duties of social reproduction. They receive no support towards fulfilling these duties from anyone else in their homes. This burden causes a great deal of tension for the women especially those that have small children, as they receive no assistance towards childcare and it is considered entirely their responsibility. Consequently, social reproduction responsibilities are often critical in female factory workers’ concerns when they leave their home for work, and a cause of stress throughout the day. Many women complain of constant mental stress while completing their occupational assignments in the factories as they worry about household duties, chores and their children. Difficulties arise when work hours in the factory are stretched into the evening. The extension encroaches on the time women need to fulfill their household chores and is a double burden on them often causing them to leave employment.

Social reproduction functions to curtail women’s mobility in Pakistan. The belief system that women are solely accountable for household work is ingrained and internalized within Pakistani society. So much so that many women elect to stay home and not undertake waged work out of the house because it interferes with their household obligations. Even tangible essentials that may be fulfilled by women going out to work are subordinate to this belief system. Some women believe that economic needs (even food) must be secondary to their primary responsibility of remaining at home and caring for the household, and choose not to go out.

Hence informal institutional beliefs and norms regarding social reproduction and household duties function significantly in women's exclusion from the labour market, through their inability to undertake waged work outside of the home. Furthermore Pakistani women cannot work in factories late into the night. Institutional constraints coupled with mobility issues are prohibitory forces for women of this sector that prevent them from undertaking better-paid jobs, which require longer hours. Their participation in the garment industry is thus severely restricted.
Chapter V

Labour Market Segmentation and Precarious Work in Pakistan’s Garment Industry

5.1 Introduction

“Here most of the time if a woman manages to make it to the factory at all she enters at the lower levels, you know, not in the stitching jobs, those are the higher ones. And then she stays at the job she started at. Sometimes if she’s lucky - and brave - she’ll ask to take on the stitching but that’s not often. We just stay at the same job”.

(Safia, Comfort Garment Factory Lahore, (cropper), female, age 30)

This chapter examines labour market segmentation and precarious work patterns in Pakistan’s garment industry with a particular focus on the secondary segment and its constitutive tiers. Piore’s (1975) three-fold stratification provided a bifurcation of the primary segment into a lower and upper tier that is useful to understanding specific workings within the primary sector. However, theoretical attention has focused less on the numerous tiers that potentially exist in the secondary segment. This chapter explores the tiers of the secondary segment of Pakistan’s labour market and examines women’s specific positions within these tiers. Although women occupy large portions of the secondary segment in factories in the industrializing world (Elson and Pearson 1981; Wright, 2006; Pun, 2007), in Pakistan they are conspicuous for their meagre numbers. Conversely women constitute a large portion of industrial homeworkers.

This study finds the secondary segment within garment factories in Pakistan is split into higher and lower tiers, with men dominating the higher tier and women
populating the lower levels. This chapter examines the causes for this phenomenon taking into account forces of inclusion and exclusion, women’s restricted mobility, male and female occupational characteristics and how the method for learning a skill makes it “feminine” or “masculine”. It also examines precarious work patterns and the concept of standardized jobs. The concept of “nimble fingers” and the “masculinization” of the skills required by jobs in the different tiers of the garment making process is analyzed. A section on female homeworkers examines an additional lower tier of the secondary segment and explores how exclusionary processes, mobility, monopsony and a “thin” labour market reinforces and perpetuates the subordinate and disadvantaged position of homeworking women.

This research draws to some extent on current theories of precarious work. Neoliberal globalization since the 1970s has freed employers from spatial constraints and they are able to position their business enterprises to take advantage of cheap sources of labour around the world (Freeman, 2007; Strange, 2009; Harvey, 2010; Bieler, 2012). Increasingly flexible and precarious production processes and employment systems have been established, with workers’ diminished control over their employment (Rodgers, 2007), assumption of more risks and reduced social benefits and legal entitlements (Kalleberg 2013).

Understanding some of the characteristics of precarious work and labour market segmentation in Pakistan’s garment industry is important for this study as it helps to answer the question:

To what extent is the secondary segment of the segmented labour market in Pakistan’s garment industry divided along the lines of gender?

- How do features of segmentation and precarious work mediate the gendered structure of the secondary segment of Pakistan’s garment industry?

Subsequently it helps explain why the women who are working in Pakistan’s garment industry are not in the mainstream, but are primarily working in the peripheral areas.
The theory of labour market segmentation is sometimes criticized as being deficient in economic foundation and differentiation and that it classifies whole sections of the economy together based on the experiences of sections of the periphery (Porta et. al. 2016). However, despite the criticisms of oversimplification, many features of labour market segmentation and the tiers that exist within the segments remain important and relevant today and are helpful to answering questions within this research.

5.2 Garment Industry jobs

A range of jobs constitutes the garment industry. This research defines the primary segment jobs as those consisting of managerial, and executive positions. The secondary segment jobs are those that operate on the garment factory floor. The secondary segment can be further bifurcated into higher and lower tiers. The higher tier jobs are more lucrative and better paid and comprise patternmaking, marking and cutting, stitching or sewing. The lower tier jobs are less well-paid and constitute attaching buttons, hooks, zippers and accessories, hemming, removing lint and loose threads and inspecting and packaging the garments. These jobs are referred to as “cropping” by my respondents.

In South and South East Asian garment factories, women largely do all these jobs – i.e. the higher and lower paying jobs. Women primarily populate the entire secondary labour market in most of the South and South East Asian garment industry, constituting 60%-90% of factory workers (ILO 2015; World Bank 2017). However in Pakistan only 28% of the garment industry workers are women, and most of these are employed in the periphery or the lower tiers of the secondary segment. Thus in Pakistan, men largely hold the higher paying jobs of pattern making, cutting and sewing or stitching garments. The lesser paying tasks - hemming, attaching buttons, hooks, zippers, and accessories, removing lint and loose threads and inspecting and packaging the garments, are largely held by women.
Secondary Segment Tiers in the Garment Industry of Pakistan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Tier Jobs</th>
<th>Lower Tier Jobs</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Mostly done by men)</td>
<td>(Mostly done by women)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Referred to as “Cropping”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pattern-making</td>
<td>Hemming</td>
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<td>Marking and cutting</td>
<td>Attaching buttons, hooks, zippers, and accessories</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stitching or sewing</td>
<td>Removing lint and loose threads</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Quality control and inspection</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Packaging</td>
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Additionally the higher tier corresponds to some features found in the blue-collar jobs of the primary segment. Davies et. al. (2017) argue that the standard employment relationship is typified by the classic ‘standard model’ of regular, contractually based work and workers are expected to work full-time for a specific employer at the company's place of work. Standard jobs are typically located in the primary segment. However, many jobs within the higher tier of the secondary segment of Pakistan’s garment industry demonstrate features of regular/standard work:

a) Although most of the factory workers do not have employment contracts, the workers who work on the sewing machines are not easily replaced and enjoy greater regularity within their daily work compared to those within the lower tier who are hemming, cropping threads and packing and are easier to replace.

b) There is a difference in the pay scale of these more skilled workers. While all workers receive wages on piece rate, due to the level of skill involved the upper-tiered workers - stitchers, pattern makers etc.- receive higher wages than workers of the lower tiers whose piece rate is considerably less.

c) Similar to trends within the primary segment, some amount of training is given to workers within the higher tier. The factory generally provides
training when the worker first gets a job, as stitching, pattern marking and cutting require a degree of expertise.

d) Men largely occupy jobs in the higher tier, and in a manner that echoes trends of the primary segment of the labour market, male garment workers on the factory floor have managed to syphon off the more lucrative jobs and retain them for themselves.

Factory managers and workers speak about these trends:

“Out of the 700 stitching workers about 100-150 are women. We also have helpers, you know, helpers sit with stitchers and basically help them – they could hold cloth etc. There are about 400 and these are also mostly men, with the same ratio here as well. Women sit with women stitchers as helpers. But most of the women in the factory generally work in clipping (thread), hemming, packing and this kind of stuff. They’re called croppers.”
(Mr Tanveer, Nishat Textiles Lahore, Account’s Manager, male, age 40)

“Stitchers work on piece rate; they’re paid by piece. Each piece’s rate is fixed generally according to time - the amount of time needed to sew a particular piece according to its style. The workers who come in even on piece rate come in everyday - it’s as if they are salary workers – it’s not that we pick new people each day. The floor manager knows the expertise of each worker and divides them into groups accordingly...The workers get work every day.”
(Mr Tanveer, Nishat Textiles Lahore, Account’s Manager, male, age 40)

As the quotes above demonstrate, the ratio of women employed in the higher paying jobs of the secondary segment is only about 14%-20%. The Accounts Manager explains that the women who are employed in the factory are mostly concentrated in the lower paying hemming, clipping and packing areas, while the higher paid stitching jobs are largely held by men.

A complex employment relationship has developed within the higher tier of the factory primarily because of the complexity of tasks that are specific to a job. Many of the men who work in these jobs have been working here for years. Workers come
in everyday for years, and floor managers know and recognize the strengths and weaknesses of workers and award jobs and pay accordingly. Male garment workers on the factory floor have managed to dominate the areas of work with higher pay in a manner that mirrors features of the primary segment of the labour market.

Although the workers within the secondary segment are not officially employed with contracts, and are working on piece rate rather than salaries, the workers come into work everyday and have work habits and commitments similar to standard, contractual, salaried employees. Bernhardt (2014) argues that non-standard work arrangements are deficient on at least one factor: (1) the job is temporary, (2) the job is part-time, (3) an intermediary employs the worker, or (4) there is no employer at all. However, the work arrangements described here demonstrate that, despite the jobs being non-contractual, the jobs that men in the higher tiers of the factory hold are in fact standardized. Davies et al. (2017) argue that many jobs have always been not ‘standard’, especially those rooted in the insecurity and lower wages of the secondary labour market (Doeringer and Piore, 1985; Reich et al., 1973). And as the quotes above demonstrate, jobs that may be theoretically defined as non-standard may not be defined as such by the workers or their managers. Instead these reflect standard work patterns and are in fact considered standardized by workers.

*With the men, we have men here who have been stitching for 20 years and more, they know this is what they’re going to do and continue doing over long periods. The women come according to their needs and leave accordingly as well.*

(Mr Tanveer, Nishat Textiles Lahore, Account’s Manager, male, age 40)

In the secondary segment of a labour market, there is fluidity and high turnover, workers who leave (or are fired) can easily be replaced by workers from a reserve army and from similar jobs (Reich, Gordon and Edwards, 1973). The women who work in the garment factories in Pakistan are concentrated in the lower tier of the secondary segment. Their work comprises of snipping threads, hemming, attaching buttons manually etc. as these jobs are the ones more readily available.
Women may come in everyday also, as men do, but, as the quote above shows, the length of their tenure varies according to needs - their own or the factory’s. While men largely have standardized work patterns, women do not occupy the more lucrative stitching, pattern making and cutting jobs on the factory floor. They can be more easily replaced and do not exhibit work patterns similar to the primary segment or standardized work.

“When we (women) come to the factory we will generally take whatever job we can get. Most of the time the openings are for the hemming, cropping side, and not the stitching side, so we take it.”

(Alia, Comfort Factory Lahore, cropper, female, age 40)

So there are more men, look around, there are men everywhere. Maybe only on our floor there are more women but everywhere else, the women are in the cropping not stitching."

(Nargis, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, cropper, female, age 35)

As the quotes demonstrate, women occupy the lowest tiered jobs on the factory floor. The jobs here are generally in larger numbers; women who come into the factory looking for work find the greatest number of openings in this tier and are absorbed into them. Piore and Safford, (2007) argue the production processes in the secondary segment involve simple, repetitive tasks that many of the virtually infinite supply of untrained people can often learn quickly and easily. As evidenced in the quotes, anyone may enter this segment of the economy; women typically find work here and can also be easily replaced.

An important feature of the secondary segment is its fluidity. The secondary sector of the labour market is flexible, absorbing more workers in times of greater need and just as quickly expelling them when the need is fulfilled. Freeman (2007), Rodgers, (2007), Kalleberg (2013) and Bernhardt (2014) argue that employers seek greater flexibility in their relations with workers and the reorganization of work along the lines of flexibility has led to the decline and erosion of labor standards. Businesses have established increasingly flexible production processes and employment systems (Rodgers, 2007). Work is reorganized to cut wages, reduce benefits, and employers
avoid or refuse legal responsibility for their employees (Vallas 2006). Furthermore, the boundaries of the formal organization are not purely defined by administrative rules and procedures; instead, as Peck (1996) argues social rules, customs and practices may add to the fluidity and flexibility of the structure.

“These 3-4 women were actually working on the machines and were employed to stitch. Then suddenly they were shifted to the hemming side. It’s up to the floor manager - he can decide who should work at which job. It’s his will. But when I first came here I saw they were working on the stitching machines and were doing fine. Then more men came in and they’ve shifted these women to the hemming and cropping section and all those machines are run by the men now. Although those women have been working here for many years, and the men came later. But the men have got those stitching jobs.”

(Sajida, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, embroidery worker, female, age 23)

“I worked at a factory where we were all on salaries. So it wasn’t piece rate (per item), everybody got salaries. But then the men struck some sort of deal with the managers, they arrived at an arrangement and after a few days they got rid of all the women. They gave no reason. There weren’t any late sittings or anything, but they just got rid of all the women and kept even the useless, good for nothing men. And the thing is, often when we were all asked to stay late, the women would stay, and the men refused to and would leave. The guys get away with everything. They’ll not get fired though and they get any job they want.”

(Nasreen, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, factory worker, stitching, female, age 35)

The above quotes not only demonstrate the flexibility of the secondary segment, but also specifically show that women are more easily replaced within this sector of the labour market than men. Men are able to negotiate with male managers to obtain higher paying positions. Feminist writers see the secondary position of women as particularly useful to capital because women provide an ostensibly malleable backup of labour that can be readily assembled or disassembled according to the dictates of the production process (Humphries and Rubery, 1984; Wright, 2006; Pun, 2005,
They are a cheap source of labour that can be easily fit into flexible work patterns and secondary employment segments and, as the quotes demonstrate, can be removed at will. In the garment factories the floor managers are men and, as the respondents state, they are able to move women in and out of the better tiers of the factory floor according both to the availability of male workers and to satisfy specific production needs. Despite the fact that in many cases the women’s work habits are more suitable to production requirements - like a readiness to stay late and do overtime work - the male floor managers deliberately give women’s higher paying jobs to men, and shift women into the lower paying tier.

Piore’s (2002) institutionalist’ emphasis on “social rules” operating within a labour market helps to understand experiences of women in Pakistan’s garment sector. In the quotes above respondents speak about social experiences and social relationships that deprive them of their jobs, and award these jobs to men. The floor managers have social relationships with other men working in the factory and make opaque deals with them giving them the higher work and pay positions. Administrative and legal rules (prohibiting discrimination) are ignored giving way to the social process, practices and customs resulting in the boundaries of the formal organization being socially defined.

Additionally Adey (2010) argues that mobility is an organic relation, an alignment to oneself, to others and to the world. Men’s ability to move between the two tiers more easily than women and retain the higher tiered positions, as shown in the quotes above, indicates that their mobility is a result of a series of types of relation. Massey (2005, p. 15) maintains that ‘space is the product of social relations’ and that our mobility helps or works ‘to alter space, to participate in its continuing production’. Men of the garment factories take advantage of their social relations to create opportunities for labour market mobility, thereby cultivating for themselves better ‘spaces’ and environments to work in.
5.3 Restricted mobility

Restricted mobility between the segments is a key feature of the segmentation theory (Reich, Gordon, and Edwards 1973; Harrison and Sum 1979). Economic mobility between the two segments is sharply limited, and workers in the secondary segment are essentially often trapped here with movement into the primary sector very challenging. In garment factories of Pakistan movement between the higher and lower tiers mirror patterns of the movements between segments. There are some instances in the factories where a girl or woman is able to move from the lower ranked “cropping” job to the higher ranked stitching, but these are few and far between.

“It does depend on us though where we want to be - stitching or cropping. Like that girl, Sidra came here and started in cropping, but she was more interested in stitching and so she went there. Zaineb Appi is teaching her. On this floor we have other women ready to train. I don't think that’s provided on other floors. Another woman came here in hemming, cropping, and now she’s (in stitching) earning more than the woman who trained her! But that’s for this floor. I know women on the other floors who are not this lucky and they want to move into stitching but they can’t.”

(Shugufta, Nishat Textile Factory Lahore, cropper, female, age 45).

As the quote above shows, the movement between the lower and higher tiers is as difficult and unusual as the mobility between the primary and secondary segments that many theorists have described. Occupational mobility enables workers to make changes between jobs and job types. It also refers to workers ability to move into better jobs. Occupational mobility may be restricted through regulations, for e.g. licensing, training or education requirements that prevent the free flow of labour from one industry to another, or one segment or job to another within the same industry. Increased occupational labour mobility can enable workers to train for new jobs and can provide workers opportunities to improve their financial positions (Bhattacharia, 2017). Sen (1999, 2002a) considers that the ability to select between different sets of opportunities reflects a person’s advantage, and capability to function. Women of this sector are mostly denied labour market mobility and the opportunity to work in different locations within the factory, which keeps them at
positions of disadvantage. The career paths for most women are static and begin and end in one position. Even when women show an inclination to progress, and ask to be moved to better positions, they are often unable to and remain where they began/are.

**Restricted mobility - Sticky Floors**

Some economists have described the phenomenon of immobility between segments and tiers as the “sticky floor”. Economists have attempted to identify sticky floors in the labour market and the term is used to describe a discriminatory employment pattern that keeps a certain group of people at the bottom of the job scale. Sticky floors are described as the pattern in which women particularly, compared to men, are less likely to experience job mobility and instead find themselves stuck at the bottom of the wage and promotion pile of the labour market. By comparison, the term "glass ceiling" is used to describe an artificial discriminatory barrier that blocks the advancement of women who already hold fairly good jobs, usually in middle management. Catherine Berheide’s (1992) account of “sticky floors” compares it to the focus on glass ceilings:

“Most women should be so lucky to have the glass ceiling as their problem. Many [women are] mired in....the sticky floor.” (Interview, Laabs 1993, cited in Morgan, 2015, p. 8).

Berheide’s (1992) account of occupational mobility (in her study of women and ethnic minorities in state and local government in the US) mirrors the situation women are restricted to in factories in Pakistan. Women in these employment fields are stuck in jobs with low pay and very limited possibilities for upwards or even sideways mobility. Uteng (2011) defines mobility as a simultaneously geographic and sociological construct, that is no longer restricted to the limited definitions of speed and distance. Instead it is has become an enabling factor, which is a pursued rather than assured ‘good/commodity’. Women’s inability to access this ‘good’ has kept them stuck in the “sticky floor”. There are no career ladders within organizations for those stuck to the floor (Morgan, 2015) and most women find themselves unable to improve their economic situation.

In most Pakistani factories, sticky floors deny mobility to the lower tier workers (male and female) miring them wherever they start their careers. For example, some
experienced machine operators who have good people and organization skills may become supervisors but in general the machine operator advances only to more skilled operator jobs, i.e. stitching the fancier garments or a more delicate and expensive fabric and style. There are no Pakistani women floor managers in the factories that I went to, indicating inadequate opportunities for women’s advancement. However, in one export oriented factory the floor managers are Sri Lankan women.

Representatives from ILO Pakistan support the theory that labour market immobility is prevalent in Pakistan’s factories, particularly for women.

“We use a term “sticky floors”. Women enter on a particular level and retire on the same level. They just don't grow or move up. They don't get the opportunities or have the bargaining power to do that. Very few women are in the trade unions or have representation or participate in collective initiatives or collective bargaining. The wage differentials for women are also high - 36%.”

(Saad Gilani, Senior Programme Officer, ILO Pakistan, male, age, 60)

“Women enter at the lower levels but due to the lack of opportunities for training they don’t progress. Men can usually get training and they start training both formally and informally - working towards the jobs that they want. Men can move around and sit in different places, they can choose to sit at the place that may be the next level, and informally start learning how to do the work that’s done there. Women can’t move around and sit at different places and they won't do that because there may be no or very few women who are in the higher jobs to sit with and train with.”

(Khalid Chaudhry, Comfort Factory Lahore, manager operations, male, age 55)

As the ILO representative’s quote reveals, most women who work in the garment factories face labour market immobility and find themselves unable to better their work situation. Discriminatory employment patterns keep them at the bottom of the job scale and some of these women may work their entire career lives in a particular spot or job with no opportunity to advance. They have very little if any bargaining power and do not generally join organizations that may help to advance their careers. Additionally, as explained by a factory operations manager, women seem to be caught in a vicious circle that keeps them stagnant and immobile. Very few training
opportunities are available to women; in many cases, workers teach other workers and thus women teach other women the craft of stitching. As there are very few female stitchers in the first place, there are limited occasions for other girls to learn. Men face the problem of sticky floors and job movement less than women partly due to the opportunity for learning, either formally or informally (discussed ahead) but women have fewer opportunities for mobility that helps them climb out of the sticky floor.

The quote also highlights the link between limited physical mobility for women in the factory and their limited mobility between higher and lower tiers and primary and secondary segments of the labour market. Mayers (2005) explains that an alteration in geographical/spatial mobility arrangements can change the individual scope of options and actions, thus constructing different environments of social mobility. Women’s inability to move, as described in the quotes above, deny them access to the spatial arrangements that may afford them opportunities to improve their social and economic situations.

Theorists often describe mobility in terms of travel. For example Sen’s (1999, 2002a) conceptions of freedom include a person’s ability to move about in geographical space. Sen claims, the opportunity to travel provided by physical mobility may improve individuals’ alternative choices of what to do and where to do it. Hanson and Pratt (1995) argue that there is often a vast distinction between men and women’s ability to overcome distance and that men’s greater mobility enables them to overcome distance and gives them opportunities that may be denied women with less mobility. Drawing from these theories I argue that traveling great (or small) distances is not the only facility afforded by mobility. In fact the smallest movements within a physical space has potential benefits. As the quotes above demonstrate, women’s inability to move to certain areas within the same geographical space, where no real distance or travel is involved, denies and excludes them from economic opportunities that are accessible to men, who have mobility. As Hanson and Pratt (1995) argue, opportunities available in a geographic area may be different for women and for men, due to their mobile/static situations. They argue that women and men, through the
disparities in inclination and capacity to travel – i.e. their mobility – define the relevant geographic area, and the opportunities provided therein, differently. Extending this, this research finds that even within very small spaces (like a factory floor) where there is no need to travel, the lack of mobility and movement acts as an exclusionary force and denies women opportunities.

The factory floor provides a physical manifestation of the problem of restricted mobility that many women face. On the factory floor, women are unable to move to working areas that are populated primarily by men and incorporate few other women. Consequently, women cannot freely move to workstations that can lead to development of informal familiarity with work associated with higher paid jobs, essentially excluding them from these opportunities. Men do not have this problem - they can and do reposition themselves. As few women work in stitching, women’s movement into these areas of the factory is difficult (as sitting with men in Pakistan’s factories is often problematic). Thus Pakistani women’s lack of mobility into higher tiered jobs is compounded by their restricted physical mobility on the factory floor.

5.4 Segmentation by sex - male and female occupational characteristics and masculinization of skills

A principal feature of the secondary segment is that it is regularly (though not exclusively) occupied by women. Anker (1997) and Cejka and Eagly’s (1999) account of the bifurcation of jobs, wages and prestige based on masculine and feminine characteristics explains how characteristics of “female” occupations mirror the common stereotypes of women and their supposed abilities. Characteristics of “male” occupations mirror those of men and their assumed skills, which consequently create “female jobs” and “male jobs”. Women’s implicit “negative” stereotypes serve to essentially disqualify them from the higher paid and prestigious managerial and supervisory positions. Characteristics of management and supervision are not normally considered acceptable women’s traits in the workforce, consequently making these typical “male” occupations. This stereotyping retains most women in the secondary sector of the segmented labour market, which has fewer managerial positions.
The (now) classic justification of a woman’s “nimble fingers” making them innately qualified for the garment industry help to explain women’s predominance in factories (Elson and Pearson, 1981) around South and South East Asia (as well as other parts of the world). But in Pakistan, occupations that are usually considered feminine - spinners, weavers, knitters, tailor/dressmakers or stitchers – in the global garment industry, are considered men’s work. In Pakistan, it is men who are stitching, pattern making and cutting etc. despite their lack of “nimble fingers” which in other places effectively deems men unsuitable for these jobs. Moreover paradoxically it is characteristic feminine traits (like their smaller, nimble fingers) that are used to explain women’s exclusion from these jobs in Pakistan. Conversely masculine traits are the reason given for Pakistani men working in what throughout that world are considered women’s occupations.

The masculinization of “female” work in Pakistan

“Men sew better than women. They are definitely better tailors. Their stitching is straighter, they are stronger and hold the fabric more firmly and can stitch in a straighter line.”
(Khalid Chaudhry, Comfort Factory Lahore, manager operations, male, age 55)

“Men can handle the machines better than women, obviously they will stitch better.”
(Shugufta, Nishat Textiles Lahore, cropper, female, age 45)

“You can always tell when a man or a woman has stitched a garment. The woman’s sewing is not as neat or fine as a man’s. The thing is we get the final product here (at the cropping table) and we can see that there’s a difference between the men and women stitching - there’s a certain neatness, a precision, in gents’ stitching. Women have difficulty handling the machine, they are good but maybe not as good.”
(Seema, Comfort Factory Lahore, (cropper), female, age 38)
“No, there’s no truth to them not being skilled. Many male tailors have been left behind compared to how well some of the women here are stitching. Jamila Kausar - come here, how much do you work and what are you making?...she easily makes 15000 (Pk. Rs.), they’ve left the (male) tailors behind.”

(Latif, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, floor manager, male, age 60)

As the quotes above show, masculine characteristics are ascribed to the higher paying jobs – stitching, pattern making/cutting – in the garment factory floor and industry. Men can sew in a straighter line - women can’t. Men can handle the sewing machines better - women can’t, men iron the cloth before sewing it - women don't, finesse is apparent in the men’s finished product - it isn’t in the women’s. The way men hold cloth is superior to how a woman will hold it because he is considered physically stronger. A man’s ability to work a machine is deemed better both because of this superior muscular strength, as well as his innate capacity to work machines, which is not generally considered to lie in the purview of women’s inherent characteristics. Men can sew in a straighter line - women can’t. The man’s precision in sewing in a straight line is attributed to his strength in holding fabric more firmly as well as his superior mathematical abilities, which women ostensibly lack. There are a multitude of arguments (physical and mental) in Pakistan that construct these tasks as innately male, resulting in a masculinization of the profession, an increase in prestige and higher pay associated with stitching.

Consequently men in this labour market are enabled and willing to enter this typically “female” occupation because the skills associated with it have been converted and constructed as “male” talent and are more prestigious. Females are not considered proficient, competent or adept at the skills required in this profession. Even the most seemingly basic activity has been given masculine or feminine attributes - women have been termed too “weak to handle the sewing machine”, “not capable of holding the fabric firmly” or not able to ensure that the “fabric follows a straight path as the needle goes through the cloth”. Similar to the characteristics not considered “women’s traits in the workforce” as described above that make them unqualified for managerial and supervisory positions, specific skills required to sew and stitch (as
well as pattern making and cutting) have been conferred with distinctly “male” features and have effectively disqualified women from being considered adept or suitable for these occupations. The profession has been made “male” in Pakistan and thus acceptable for men to work in.

5.5 Training and Skill Development

Numerous theorists (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Glick 1991; Anker, 1997; Cejka and Eagly, 1999) explain that wage differentials and prestige correspond with characteristically “male” and “female” skills and professions. One argument they make is the difference in the way that men and women learn skills and where these skills are learned. Elson and Pearson, (1981) argue “nimble fingers” and other stereotypical characteristics are not inherited or genetic but are often “learned” by men and women in different settings. In general women learn household tasks including sewing and garment making in their homes, from other women. The home is a private space and activities that are learned and performed here are hidden from public view, often making them seem “natural”. The skills women develop and the tasks that they are able to perform through such private learning, including stitching, are consequently deemed semi-skilled and not professional. As Bhattacharia (2017) argues, their skills are in essence “naturalized into non-existence”. Conversely, in general, if men learn skills in a professional setting, they are considered professionally qualified.

“Men take their work more professionally, possibly because of the way they learn it. A young man wanting to be a tailor goes to work (at the tailoring shop) with a focused mind knowing that this is his job and he’ll take it as such. He also meets and sits with others doing the same work. There may be a master sahib (head of tailoring enterprise, or head tailor) who teaches him and corrects him when he does a particular thing wrong and trains him. So even when working at the tailor shop, he’s still learning and improving technically. The guy is going out, sitting within a professional atmosphere, working his shift - 8-9 hours. He’s got a working environment, is constantly learning from others, and knows he has to complete a certain amount to get paid. Women don't have this exposure. A woman sits at home
and sews, as she has been taught - once - and that’s it. When a woman tailor works at home, she is constantly being disturbed, and she’ll only do as much as she’s learned - the one time that someone taught her - she won’t get much chance to improve. She can’t go and sit at the masters’ feet to learn. She is infinitely interruptible and not part of a professional environment.”

(Shamaila, Nishat Textile Factory Lahore, Brand Product and Design manager, female 28 years).

As the above quote explains, the system that creates the tailors of Pakistan helps to convert the skills and characteristics required for the occupation from ostensibly feminine to masculine. Men learn how to stitch in the public space and are taught by other men. The process of becoming a tailor in Pakistan starts with families sending the young men of their homes as apprentices to an established tailor, often in the neighbourhood or the near vicinity. The “Master” or head tailor typically works in his own shop and has several apprentices working for him. Plenty of work is available as traditionally in Pakistan most people have their clothes stitched by tailors as opposed to buying ready-made garments from stores. With such a large turnover of production within a tailoring enterprise, there is ample opportunity for boys to learn skills and master the trade. Furthermore the different items that need to be stitched also offer a wide range of diversity - from traditional shalwar (baggy trousers) and kameez (long tunic), saris and burkas, to western styled shirts, trousers, and pyjamas etc. The trainees are all boys or men. No women are hired as apprentices within these tailoring shops. As mentioned, women or girls typically learn to sew within their homes, from their mothers, aunts or women in the neighbourhood and they rarely have the diverse range of items to learn and practice on, or an experienced teacher like the “tailor master” to teach them. As a consequence of their training, men have greater opportunity to develop their skills and can stitch a greater variety of items. The skills they develop, being learned in the public space, and taught by professionals, are deemed specialized and are not considered merely ordinary or natural, like women’s garment making skills.

Additionally a professional environment allows men to gain management skills. The enterprise provides them with a range of diverse opportunities for learning. This
public setting makes their skills seem more specialized as well. Pakistani women do not learn in a professional setting and their skills are seldom honed to the level of men. Consequently, as theorists argue, as women acquire skills in the “hidden”, private setting, i.e. within the home, such skills are considered sub-standard, unspecialized and of lower quality and worth than their male counterparts. The learning environment is one that promotes the masculinization of the labour market associated with the garment industry and tailoring and helps to explain the predominance of men within the higher tier of the secondary sector.

Training and learning opportunities are more available to men in the factory premises as well, allowing them to advance to the higher tiered stitching and pattern making jobs. As discussed by respondents, in most factories men teach other men and women teach other women different techniques. As there are more men in factories, and they move around easily, they have greater occasions for learning and advancement. Furthermore Pakistani men regularly move from one factory to the next in search of better prospects, picking up new trends and techniques that supplement their skills; these opportunities, as the following quotes show, are less available to women in this society.

“A lot of the men who work on the machines here have been working in different factories before as well. I’ve only been in this factory. But men have much more varied training compared to us - they manage to learn different techniques from different factories. Then when the fancier stitching jobs come in, they get them and we don’t.”
(Saima, Nishat Textiles Lahore, factory worker (stitching) female, age 28).

“Here’s the thing. Men have more training. They may have done the rounds of several factories before coming here and thus got more and different training. Then they know more and can sew better.”
(Alia, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, factory worker (cropper) age 40)

“Also a lot of women just want to hurry up and earn what they can very quickly. They don’t want to learn to use the machines or anything, they’ll do what they know and are ready to take on the hemming or the helper positions and just do them.
Others, who are more ambitious, and also braver, invest some time initially to learn how to work the machines. Factories often offer training when workers first join. These women know it’ll take more time but that in the long run it’ll pay more so they try and get training. But they have to have courage.”

(Kausar, Nishat Textiles Lahore, factory worker (stitching) female age, 38)

Human capital theory suggests that individual workers can move from place to place and opportunity-to-opportunity through acquiring enhanced skills needed to work in those specific places and opportunities. It is assumed that the economy is sufficiently competitive to ensure that employers will hire workers like all other factors of production, and that wages are proportional to individual productivity. Furthermore, it is believed that increased investment in skill enhancement (general and specific training) will generate higher wages. This, however, implies that poor people must be poor because they lack sufficient or appropriate skills (Harrison and Sum 1979) and that mobility between and within workplaces is available for all workers. Piore’s (2002) explanation of the barriers between the primary and secondary sector takes into account that workers are barred from the primary sector not so much by their own lack of human capital, but by institutional restraint and the social construction of labour markets (such as discrimination and other social rules).

Piore’s argument can be extended to explain that social barriers that restrain women from hopping from job to job and acquiring skills along the way, as men do, accounts for their restriction to particular jobs (Piore and Safford, 2007). As the quotes above demonstrate, human capital development through skill enhancement and training helps workers get better jobs with higher pay. The Pakistani men in the above quotes are able to move from job to job and improve their skills, leading to opportunities for higher paid work. Human capital theory assumes that all workers have access to the same opportunities, be they for training or jobs, whereas, as evident, they do not.

Theories of segmentation and mobility take into account the inability of certain workers to move as demonstrated by the incapacity of women in industry to go from job to job or factory to factory and enhance their skills. Hanson and Pratt (1995) Mayers, (2005) and Uteng (2011) argue that mobility provides greater prospects for
education and training, the freedom to work in different locations, access to information and access to final goods and factor markets, which all become more accessible to those who have mobility. As shown by the above quote, many women of the study work in one factory for their entire working lives and are unable to move to other factories as men are, thereby limiting women’s skill development, denying them opportunities for better jobs and restricting movement to higher tiers or higher segments.

Theorists (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Anker, 1997; Cejka and Eagly, 1999) argue, wage differentials are influenced by the masculinization of skills. Consequently in many cases in Pakistan it is enough to know that a man has performed a task in the tailoring process to declare it superior in craftsmanship and charge more for it.

“When an item comes to us for hemming or cropping (cutting the threads), we can tell a man’s piece of work from a woman’s, there’s something better about it.”
(Salma, Comfort Factory Lahore, (cropping), female, age 45)

“If I or another woman sews the suit you’re wearing she’ll take maybe (Rs.) 300-500 for it. The man will take (Rs.) 1000 because he’s a tailor. His charges and payment are higher; he knows he can ask for more money because he’s a man.”
(Naheed, Gulberg Town, Lahore, homeworker, female, age 26)

Does he work harder?

“Well not in actual physical work, he and us, we use the same machine and the same reel of thread, but he charges higher because he’s a man and everyone knows that a man has sewn it.”
(Naheed, Gulberg Town Lahore, homeworker, female, age 26)
“The difference is there because God has put it there by making him a man. No matter how much a woman says she equal to a man, she’s not, she’s different. It’s so around the world. If a woman sews a mans clothes she wont do as good a job as a man stitching men’s clothes. Even if it's a minute difference, it’s going to be better when a man does it. The man’s cutting is better too. We can tell when we iron clothes.”

(Allah Rakhi, Shadi Pura, Lahore, homeworker, female, age 50)

As gender stereotypes justify women’s subordination in society, prestige and income are associated with occupations thought to require masculine characteristics (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Cejka and Eagly, 1999). As the quotes above highlight, women face the daunting reality of a social structure in which high wages are not awarded for their occupation or the quality of their work, but are based on their sex. In this social structure high wages and esteem are associated with occupations that are believed to require masculine personal characteristics and lower wages and condescension are connected with feminine personal characteristics. Items produced by men in these occupations are considered superior – women’s are substandard. When asked what the difference is, or how it is apparent, the quality control people and the hemmers in factories, and even homeworking women merely say “we just know” or “we can just tell” without giving any concrete or tangible reasons. Interestingly even male homeworkers, who work within their homes alongside their wives, succeed in charging more for their products, and some female homeworkers feel this is justified. As the quotes demonstrate, Pakistani men manage to demand more money for garments made by them primarily because they are men and people know it is a “man” made garment. Women are not paid the same rates as men for their work simply because people know the work is done by women; in fact, knowing the differentials, women demand much less as well.

“Every one of us was tested before we were given a job. And after having passed the test, just like the men, we got the job. A lot of us women know we get paid less than men and that it’s because the man can be more demanding, he asks for more. We - the women - will just be quiet and thank God we have a job at all.”

(Naheed, Nishat Textile Factory Lahore, stitcher, female, age 28)
“Yes, the rate is the same. They (the men) may make the item faster so get more (money) accordingly. They have been working for longer and are faster at stitching. But the main difference is that women’s piece’s are more scrutinized and sent back for corrections more than the men. The men get away with more even in the way we’re checked.”

(Naheed, Nishat Textile Factory Lahore, stitcher, female, age 28)

In general the factories use the piece rate system to pay their employees and the piece rate is the same for every one. Most workers, including women, have no complaint regarding payment or wages being different for men and women in the factories because of this. But differences are experienced in the treatment and scrutiny that women’s work receives. As shown above quality control inspectors already seem to have a bias against women’s stitching and thus there is a tendency, as the respondents explain, for their products to be scrutinized more intensely and sent back for revisions, more often than men’s work.

As the quotes above show, the female stitchers feel resigned to the treatment that is meted out to them, in the extra scrutiny of their work as well as the general subordinate position they occupy on the factory floor. They generally do not ask for more money or make a fuss about how they or their work is treated and remain quiet in the face of discrimination because they feel lucky to have a job at all.

**Primary breadwinners**

Researchers of wage differentials have found a prevailing wide spread belief that men need an income to support a family, while women do not (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Elson, 1999; Cejka and Eagly, 1999). Higher monetary compensation for men is justified by advocating that men require a family living wage, while women merely earn for themselves. The assumption that women are not principal breadwinners in their families pervades in the society under study, and in many cases is a fallacy.
“When we come to the factory people say we’ve just come here to pass time, or to enjoy ourselves, not to work, whereas so many of us are often the main providers for our families. So it’s really difficult. The woman who’s really desperate is the one who’s getting out and coming here to work.”
(Jamila, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, worker (stitching) female age 45)

“Generally its desperation, but sure, I think maybe some women do want to get out of their homes and work. They’re bored at home and know how to sew or something and come because they want to. But everybody here - all ten of us, is only here for the monetary gain - we have rents to pay, kids to educate, our husbands are either dead or unable to earn enough for our family’s needs. So we come out to make up those needs.”
(Shazia, Nishat Textiles factory Lahore, worker (stitching) female age 40)

“You need to know that women who work here, only work because they have to. They wouldn't if their financial needs were being met. If there are 500 women working in the room or on this floor, you can say only about 100 if even that, are working because “they love it” everybody else works out of desperation. Look at this table-(about 25 women) everyone sitting here is working because we have to, not because we want to.”
(Bushra, Nishat Textiles Lahore, (cropper), female, age 35)

A lot of these women are widows, they’re raising their kids, paying rent for their homes, they’re not spreading their palms begging from anyone and ask them, many of them are making Rs 24000 each, more or less. We pay them cash on Friday’s because Saturday the banks are closed and they need money for their homes.
(Mr Latif, Nishat Textiles factory Lahore, floor manager, male, age 60)

As the quotes above demonstrate, many women who choose to work in the secondary segment of garment factories are doing so out of poverty and desperation. A large number of the female respondents are either widows or in other ways the main providers for their households. The floor manager acknowledges this but in other
instances these women speak about the manifold levels of discrimination and harassment they face. Women are paid less because they are women and it is thought they do not need to run their homes. Their reputations are questioned because it is said or thought that they come to the factory just to pass time and their output is considered sub-standard.

Elson and Pearson (1981) Anker (1997) and Elson (1999) argue women do not do 'unskilled' jobs because they are the bearers of inferior labour as is presumed by advocates for women’s lower compensation, rather the jobs they do are labeled 'unskilled' because women enter them already determined as inferior bearers of labour. Women’s lower position, and society’s refusal to acknowledge them as a substantial breadwinner for their home and therefore economically viable, sustains their inferior wages and position.

5.6 Homeworkers and Monopsony

While Pakistani women workers are relegated to the lower tier of the secondary segment within factories, homeworking women of the garment industry occupy an even lower position within the segmented labour market. Collins and Bilge, (2016) argue that in any society, one feature alone does not construct social inequality and power arrangements, many factors intersect, influence and stimulate each other to produce them. It is inadequate to measure systems of oppression through a single axis be it of race or class or gender, as several axes will have together combined to create the resulting arrangements. Theories of intersectionality help to explain that all women are not exposed to all forms of oppression, nor do they experience them in identical ways. Gender may be a potential basis for all women to be subjected to oppression, but repression is not distributed equally and gender may not be the only dynamic. Instead, women may be additionally subjected by the intersections of other arrangements that operate within their own particular societies (Ritzer, 2007; Collins and Bilge, 2016).
Women in Pakistan who have managed to make it to the factories even if only to work in the secondary segment’s lower tier, do so after jumping through several hoops (discussed in chapter VI). However, Pakistani homeworking women, for various reasons (not permitted by husbands, fathers or other members of their family to leave home for work; responsibilities at home; factory distances, difficulty with transport; fear of social stigma attached to women working in factories, etc.) have not overcome these forces of suppression. Nevertheless their economic conditions place them in weak financial positions and they need to work. Economic need compels them to become homeworkers and this research finds they now occupy a position within another tier of the secondary segment, which is inferior to that of the factory. Wages within this tier are lower than those given at the factory because generally the women sell their goods to one buyer who has the ability to fix prices and create labour market monopsony.

**Monopsony**

A monopsony occurs when a firm has market power in the employing factors of production and there is one buyer for the product of a large number of sellers. A typical labour market example is a mining or mill town in the early days of the Industrial Revolution (Manning, 2003).

In a monopsony, a large buyer normally controls price movements and is able to force prices to decline (Bhaskar, Manning and To, 2002). One buyer interacts with several prospective sellers of a specific product and this single entity has market power over terms of offer to its sellers, as the only purchaser of a good or service. Thus it results in a market where a single buyer substantially controls the market as the major purchaser of goods and services. While the economic description of monopsony generally refers to a single “firm” in the market that demands labour, in the case of the homeworkers I extend the term to include a single middleman (or woman) demanding labour. Manning (2003) argues that there are very few (arguably none) labour markets in which there is literally only a single employer and that workers always have some ability to move location, so one should not take the ‘mono-’ part of the prefix too literally. But for many homeworking women in the Pakistani garment
industry, a single buyer for their goods is essentially the case.

“A man comes to distribute the work. There are 15 of us who sew shalwars (baggy trousers) and he goes to the homes and gives them work, about 20 homes or so. We used to get Rs. 5 now its 8 per shalwar. The factory is close by, in a basement in someone’s house. They get us to sew and then pay us... he (the middleman) comes every day. We have to give him the completed work daily.”

(Farida, Gulberg Town, Lahore, homeworker, female, age 36)

“We can’t go running around into different markets to sell our products, we stay in our community and sell it to the middleman who comes to us.”

(Bilkees, Gulburg Town, Lahore, homeworker, female, age 45)

“It’s cheaper for the factory to outsource the work. The middleman takes his share as well. The middleman makes sure that we don't get to the factory so that we and the factory doesn't find out how much he’s making and how much he’s paying us. But the thing is that we get our work just (delivered to us) at home. He comes to give it and then to collect it. It’s easier for us because we don't have to go out, or to search for it.”

(Alia, Gulberg Town Lahore, homeworker, female, age 30)

As the above quotes show, power relationships within the homeworking sector constrain Pakistani homeworking women and compel them to sell their goods to a single buyer. A worker who faces a monopsony most often receives a wage that is less than the value of product and the degree of variance between wage products depends upon the extent to which monopsony is present in a given labour market (Blau and Jusenius, 1976; Burdett and Mortensen, 1998; Manning, 2003, 2011; Ashenfelter et. al., 2010). On average, women are paid 50% - 70% less than male tailors in this market. As a previous quote has shown, women receive Rs. 300 – Rs. 500 for an item, compared to Rs. 1000 that men demand. In a classic monopsony a “thin” labour market may include situations where there are several employers, but
they collude in wage setting so that there are only a few effective employers in the labour market (Bhaskar, Manning and To, 2002; Manning, 2003, 2011). By giving work to be distributed to a go-between, who services a number of employers and factories, wages are held down, which helps both the factories as well as the middleman.

Given that the homeworking women are not able (for various reasons discussed in chapter VI) to go to the factory to work, or to the market to sell their garments themselves, they must rely on the one buyer who supplies and buys their work and they must accept the rates he sets. Manning critiques theories of monopsony by suggesting that workers always have the option of moving to areas where they may have greater selling power. However, women in this class of society have very limited mobility. Uteng (2011) describes mobility as an enabling factor, and Sen (1999, 2002a) argues that those who have physical mobility have improved choices for what to do. As the quotes above make clear, women cannot “go running around into different markets to sell (their) products”. These women have restricted mobility and with minimal access to the market can only sell their goods to the middleman who comes to them. Consequently, they are generally compelled to accept whatever price he offers them, and their wages are held down.

Hanson and Pratt, (1995) argue that there is an enormous difference between men and women in their ability to overcome distance. Men’s greater mobility enables them to surmount distance giving them opportunities that may be denied women with less mobility. Homeworking men’s ability to move to different locations (shops, markets) or to the factory to get and sell their work, allows them greater power and ability to demand higher prices. Additionally, as previous quotes have demonstrated, these men’s skills are considered superior to women’s and they are able to charge a higher price for the same work as the homeworking women.

Women are aware that factories find it more economical to outsource production and that they are paid less for their work.
“The woman doesn't demand more money for her work. She calculates what she would be doing if she wasn't working and realizes it's better than being free and doing nothing... She takes anything - she’s also too afraid of losing the job.

(Shakila, Shadi Pura, Lahore, female homeworker, age 40)

As the quote above shows, Pakistani women working in a monopsony operate from a position of disadvantage that is characteristic of precarious employment. In a “thin” or monopsonic labour market a single buyer typically fixes prices, often forcing them downwards (Bhaskar, Manning and To, 2002) and workers are not able to demand higher wages. Additionally, in a monopsony the rate of job opportunities within a labour market regulates the share of market power between employers and workers: if there are few jobs available the market power for employers increases (Burdett and Mortensen, 1998; Manning, 2003, 2011). Kalleberg, (2009, 2013) argues that insufficient alternative employment, job loss or fear of job loss characterize precarious employment. With only one (or two) distributors coming into their immediate market, Pakistani homeworking women may fear losing a job and not getting another opportunity if they demand more money. The share of market power between a homeworker and the employer is skewed on the side of the employer (Manning, 2003; Kalleberg, 2009, 2013; Furman and Orszag, 2015), as the employer may be able to withhold jobs, delay them, or find other replacement workers. With reduced negotiating power these women often take whatever job or work comes their way at whatever rate is offered.

The secondary segment of this labour market thus has an additional tier in the employment of homeworkers. These women are employed in precarious working conditions and labour market monopsonies. In fact this tier potentially constitutes the lowest tier of the secondary segment. Capitalistic forces within the industry are able to take huge advantages of the plight of the Pakistani homeworking-woman - who lacks mobility and works for so much less at home. These forces benefit from women’s predicament by affording them limited opportunities to make a wage, which is set at a much lower rate than exists at a factory.
5.7 Discussion and Conclusion

The chapter provides some answers to the research question:

To what extent is the secondary segment of the segmented labour market in Pakistan’s garment industry divided along the lines of gender?

- How do features of segmentation and precarious work mediate the gendered structure of the secondary segment of Pakistan’s garment industry?

This chapter highlights how characteristics of segmentation, precarity, gender, mobility, natural and assumed masculine and feminine traits and skill development operate as forces of inclusion and exclusion and interact and reinforce each other in the segmented labour markets of Pakistan’s garment industry. Features of precarious and non-standard work are found in segmented labour markets (Kalleberg 2009). The bifurcation of jobs between the primary and secondary sector is based chiefly on precarity and insecurity located within the secondary segment. The development of segmented labour markets in a society is a function of many different features, including distinct divisions between primary and secondary segments, restricted crossover mobility between the sectors, multi-level tiers within both segments, and the prevalence of precarious work patterns like job insecurity and lack of contracts. This chapter finds a stereotypical portrayal of women as naturally more docile and willing to accept tough work discipline, and to be considered inherently more suited to tedious, repetitious, monotonous work. As the chapter shows, the garment industry in Pakistan is precarious and deeply segmented with most characteristics responding positively to theoretical classifications.

This chapter helps to explain why most women working in the garment industry in Pakistan are employed on the margins of this labour market. Women constitute a mere 28% of the total work force of the garment industry, an acute contrast to the 60%-90% in most other parts of South and South East Asia. The presence of Pakistani garment working women in factories is negligible in the mainstream jobs of
pattern making and cutting and stitching, but concentrated in the periphery where they hem, cut loose threads, attach accessories and check finished products.

Distinct higher and lower tiers constitute the secondary segment of the garment industry and functions within them imitate characteristics of the divide between primary and secondary segments. Women’s work environment has patterns of flexible and precarious work, and is unreliable, irregular, and risky (Kalleberg, 2009, 2013). They are absorbed when firms have greater need and just as quickly expelled when this need is fulfilled. In many cases, these female workers are intimidated into making concessions due to insufficient alternative employment opportunities and jobs (Vallas, 2006; Kalleberg, 2009, 2013). For most of these women, there is limited crossover ability between tiers. Many women of the secondary segment are deprived of the advantages of mobility at different scales. Many are mired in “sticky floors” and may start and end their working careers in the same place. Most women in this segment work in the lower paid “cropping” jobs and not in the more lucrative stitching area. Labour market immobility makes it very difficult for “croppers” to move into the mainstream stitching jobs and most spend their entire careers in the same low-skilled occupations. There is very little, if any, opportunity for them to advance in their careers, as few job ladders exist for them. Several explanations are provided for Pakistani women not working in the stitching jobs, with lack of skill and inability to stitch, as well as a male dominated work environment being the main reasons. Women’s lesser skill is given as the cause for low levels of representation in the stitching occupation but in certain cases women who essentially started out as stitchers and worked at stitching machines for several years, were demoted from their positions to accommodate men. In these instances, as Piore, (2002) argues, the firm’s formal institutional rules that create and reproduce labour market processes are undermined by the social rules and customs predominant in this industry. These exclusionary forces sanction discriminatory practices against female workers and keep them in subordinate positions.

Employers of the secondary segment rarely invest in workers by providing them with training and skill development opportunities (Reich, Gordon, and Edwards 1973; Devine, 1999; Piore and Safford, 2007). This allows for workers to be more easily replaced at no real cost to the employer. Similar conditions exist in Pakistan’s
Men and women in this society learn skills differently. Men learn how to stitch in the “public” and women in “private” areas. The resulting skills are characterized differently for men and women with male skills considered superior and female skills sub-standard. Faculties developed by women within the home are often termed “semi-skilled” (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Elson, 1999; Cejka and Eagly, 1999). Additionally in order to make it more acceptable and prestigious for men to work in an occupation that around the world is generally classified as “women’s work” characteristic skills required for these jobs have been “masculinized” and given physical attributes like superior physical strength and ability to handle machines, that are stereotypically male.

Although “nimble fingers” is one of the main reasons given by garment factories around the world for predominately hiring women, this does not correspond to practices in Pakistan. However, while this trend seems to invalidate the theory of women’s “nimble fingers” it further establishes theories that argue that it is essentially female and male “characteristics” that “make a job”. In Pakistan characteristically female “nimble fingers” are not deemed the most important requirement for stitching. Instead, stereotypically male traits of superior strength, mechanical precision and mathematical prowess are the essential prerequisites for success in this profession and these characteristics effectively make it “a man’s job”. There is no need for women’s “nimble fingers” except in the lower hemming and cropping positions.

Theorists (Bhaskar, Manning and To, 2002; Piore and Safford 2007) argue that firms strategically retain workers in the primary segment by paying them higher wages. Conversely, worker retention is less crucial in the secondary segment and employers often hold wages down. Pakistani garment factory employees of the secondary segment are mostly paid on piece rate, based on garment style and the time it takes to complete items. Employers have greater need to retain stitchers as their jobs are more specialized and they are not as easily replaceable. Consequently the wage rate for
stitching, pattern making and cutting is higher than for “cropping”, hemming etc. Croppers can be more easily replaced and receive lower wages. Thus despite piece rate wages, practices within the higher tier of the secondary segment mirror those of the primary segment. Retention of stitchers and higher tiered workers is important and their wages are higher than the lower tiered “croppers”.

Theorists often define precarious and flexible work as being “non-standard”. The employment of regular, full-time labour is often associated with “standard work” characterized by formal employment contracts and full-time work for a specific employer at the company’s place of work (Davies et. al. 2017). Conversely ‘non-standard’ work is more diverse, categorized by “informalization” of employment, through more outworking, non-contractual, casual labour, part-time labour, homework, etc. (Standing, 2009; Bernhardt, 2014). However, precarious work theories are deficient in recognizing that the workers may not agree with theoretical definitions of “non-standard”. In Pakistan’s garment industry, many factory workers do not have contracts but they have “standardized” jobs. Many workers have been working full time, for the same employer, at the employer’s factory for several years. The workers may not have an official contract and may be paid at piece rate, i.e. not be salaried employees, but they are paid according to a monthly or weekly schedule, and often when required to work over-time, they are paid over-time rates. For these workers, their jobs are “standard”.

Wages and prestige correspond to the perceived skill levels of men and women. As women are generally considered semi-skilled, they command lower incomes than men and are allocated less prestigious jobs. As such, women make much less money for the same garment than men even in the same market. Even male homeworkers manage to obtain a higher fee for their products than women. Advocates for women’s lower wages base this partly on women’s lesser needs as ostensibly, women do not need to provide for a family. However the realities of many factory women and homeworkers is significantly different. Many women of this research, particularly widows, are the principal breadwinners for their families but are paid less anyway.

This chapter divides the secondary segment into tiers. The research highlights how homeworking women constitute an even lower tier (I argue the lowest) within the
secondary segment of Pakistan’s garment industry than the “croppers” in the factories, and experience precarious work conditions. Features of the secondary segment and precarious work are particularly evident in homeworking women’s labour market. They face restricted mobility, low wages, an inability to negotiate better incomes and they are easily replaced. A “thin” and monopsonic labour market challenges them with few, and often single buyers of their goods forcing them to accept whatever wage they are offered and keep prices down.

The labour market for homeworking women in the garment industry of Pakistan demonstrates that monopsony exists in its orthodox and classic form. This research extends theories of monopsony to explain how labour is recruited from homeworking women in the garment industry of Pakistan. The theories provide insight about how capital works at different scales to set wages and keep them to a minimum, and demonstrates how particular features of classic monopsonies like mobility are utilized to benefit capital. I argue that in this labour market homeworking women’s lack of mobility creates labour market monopsony that operates in its classic form. I disagree with Manning’s (2003) observation that a monopsony does not exist in its traditional definition. Integral to theories of monopsony as argued by Manning (2003), is that workers always have mobility and can move from places of low employment opportunity to those that have better prospects. However, as evidenced by research in the Pakistani garment industry, I argue that the classic definition of monopsony is apparent in the single middleman/woman who recruits labour from homeworking women in Pakistan. Pakistani homeworking women, through their lack of mobility, often have no access to labour or factor markets and are unable to move to areas of higher employment. These women operate in monopsonic markets created primarily by their lack of mobility.

Finally, theories of intersectionality help to examine the intersections and intertwining of different forces of discrimination on particular women. As intersectionality theorists argue, the same forces do not affect all women identically; different women may be subjected to a disparate set of oppressive elements that can affect them uniquely (Collins and Bilge, 2016). The women of the secondary segment of Pakistan’s garment industry typically belong to the low-income class and usually
enter paid work out of economic need. They generally have low levels of education and little access to mobility, to information or to factor markets. They may be subjected to a number of discriminatory forces of inclusion and exclusion, which affect them differently.

Similarly a diverse set of forces - characteristics of precarious labour markets, mobility, monopsony, access to information and markets, natural and assumed masculine and feminine traits, processes of skill development, etc. intertwine and intersect to divide the secondary segment of the segmented labour market along the lines of gender.
Section II

Chapter VI

Gendered Space in Pakistan

6.1 Introduction

“No we can all stitch just as well as the men. But the difference is the fact that we can’t move away from our homes. We have to be confined to the four walls of our home or at the very most to our neighbourhood. We can only make demands within this space. The man can work differently - he will first negotiate here, and then if he’s not satisfied with what he’s offered he will move ahead, to the next place or beyond that until his demands are met. He has more power to have his demands met because he can move; he has more space. That’s the difference. We cannot move out from this space. We don't sew badly otherwise the people wouldn't give us work. The only reason a man is getting more is because he can move out to different places and have his demands met, we can’t.”

(Bilquees, Shadipura Town Lahore, homeworker, female, age 38)

Prevailing socio-political arrangements, formal and informal institutions, conventional social norms are some of the forces and dynamics that structure the nature of spaces within societies. Characteristics of these spaces can in turn regulate how inclusive, exclusive or prohibitive they are to the different sectoral members and societal groups that occupy them. Numerous theorists (Bordo, 1993; Butler, 1994; Alcoff 1996; Duncan 1996; McDowell, 1996, 1999; Massey 1994, 2005; Uteng, 2011; Folbre, 2001; 2016) argue that women’s status in societies is a result of a variety of cultural, religious, and socioeconomic factors. Additionally, as the quote above demonstrates, a woman’s position in society is developed, established and
perpetuated by a number of physical mechanisms - the woman’s physical location, her access to space, the capability to move her body within a specific place, her mobility and power to travel particular distances, even the micro-movements of her body – all contribute to and preserve a woman’s position within spaces. This chapter will show how some of the dynamics and forces of “space” are mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion. Relationally, I find that inclusive and exclusionary forces can produce gender prohibitive spaces for women. I argue that gender prohibitive spaces are instrumental in conferring or denying women opportunities for economic progress. The homeworking woman’s words above support theorists arguments that spatial dynamics can enhance or limit women’s economic pursuits and monetary gains. Their capacity to demand higher wages subsequently strengthens or perpetuates their inferior positions within societies.

As this research uncovers reasons for women’s under representation in Pakistan’s industrial labour market, this chapter moves from institutions and precarious and segmented labour market arrangements and turns towards spaces. It examines the question:

- How is “gendered space” produced, constructed and structured in Pakistan’s labour market?
- How does the structure of “gendered space” influence employment patterns for women in Pakistan?

This chapter examines Pakistani women’s position in public and private spaces. It shows three different spatial arrangements that women must navigate in order to undertake waged employment – arrangements within the home, the street (i.e. travelling to work) and the factory. The gendered nature of these spatial systems is revealed, exposing some difficulties, especially complications of mobility that women who want to work must overcome. Additionally, women’s identity as national symbols of purity and piety is explored. This chapter draws heavily on Foucault’s theories of power and control to study how women are positioned and maintained in subordinate situations. Foucault’s “gaze” is exposed as a tangible mechanism and
force of control in regulating women’s movements and positions. Finally, resistance to this control and regulation is investigated.

6.2 Public and Private Space

Theorists have described the distinctions between public and private spheres. The public has traditionally been considered the male domain and the private, female. Duncan (1996) and Rose (1996) argue that public and private spheres are gendered and women have historically been retained in the private, domestic sphere. Conditions in Pakistan vividly illustrate the attempt to confine women to the domestic sphere as both a specifically spatial control and, through that, a social control on identity. As theory explains, there are two primary concerns about a woman leaving the privacy of the home to go to work. The first concern is the production of an ‘economically active’ woman who has prospects for an independent income; the second, is the woman’s entry into the other, public world. In many societies these concerns are managed by controlling their access to both, and starts with spatial regulation and limiting women’s ability to navigate spaces.

6.3 Porous feminine spaces: the home

The following quotes explain some of the initial obstacles faced by Pakistani women who might decide to take on work outside the home.

“The hardest circle (barrier) that women have to cross when they want to work is within their house, their family. Getting permission from their fathers, husbands, uncles, grandfathers, and mothers - that is the hardest barrier to cross when they want to go to work. The women are sometimes faced with resistance, which can get aggressive, or they could be humiliated and not push further. In that case they may not be able to break this crucial barrier.”

(Saad Gilani, Senior Programme Officer, ILO Pakistan, male, age, 60)

The ILO representative highlights some of the spatial hurdles and barriers, which he
refers to as “circles” that a Pakistani woman must overcome in order to work outside of the home. He speaks of three such “circles” (discussed ahead) but describes the difficulties experienced within the sphere of the home, the private space, as the hardest to transcend. In the sector under study, when women want to work, they must first seek permission from men, and often several men, who are head of their household. Whether it is their father or husband, in certain cases their brother, or oftentimes even grandfather and uncles, women must have male permission to go out to work. The ILO representative talks about the resistance Pakistani women may face within the home and the aggressive forms this resistance might take, which can be humiliating or even turn violent. Some women are able to overcome this barrier. However, when masculine opposition threatens or becomes violent, many women will succumb to male pressure and give up.

Several female respondents confirm the pressures of the home and speak of the prerequisite for women having to obtain permission to go out to work. When asked if they have ever thought of going to the factory themselves, women homeworkers of two districts of Lahore - Shadipura and Gulberg Town - explain:

“No, we aren’t permitted to. If she’s (a woman) unmarried, her father doesn’t allow her, if she’s married her husband doesn’t let her. If we were boys, or men, we would. But we’re women.”

Why are so few women working in the factories in Pakistan?

“Our men don’t let women go to the factories.”

“...we wouldn't be allowed- permitted to go by our husbands. First our fathers then husbands, then sons.”

“None of our girls go out to work; we only work in the home. And there’s plenty of work, different kinds as well. A man comes here to give us the stuff that he gets from the factory. He asked us to come to him but our husbands don’t let us go out so we can’t go ourselves, so we told him to come here.”

(Women homeworkers of Shadipura and Gulberg Town Lahore, age 20-45 years)
Alcoff (1996) argues, women mediate the relations between man and his others - other men, nature, his own self. Pakistani women’s necessity to seek permission to leave home for work indicates Pakistani men’s ability to restrain and control them, denoting male superior, and female inferior familial positions. As these quotes demonstrate, home-working women seek permission and accept the decisions of the male head of their households. The women interviewed are homeworkers and talk about “not being allowed” by the different male members who may hold power at separate times of their lives - fathers, husbands and even sons. Men permitting or denying women’s spatial mobility maintains women’s secondary, subservient status within the household. The contradictions in this are evident - women are denied physical movement outside the home while interaction with male middlemen is still acceptable. In many cases other men, the middlemen and contractors from the factories, are able to visit women’s homes to distribute work to them. Hence as theory suggests, in these instances it is not the actual work and financial benefit that is denied to the women of the sector under study, but spatial separation that causes concern and is prohibited.

Literature on exclusion often deals with the right to participate in major social activities like employment (Sager, 2006). Theories of mobility reveal some of the mechanisms and forces that lead to exclusion. Mobility demonstrates how particular sectors of society, like gender, are restricted or prohibited from entering the public space, participating in activities, and benefitting from them. “Public spaces” are traditionally associated with the marketplace, and its related activities (Duncan, 1996). Uteng (2011) describes mobility as a “good” or “commodity” which is an “enabling” factor. These respondents are not allowed mobility that will enable them to navigate between public and private spaces. They are unable to enter the public space, which deprives them opportunity to participate fully in the labour market. Their economic opportunities are narrowed as they are not allowed to go out to work. They must only rely on limited sources available within their private spaces, like contractors, to provide them with jobs. These women’s “immobility” is an exclusionary force restricting their access to public spaces and the economic activities existing within them, and helps keep them in subordinated and subservient positions.
Understanding this relationship of power between the genders in Pakistan is complex. Foucault has described power as a *relation* and not a *thing*, which exists everywhere and is exercised throughout the “social body”. Power in this case is seen through Pakistani women’s seeking consent from the male head of the family, a social norm that is firmly entrenched in the belief systems of my female respondents. Theories of the internalization of power structures explain women’s submissive status, and the extent to which this has become naturalized. For many women who are subjected to obtaining approval and sanction to enter public spaces, there is no resentment or resistance to the status-quo, just an internalized acceptance that this is the way things are.

Male power is expressed through the ability to limit women’s physical mobility and access to public space. Massey (2005) and Adey (2010) argue that mobility is a lived relation, an orientation to oneself, and to others, and performs and holds together a series of types of relation. As power operates at the micro levels of social relations, acting as a type of relation between people, male power within this social sector shapes women’s behaviour and movement in such a way that affects women’s ability and inclination to be part of the global factory workforce.

**Porous feminine spaces (vulnerable, permeable, weak)**

Power hierarchies operating in spaces express themselves by creating “weaker”-vulnerable, porous and ultimately encroachable - or “stronger” - unyielding, less permeable spaces. The same space (the home) may exhibit different spatial outcomes for males and females based on existing power structure (Rose, 1996). For women, the space may be “weak” and for men it may be “strong”. In the shared private space of the home the personal wants and needs of the male head often intrude upon or negate the rights and needs of the women occupying the space with them (Duncan, 1996). As the following quotes demonstrate, fulfilling Pakistani male requirements within the home is of paramount importance to the overall arrangement and spatial structure of the home and the quotidian structuring of the daily household schedule.

“The thing is that at home we can do our work when ever we have time - morning after our husband has left, noon, night – of course after all our (household) duties are
completed. It’s easier because we can work according to our time, after taking care of him and our family.”
(Razia, Homeworker, Shadipura Lahore, female, age 30)

“We can’t go out, all of us have kids and have to look after them and our husbands and homes. At home we can do other things, house hold tasks etc. and if the chores are finished, our husbands don’t mind, they let us (work).”
(Humera, Homeworker, Shadipura Lahore, female age 45)

As the quotes show, many women are only able and only allow themselves to begin work on economic assignments after making sure that all their familial and household chores are completed, so as not to cause friction in the home space. As discussed in previous chapters, many female homeworkers consider their primary duty to be completing all the household chores, and taking care of their family’s and husband’s needs. Any other activity is secondary and to be undertaken only after these fundamental responsibilities are completed. Many respondents explain that they start work only after their husbands have left, so as not to inconvenience them, or that their earning activities must revolve around their husband’s schedule – generally when he is out, and/or all his needs have been met – otherwise the husband may disallow this activity. None of the female respondents consider their own needs or the requirements of their jobs to be of real importance.

As “head” of the household and the home, the male has authority to sanction the activities that occur within the space of the home. Pakistani women going out to work have to “cross the barrier” of the home by seeking explicit permission from the male head to enter public space. However in the case of the Pakistani homeworker, tacit consent is also needed before they can start any economic activity within the home. Although communicated in a less obvious, subtle manner and implicit permission, it is permission nonetheless. Allowing a woman to carry out particular activities in this private space demonstrates Pakistani men’s greater power and position.
“Household chores take up most of our time. My husband says I can do what I want in the house, that he doesn't mind that, but that I'm not to go out.”

“They say that if you can get work to do at home then you can do that, that will be fine, but don't go out.”

“That (going out to work) is not really a consideration. We work according to our home situations, and our daughters help too. In many cases we're not allowed to go out to work - some of us don't have permission from our husbands, they say that we can work at home though, that whatever we want to do, we can do from home.

(Women homeworkers of Gulberg Town Lahore, age 23-45 years)

As the above quotes show, homeworkers describe the husband “not minding” that they work at sewing or other activities so long as their domestic tasks are completed. Although the husband doesn’t let them go out, they are allowed to work at home if they want; a woman’s financial undertakings and activities are acceptable to the husband if they are done at home.

Massey (1994) argues that the home is designated as a private space and is generally engendered as female. If all resources were distributed equally between masculine and feminine places spatial arrangements may not be so susceptible to power hierarchies. Yet as space is the product of social relations (Massey 2005) and is socially constructed, that rarely is the case. The houses in which people live and the buildings in which they learn and work reflect assumptions about the proper relations among family members, colleagues, and strangers, and shape the occupants' behavior (Weisman 1992; McDowell, 1999; Massey 1994, 2005). Once spatial forms are created, they become institutionalized and perpetuate a legacy for future action (Harvey 1973; Massey 1984; Bowlby, Foord, and McDowell 1986; Massey, 1994, 2005).

Hence, despite being engendered as female, for the respondents in this study, the home is conventionally subject to control of the male head of the household. All and
any activity that occurs here must have sanction from the male head. As a “weaker” space for women it is more vulnerable, where the rights of Pakistani women are permeable and easily impinged upon by men. In this society men’s needs and wishes have the power to veto those of women if they find them unsuitable or inconvenient. Relations between family members, and particularly between males and females, are subject to power that expresses itself as a relation that exists everywhere (Foucault, 1977) and is further subject to the power hierarchies that operate within a particular space.

6.4 Women’s Spatial Mobility

Adey (2010) argues that mobility is a key factor in producing, altering and/or reproducing spatial patterns. Spatial regulation of women denies them mobility and confines them to their home or immediate vicinity, and deprives them of opportunities that could otherwise improve their economic situation. Their immobility is a disenabling factor (Uteng, 2011) that helps to further maintain and perpetuate their subservient and secondary position in the social power hierarchy. Due to the regulation of Pakistani women’s movements they are unable to navigate spaces. Consequently, home-based garment workers in parts of Pakistan suffer economic losses. These women receive much lower monetary compensation for their work compared to men (both homeworking or factory-working men) and other women who work in factories and do almost identical work.

The quotation at the beginning of this chapter demonstrates some outcomes of these women’s inability to move from one place to another in search of work or to seek buyers. As the quote illustrates, many women in the research group are acutely conscious that their inability to traverse spaces - away from the home and immediate neighbourhood - is a cause of monetary loss for them. The mobility afforded to men is denied to these women and is a crucial reason they are paid less than men. This gendered spatial mobility means they have little chance to negotiate for compensation of their labour in different places, thereby forcing them to accept whatever price is offered. Thus women’s inaccess to different spaces and inability to move between
spaces confers monopsony power onto the buyer, who can set an arbitrary price for piecework. Conversely, male mobility enables them to travel across spaces and to demand higher compensation for identical work. Many of the respondent female homeworkers are aware they stitch just as well as their male counterparts, otherwise they would not be given work in the first place, but because of their carefully regulated and curtailed movement within spaces, they encounter economic loss.

Crucially this suggests the intersection between space, mobility and gender is important. Home-based male stitchers are paid more than women for stitching identical items. Women state that along with men’s ability to move to places where their price demands are met, is their ability to go and get the clothes to be made from the factories themselves. Women are not generally given access to the factory to pick up items; men gain spatial access to factories and in doing so often became distributors or middlemen themselves.

Are there male homeworkers here?

“Yes many men work here, the difference is they go and get the clothes to be made, themselves. And he often becomes a distributer - or a supplier - the middleman. The one who’s near here has about 25-26 women that he supplies to and gets work done from.”

(Safia, Gulberg Town Lahore, homeworker, female, age 38)

As this quote shows, male ability to navigate distances and enter certain places not only allows men to have their own demands met by negotiating in different spaces, but also offers them opportunities for advancement and promotion, (similar situations are echoed in the factories as well (discussion to follow). As Mayers (2005) and Uteng (2011) argue, mobility is no longer restricted to the limited definitions of speed and distance. A simultaneously geographic and a sociological concept, the nature of spatial mobility can change the set of opportunities and actions for individuals and produce social mobility. Hence, men who have mobility can access spaces, go to collect items from factories and are able to promote themselves to the level of
contractors and suppliers. Consequently, these men’s social status is improved. They can now employ women to stitch garments they have collected from the factories and then re-collect and return finished goods. This (social) mobility is denied women who may now work for the men who might once have been employed alongside them, thereby establishing the men in a superior position and maintaining the woman’s secondary status.

**Spatial immobility – a capital advantage**

Women’s immobility and lack of access to the factory space functions as an exploitable feature by capital and is a fact not lost on the homeworking women. Factories and production units send middlemen to the neighborhood of female homeworkers to distribute work, which homeworking women complete at very low cost to capital.

“The middle man makes sure that we don’t get to the factory so that we and the factory doesn’t find out how much he’s making…but the advantage to us is that we don’t have to go out, we can’t anyway, and so even sitting at home we’re able to get work. He comes to distribute it and then to collect it.”

(Shugufta, Gulberg Town Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 30)

Have you ever thought about getting work yourself and eliminating a middleman?

“No, they don’t give it to just anyone. They’ll give it to select people who also are responsible for printing the design on the cloth and then they come and give it to us.”

(Sumera, Homeworker Gulberg Town Lahore, female, age 45)

As Adey (2011) argues, mobility binds together a series of types of relation. The above quotes demonstrate the extent to which the immobility of women and spatial constraint is vital to the maintenance of their position on the economic scale and the advantage that middlemen and capital (factory owners) gain as a result. Thus the economic relationship between homeworking women, contractors and capital is held together by mobility and restricted access to spaces.
Rodgers et al. (1995) and Curran et al. (2007) find that the lack of participation of individuals in labour markets is a key feature of exclusion and places them in a situation of disadvantage. Women’s exclusion from factor markets (e.g. lack of access to land, infrastructure, information on markets and prices) inhibits their employment and income opportunities. In the quotes above, women speak about the middleman ensuring that they do not gain access to the factory so that neither they nor the factory managers can calculate how much money he is making. Denying ingress withholds from women knowledge of their productive worth and keeps them from raising their prices. At the same time, the factory management also limits women’s labour market participation by denying them direct access to the factory. Factory management do not provide homeworking women with goods to be stitched directly, generally excluding them from these opportunities. The factory deals with only a few men, who collect and distribute items for production from the factories to home workers.

Women are cognizant of capital exploiting their immobility within spaces. They also know that it is much cheaper for the factories not to hire them but instead have them work in their homes. In many cases capital chooses not to employ and uses this exclusionary mechanism to keep wages and costs down.

“It’s cheaper for the factory to outsource the work. The middle man takes his share as well.”
(Nasira, Homeworker, Shadipura Lahore, female, age 35)

Is the factory close by?

“Yes, very (close) but in any case, they don't want us to work there, they just give it to us to do at home. They don't have ladies staff. The factory owners find it easier and also cheaper for them if we don't work there but work from home. We would ask for more (money) if we had to sit and work there.”
(Naila, Gulberg Town Lahore homeworker, female, age 30)
In these cases the factory management does not hire women at all. The women of this sector are aware that they can demand more money if they work on the factory floor and so the factory simply doesn't hire women. However, management has no problems giving these women work to do in their homes.

As Peck (1996), Chen et. al., (1999) and Chen and Sinha (2016) explain, a factory that outsources work has multiple advantages: First, homework results in savings on both variable and fixed production costs. The fixed costs associated with operating a factory, for example rent, light, heat and building maintenance, are passed on to homeworkers. Holding down wage rates and managing to avoid payments for overtime, sick leave and holidays accomplish savings on variable costs. Second, in the homework labour environment, employers are able to achieve increased levels of production flexibility. Homeworkers are paid piece rates (i.e. only for actual output), they can be discharged and re-engaged as required and employers are able to adjust purchases of labour power in accordance with their immediate production needs.

Homeworking women are denied mobility and access to particular spaces and their exploitable position is perpetuated as they are required to conform to the historical arrangements and forces that have dominance in their sphere. Social norms giving dominance to male members of this society allow men to restrain women’s mobility and constrict navigation of certain spaces. Capital and the middlemen are dominant in this labour market and as Hanson and Pratt (1995) argue, use constrained mobility as a device to isolate women from both employment opportunities and also from power and involvement in the body politic. Women’s mobility or the lack of it, their ability or inability to navigate across spaces by leaving the home or to travel long distances are all rules governing the historical construction of gender (Bordo 1993; McDowell, 1996; Massey, 2005) and serve as forces of exclusion for women.
6.5 Gender prohibitive spaces: the street

When Pakistani female garment workers leave the private space and enter the public space, which as theory suggests, is a space constructed as male, they may be subject to intimidation, harassment and various forms of violence. These public areas are ubiquitous and include the physical paths within the neighborhood and community that women are part of, the streets that they must walk on to go to work and the transportation that they may need to use. Low (1993) argues that the construction of public space may influence the production of gendered security - the insecure woman or the self-assured man. In Pakistan, factory managers and ILO representatives consider this physical path to the workplace another important barrier of entry for women in the work force.

A common theme emerging from the research data is the high level of harassment that Pakistani women encounter when they leave their homes to go to work. This is considered a major obstacle against these women’s entry to the labour market.

“The 2nd circle (barrier) is between their house and the workplace. The harassment, the restricted mobility, the transport issues and how to actually get to work ... These are concerns that they have, and have to overcome. The harassment and teasing on the streets and in the buses are abundant.”

(Saad Gilani, Senior Programme Officer, ILO Pakistan, male, age 60)

“Even if a girl does make an effort to do something for self improvement, she’s living in a hungry society. She’s looked at with such stares that most of her time is spent just protecting herself from those looks and words. So much harassment on the streets.”

(Ismail Khurram, Chairman, Comfort Factory Lahore, male, age 65)

As the quotes show, harassment of women and girls in public spaces is common in Pakistan. The streets they traverse, within the buses they take, the route to work and school are spaces where they can be harassed, harried, sneered at, leered at, verbally abused, propositioned. The ILO (Pakistan) labels this space a second “barrier of entry” for women who want to work. After having successfully crossed the first
barrier of potential resistance from the family and home, the next barrier is to physically navigate the route to work. Massey, (2005) and Uteng, (2011) argue that many societies (especially non-western) oppose the mobility of women and the public/private dichotomy cultivates the mobile/static. In these cultures masculinity is often coded as mobile and femininity as static.

As Pakistani women leave the private space of the home, they enter the public that has historically been designated as male and where male presence is acceptable. This is a space where women ostensibly do not belong and their presence can provoke negative reactions. Both the ILO and factory representatives highlight the intense level of harassment Pakistani women face in public spaces while going to work. Unless these women are travelling in a private vehicle - again private space - they can be subject to intense pressure and humiliation. Katherine Vyborny’s (2014) research on working women in Lahore found evidence suggesting that their decision to work is based in part on whether they can find safe, harassment-free transport (Nabi, 2016). Factory owners acknowledge this difficulty and some larger factories provide transportation services to their female workers. However, this is not door-to-door service and women who walk to the bus stop to take this special vehicle, which is often recognized to be from a factory, may, even on this short path, have to endure some harassment. The following quotes demonstrate some of the forms of harassment the respondents highlight.

“Yes, they look at us on the street knowing that we’re going to a factory. Like oh, they’re off to the factory, I wonder what they do there - work, or something else? The thing is we know that we’re good women and how to deal with people at the factory and that nobody can do anything to us. But we can’t explain that to others. We have to hear things from our family members as well, along with what we hear on the streets.”
(Rabia, Style Factory Lahore, worker, female, age 23)

“Once we were coming in a van that the factory provided to transport women. Two men got on by chance, and then on realizing it was a van taking women to the factory they said, “we’ve got onto a bus for prostitutes’.”
(Nazi, Nishat Textiles Lahore, Factory worker, female, age 29)
In the quotes above women speak about having to endure harassment on a regular basis if they step out of their homes. They receive harassment both from the people on the streets as well as members of their families who know they go to work in factories. There is an inherent understanding of why they must endure this as, by coming out of their homes, they leave the security of private spaces. In doing so they defy the norms of this society and are considered “dirty”, “impure”, and thus can be treated as such. In Pakistani society the factory is considered a very questionable place for women to work because of the very large male/female ratio differential. Men outnumber women working in factories by almost 80%. Family members thus may not only speak against women for going out, but further deride them for going to work in factories. As the respondent who speaks about young men mistakenly boarding their bus states, knowing that they have boarded a bus taking women to a factory, gives the men increased ammunition to abuse women.

Even in the community the guys are often harassing her even on the way to work. She becomes easy prey and they feel justified in saying things to her. They think that because she’s stepped out of the house, she must be very dirty. It isn’t like every woman sitting at home is pure or any thing - I’m just giving an example - they (women at home) could be really “fast” but because no one sees them they’re safe. Because they see us leaving the homes, they talk about us. So that’s why she doesn't come out of the house. Unless she’s desperate. She thinks that okay, I’ll listen to the talk but at least I can run my home.

(Seher, Nishat Factory worker (stitching), female, age 35)

The respondent in the above quote describes the character perception of Pakistani women who leave their homes, compared to those that remain indoors, in the private “pure” space. Women who stay indoors manage to retain the character label of the “good” woman simply because they remain indoors and are not seen.

Foucault’s theory of the gaze as a creator of power and power structures is both fundamental and restructured here. The gaze is attracted by mobility and it is not always gazing but the potential that women can be gazed at, which makes women subject to the power hierarchy’s dominant ideology. For these female respondents, mobility and the gaze interact. Mobility attracts the gaze. When women leave the
private home space and enter public space, their mobility and movements draw the
gaze. Foucault’s theories show how the gaze is a mechanism and force for creating
power and control. Theorists (Butler, 1993; McDowell, 1996; Massey, 2005) argue
that performative repetitions shape conceptions of gender, which has historical,
geographic, cultural and political differences. As the quote above demonstrates, the
women who leave the home are seen and watched and may acquire suspect
reputations. Reciprocally drawn by female movement, the gaze can manipulate
mobility. Those who do not step out of their homes to go to work do not attract the
“gaze” and manage to retain their reputations. Being constantly watched, “surveilled”
may thus cause some women not to leave home and enter public spaces at all. These
women avoid the gaze and by doing so maintain and preserve the dominant ideology
and conceptions of gender. They submit to and reinforce the belief system that
women should not leave the privacy of their homes and enter public space.

Spatial patterns that reserve or partition off particular areas for women illustrate how
“women’s space” is not a space with equal distribution of power, but has inherently
less power. It is a “weaker”, porous, encroachable space. For example public buses
in Pakistan are gender segregated with a separate section reserved for women in the
front part (about a quarter) of the bus. In some of the older busses a metal fence
cordons off this area for women. But the vulnerability of this “feminine” space (i.e.
reserved for women) is evidenced by its susceptibility to encroachment and its
potential as a place for sexual harassment. Most often, young men actively encroach
over this barrier. In reality, women have physical access to only part (around two
thirds) of the space reserved for them; men (particularly youths in their late teens and
early 20s) occupy the rest. They stand on the steps of the bus just outside of the main
platform (of both the male and female sections) and as the bus begins to move, they
move up into the women’s section. When a woman enters the bus she will often try
and squeeze to the front of the space cordoned off for her in order to avoid coming
into physical contact with the men who, once the bus moves, fill the latter part of their
section. Thus as the theories suggest, this space reserved for women is permeable and
encroachable. This is a space where women are more vulnerable, and are often
subject to sexual harassment and groping due to the close proximity with men who
have infringed upon their space, which is why they try and squeeze their bodies to the
front.
6.6 Gender prohibitive spaces: the workplace

From the home to the street to the factory, public and private spaces that are gendered as masculine and feminine have implications for women and how they work (Spain, 1993; Rose, 1996). In the garment factory environment of Pakistan, women are more conspicuous for their absence. The paucity of women in industrial settings in Pakistan corresponds to the general deficiency of women in the formal workforce. Women who do manage to go to work in the factories often occupy particular physical spaces on the factory floors where they work in clusters. The physical spaces that women are most often located in on the garment factory floors are those within which some of the lowest paid work is carried out and indicate their lower status.

While there is no official law or regulation that demarcates certain parts of a factory as off limits to either gender, women in garment factories are most often seen in specific spaces and conspicuously absent from others. In a typical garment factory floor industrial sewing machines are arranged in rows, or columns, adjacent to and close to each other. A large table or slab is arranged in a separate section of the floor for hemming and other peripheral activities. Depending on the size of the factory, and its orders, a particular garment may be stitched by several workers working different parts of the stitching process or by one worker sewing the entire garment. After cutting and stitching is completed, the item is sent for hemming and cropping (removing threads etc.) and finally quality control and inspection. Typically, cutting and stitching are considered skilled jobs commanding significantly higher income than hemming, cropping and inspection, which are seen as less skilled, easily replaceable and are lower paid. Crucially, in these factories men are mostly working as stitchers and pattern cutters, while women almost exclusively occupy the lower paid hemming, cropping and inspection jobs.

Spain (1993) argues, converting work areas to resemble as close as possible, home spaces, make women’s work more acceptable. Massey (1994) suggests, two types of occupations exist - those that separate women from men and those that bring women and men into contact. The more contact between women and men, the more controversial the occupation.
“The good thing is here, we have a place that’s separate for women, not a whole floor, there aren’t enough women for that but we do have a section. This floor is good because it’s like a family.”

(Kausar, Comfort Factory worker, female age 22)

In the quote above, the female respondent talks about her floor being “good” because it has a “family like” feel. Thus, although the factory floor has not changed shape, the ambiance is one of family and home setting. By creating particular spaces in factories that duplicate the domestic sphere, where men and women are separated, and women are placed with other women in a homelike environment, women are as safely separated by sex as if they had stayed at home (Spain, 1993). Retaining women in a family/home like setting is more acceptable to existing power hierarchies. Much like the familial relationships promoted by Chinese factory managers (Pun 2005, 2007; Wright, 2006), a factory production advisor has a similar attitude to women working in patterns that resemble a domestic setting. The homelike ambience is a reason he gives for women going into the lower paid occupations:

“So they come into the other peripheral jobs, where there are other women they can chat with. If you look at them- observe them - you’ll see how they work - they have a garment in their hands and are working on it, at the same time they’re chatting with other women and cutting the threads etc.”

“... when it comes to sitting on the machines, it becomes more restricted - you’ve got to sit there, to produce, and when these limitations are set on them, the women find it tougher to work. Women prefer a home like environment. You’ll see that there’s a difference in the working environment for women and men.”

(Salim Niazi, Nishat Textile Factory Production advisor, male, age 55)

The production advisor describes the women’s working habits to be similar to how they perform in the comfort of their homes. He believes women want to sit together, talk, gossip and they are generally more relaxed - almost like sitting in their own homes and living rooms - with other women. As long as they can do this and replicate the domestic environment, they are happy to work in the peripheral, lower paid jobs. Conversely, if they have to work on the machines where there are more
restrictions (sitting for longer periods, being unable to talk to other women), he feels that women find it constraining and difficult. In his opinion, these jobs are more manageable by men than women.

Many of the respondents have a perception that women prefer certain spaces of the factory floor to work in to other spaces. Factory managers talk about an ostensibly natural movement of women to particular spaces. When women first enter the factory floor they look around and see where other women are working and move to join them:

“So there are more men, look around, there are men everywhere. Maybe only on our floor there are more women but everywhere else, the women are in the cropping. Some women can get flustered very quickly here, with so many men sitting in certain places so they want to do the same jobs that other women are doing. Like if 80% are men and a woman enters, she’ll look to see where other women are working and gravitate there and that generally becomes the place and space for women. It happens to be the place that women are doing cropping. Women may not be comfortable sitting where there are so many other men and so they choose to go into cropping and not sewing or stitching.”
(Salim Niazi Nishat Textile Factory Lahore, Production advisor Male, age 55)

Don't women know how to stitch?

“They do but there are so many men in that area that they may feel uncomfortable working there surrounded by them. The girls aren’t comfortable.”
(Ghafooran, Comfort Factory Lahore, worker (stitching), female, age 55)

Low (1993) argues that the structure and arrangement of public spaces may generate the production of the insecure woman. Typically on a Pakistani factory floor, men often occupy approximately 80% - 90% of the stitching area. The structure of the factory space, i.e. how the spaces are arranged, influence women’s decisions to move to particular places that may be seen as more “secure”. As the above quotation highlights, women find certain parts of the factory to be more comfortable to work in and so gravitate to these areas. Valentine (1989) suggests spaces are “safer” for
women at different times of the day. Extending Valentine’s theories, when Pakistani women enter the factory floor, whatever the time of day, they look around and find safety and security in numbers as well, within the same space. They gravitate towards this “safe” area where there are more women. Typically, this is the space where the lower paid hemming etc. is carried out.

Due to the linear arrangement of stitching machines on the factory floor that are largely occupied by men, women find it difficult to move or talk to other women who are not sitting close to them. Thus these women choose to work in places where other women were close by and these are areas that house lower paid work.

Sen (1999, 2002a) views the prospect of choosing between alternative sets of opportunities to reflect a person’s advantage, and ability to function. The spatial arrangement of the factory floor limits women’s choices and inhibits the movement of women into the more powerful (higher paid, more prestigious) jobs. In fact, as Spain (1993) suggests, "gendered spaces" in homes, schools, and workplaces reinforce and reproduce prevailing status distinctions that are taken for granted. Women's position within society, whether measured as power, prestige, economic position, or social rank, is related to spatial separation insofar as existing physical arrangements facilitate or inhibit their movement from areas of lower to greater status. Within the factory premises, women’s choice to move into areas that comprise lower pay, easily replaceable jobs amounts to them occupying weaker space (lower pay, status and prestige) compared to men. Ostensibly regular and customary systems are maintained and the advantages of the more powerful are habitually preserved. Men are said to “characteristically” move into the cutting and stitching areas and this is considered a normal, natural phenomenon.

Factory managers, floor managers and factory male and female workers describe the flow of women into the lower paid occupations as a “natural drift” as they are not “comfortable” working in areas where they are surrounded by so many men. As such they argue that women naturally gravitate into the spaces where other women work. However, I argue that what may appear to be a natural movement and flow of women to particular spaces as suggested by the factory manager, is in fact a response to the gaze.
Foucault’s theories of power, control and the gaze highlight processes of exclusion and the construction of gender prohibitive spaces on the factory floor. Foucault describes how the gaze is an instrument that can make individuals and societies act and behave in particular ways that are acceptable to those who hold power. In the quotes above, the gaze manipulates women’s movement and successfully segregates the factory floor creating gender prohibitive space. As mobility and movement draws the gaze, when women enter spaces on the factory floor they are subject to male watchfulness. Mostly women seek to avoid and move away from this scrutiny. In doing so they move to spaces that have fewer men and where surveillance is less intense. As there are fewer men in the cropping area compared to the stitching area, women move to a space where they will not be subject to the male gaze so keenly. It is no coincidence that it is also the area that the lower paid jobs are done. Women’s movement away from the male gaze demonstrates how mobility and the gaze interact to produce gender prohibitive spaces.

6.7 Women’s mobility - power learned through the body

Mobility supports, restricts or alters processes of exclusion that affect women in particular (Hanson and Pratt 1995; Mayers, (2005); Uteng, 2011), and Pakistani women experience constrained mobility. Pakistani men occupy most spaces of the factory floor and the spatial arrangement inhibits the movement of women into the more powerful (higher paid, more prestigious) jobs. Spatial arrangements restrict the physical movement and mobility of women in all parts of Pakistani garment factories. The following quotes demonstrate how even the most mundane, routine motions of women are restricted, controlled and subject to intense scrutiny. This constrained mobility is exhibited at the minutest level and becomes a mechanism of control of women.

_Sewing is a very hectic job - you come in at 9 and sit at a machine and work till 1. Men have the luxury of being able to move around a bit. Women don't, can't do that. Then after their break, they come back at 2 and get back to work and work till 5 or whatever the timings are. They don't have the luxury of stretching their legs, of turning around to say something to the person sitting next to or behind them, because_
they’re men, unless the entire floor, or at least the line is of other women...It gets tough.

(Salim Niazi, Nishat Textile Factory Lahore, Production advisor, male, age 55)

Many female workers and factory managers talk about the inability of women to move around, stand up or stretch their legs or get any physical respite from the many hours of constantly sitting at their workspaces. Men can move around, stretch, go outside for a smoke, turn around and talk to the person sitting behind or next to them (because they are generally other men) etc. but these very basic movements are denied women, who have to sit in one place for several hours on end. Because men surround them, women hesitate to turn and talk to the people sitting next to or behind them. They generally do not stand up or stretch their bodies but are more likely to suffer physical body discomfort rather than move and draw attention to themselves. One young woman’s account of her inability to make even the slightest motion has been described in the prescript to this thesis. That quotation is reproduced here to demonstrate how women must behave so as not to attract the male gaze:

“I can not raise my head and look up. I start at 9[am] and sit at a machine and work till 1[pm]. That’s 4 hours at once. But when my neck really hurts because I have been bent over the sewing machine for so long, and I do look up, it could be that I look at a man - they’re all around - and what if, just by chance, I catch someone’s eye? What if he does something - winks at me or leers at me - or worse - talks to others about me looking at him? And they start saying “I like looking at men”? So I try not to move, to raise my head and look up.”

(Nusrat, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitching), female, age 23)

This quote captures how mobility and any movement of the woman’s body has the capacity to draw the male gaze. The quote shows how the very slightest of motions and can have critically adverse consequences for Pakistani women. The young 23-year-old girl talks about her choice not to raise her head or even her eyes when she is working at the stitching machine. Being surrounded by men, she is constantly aware that any movement, however small, can attract the male gaze. Her slightest movement can have adverse repercussions as her reputation and that of her family’s,
and her social standing within the factory may be in jeopardy as a result. Knowing she is under constant and intense scrutiny, this woman prefers to endure the physical pain rather than raise her head to attract or potentially meet the male gaze.

Feminist writers (Spain, 1993; Alcoff, 1996; Duncan, 1996) and others argue that social relations including gender relations are embedded in the spatial organization of spaces. These writers have extended the treatment of traditional geographic spatial scales to the scale of the body. However, they seldom acknowledge the physical movements of the body at the minutest scale. As we see in this research, the microphysical movements of the body effect power hierarchies and are mechanisms for control of women.

Other women working in the factories also described the physical strains of their work as intense and extreme.

“We have hard labour like work. We sit and work for long hours. It’s not like sitting at an office desk, those women have an easier job, ours is more like hard manual labour, like bricklayers you know? We can’t move around, stretch our legs, men can do that, we can’t. It’s really difficult for a woman to work in a factory, to sit and sit and work in the middle of men.”

(Parveen, Comfort Factory Lahore, worker (stitching), female, age 33)

As the quote indicates, the woman viewed their work as being physically intense and demanding and compared it to the manual labour that bricklayers perform. They consider their physical immobility - to move around, to stretch, and confinement to very limited spaces surrounded by men - to be as physically challenging as the toughest form of manual labour. While working for long hours is hard enough in itself, the additional difficulty of being unable to move their bodies, even slightly, is considered one of the most difficult aspects of working at the stitching machines. Their male counterparts have no such problems.
Literatures on the scale of the body help to understand how power is created and learned through the body. Foucault (1980) explains how it is through the body that lessons about the power structure are absorbed. Knowledge and power is learned and produced through the body and the practices and bodily habits of everyday life (Bordo, 1993). Thus, as evidenced in the factories, it is through regular routine activity that women’s bodies are trained to know and understand what is conventional and improper, which gestures are prohibited and which permitted, how challengeable or unchallengeable the boundaries of their bodies are. It is through the mobility and movements of their bodies, or rather, the prohibitions and restrictions set upon these movements, that women are restrained and confined within very specific patterns of existing power structures.

To summarize, it is through the body and “the gaze” that women can be controlled and manipulated. Pakistani women’s bodies are trained in the power structure that exists in the factory and, as in the case above, they may endure immense discomfort but will not make even the smallest movements like raising their head. As the literature suggests, these women’s bodies have been trained to learn, conform and abide by the dominant arrangement functioning in their society. The Pakistani factory workingwoman adopts a posture of constantly being bent, a submissive stance. They keep their head down and will not look up in case they are perceived to have committed an improper gesture. They learn the proper gestures, what is acceptable and what forbidden, what is permitted and what prohibited, and follow them. At the same time, as Löw (1993) suggests, the man’s gaze, bound up in a complex of power and knowledge, can intrude into women’s spaces and dominate them. The woman will hide from this gaze; the man will talk about it.

Theorists of mobility explore how mobility is a pursued good or commodity. Those with access to mobility advance in societies. These theorists discuss mobility in terms of the ability to move around in areas and travel distances. This research finds that “access” to mobility is problematic at the minutest level. The women of the research group have problems with the slightest physical movements. They cannot “raise their
heads”, lift their eyes, stand up, stretch their bodies, etc. Any and every physical movement has potential to produce negative outcomes.

Feminist theorists study of mind-body dualism extends to explorations of mobility as mobile-static in which male bodies are associated with mobile and female with static. However theoretical attention of mobility is largely on the difficulties that women experience in terms of being able to leave private and enter public spaces, and to travel certain distances. The body’s microphysical movements are less theorized. This research finds that physical movements on the minutest scale of the body are important forces through which women of this research are controlled. The slightest micro-movements are mechanisms disempowering women of this segment of society.

Once again we see how mobility and the gaze interact. As the gaze manipulates movements from one place to another on the factory floor, here we see movement being constrained at the smallest scale of the body. Even the slightest movement can draw the gaze, with ruinous outcomes. Women of this sector have learned these outcomes through their bodies and often choose not to move at all. As Foucault argues, power and control is learned through the body.

6.8 Relational power and identity, internalized beliefs

As woman mediates the relational structure of society (Alcoff, 1996) and power and space are created relationally, male dominance over women within this study is exhibited to others through spatial patterns. In Pakistan’s garment industry men shape spatiality in particular ways and regulate spatial movement. Additionally, male dominance is exhibited by the woman’s presence or absence within these spaces. Pakistani men’s ability to maintain their control over a woman is demonstrated by controlling and constraining their spatial mobility - keeping women in the house, not allowing them to leave without his consent, or to go to places that he and others like himself may disapprove of.

“You see there’s a certain respect that a man has. He can’t take the taunts that will be hurled at him if people know that his wife or daughter or sister goes to a factory.
If she goes out to work he may even lie and say that she works as a cleaning woman or a maid at someone’s house, but they won’t say she works at a factory.”

(Hanifa, Shadi Pura Lahore, homeworker, female, age 45)

The homeworking respondent illustrates that respect and prestige is produced relationally for a man in this society. Many women of the group under study have internalized responsibility for relational identity and the necessity to maintain a particular image of the male members of their homes and families. For the respondents, male respect in society is created in relation to what their wife, or any woman in their household, does and where they go. In Pakistan, a factory is not considered a place that women should work, and the men who allow women in their family to go there can be disparaged and taunted. In an attempt to maintain male dignity, these men may even lie and say the women of their household go somewhere else and not the factory.

Male factory workers’ attitudes about women in their households working in factories demonstrate how men’s reputations and standing in society can be relational.

“No, there’s no reason for them (women from their homes) to come and work in the factory. Why should they come and work here when we can? They shouldn’t. No man wants that. Are we dead?”

(Ashraf, Nishat Textiles Lahore, stitcher, male, age 30)

The quote of the male factory worker clearly indicates his mind-set about women in his household working in a factory. In his opinion if men are alive and able to work, there should be no need for women from their families to work in factories. The respondent’s words demonstrate the relational impact on men if women from their homes work. People of this society may even consider them to be dead if their women go to work in factories.

Other female respondents talk about the men in their homes being mocked for letting them go out and earn. The following quotes by Shadi Pura Lahore, women homeworkers reveal some of the dynamics that produce respect for men in this society:
“No nobody of our neighbourhood goes to the factory. Two (girls) used to but quit because of the household problems... so nobody goes anymore. But when we went, although it was an all female factory, the neighbours used to taunt us and our father by saying that he’s sending his young girls out to earn. He was taunted and looked down on because of it.”

(Shaista, Shadi Pura Lahore, homeworker female, age 26)

In this quote the homeworking respondent explains that her father was derided and taunted for letting his daughters go out and earn for the family. The esteem and respect of the male in the household is threatened, both for allowing girls to go out and earn, but also for being incapable of earning adequately to sustain their family and home. As the male respondent states in the previous quote, people may even think that the men of a particular household are dead if the women work. Butler (1994), McDowell (1996, 1999) and Massey (2005), suggest that gender is scripted and these quotes illustrate that as women embody certain concepts within a social structure, men embody certain others. Here, masculinity is scripted to embody the breadwinner and maintainer of the household. In the event that men are not able to fulfill or sustain this conceptual position, they may be looked down upon and scorned or even thought of as figuratively or literally dead.

The data finds that money does not effect the relational construction of power and position in any great measure. Women were asked whether making more money effects the way they, or the men in their household are thought of or treated, or, if the women make more money, they will get permission to go out and work.

‘They would still say, even if you make a Rs. 100 at home, it’s better than 1000 if you have to go out for it and people see you going to a factory. So money isn’t the thing. Plus if we get a lot of money they may start wondering what we’re doing to make that much money.”

(Abida, Shadi Pura Lahore, homeworker, female, age 30)

Thus, as the quote shows, making more money, even ten times more according to this respondent, makes no difference to a male of this social segment permitting a woman
to go out and work in a factory. In fact, making too much money may have adverse effects, wherein a woman’s honour can become suspect and be questioned. This further indicates the value of the work that a woman is considered capable of doing within this society. The quote demonstrates that women are not considered able to make a lot of money in legitimate ways, and if they do earn a large amount, their activities may inspire suspicion and doubt. This in turn may cause them not to strive for too much, and choose to remain in lower paid jobs within the power structure.

In other cases, women of this research think it best to make less money but remain respectable by staying in their home:

“No, it’s not possible (to go to a factory). There are men there ... It’s better that we take whatever work we can get and remain with decency in our homes. Where we may get Rs. 100. in a factory, we’re happy with Rs. 50 at home, where we can live with respect and decency, and our men don’t have to worry either.”

(Azra, Shadi Pura Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 35)

Maintaining “respect and decency” by remaining within the four walls of the home, is a dominant and accepted social norm in Pakistan. In the quote above, the Pakistani woman has internalized the concept that her purity will remain intact if she remains at home and the belief that it is a woman’s duty to ensure that men of their household are not worried or anxious because they go out. Other women also explain that they themselves are responsible for how they are treated inside and outside the home, and what they are permitted or not permitted to do.

Many homeworkers choose to deny themselves mobility and stay in the confines of their homes despite knowing that they may be able to earn much more for their work and time if they go to a factory. This is based on either being denied mobility and thereby the ability to navigate public spaces by male members of their household, or on the knowledge that these males will be taunted and disrespected if it is found that their women go out to work. As theories on the relational features of female social identity suggest, these women know that they are the physical manifestation of family honour - particularly that of male members – the father and husband. Alcoff, (1996) argues that women’s identity is defined by their relationships to men, (wife, daughter,
sister etc.) this research finds that male social identities are also maintained by what their women do. Any altering of the social identity of woman, by them earning, or leaving private and entering public spaces, may challenge the existing social structure and thus encounter resistance.

Foucault’s (1980) theories of individuals internalizing belief systems manifest itself in women’s assuming responsibility for how they are treated. Many women in this study accept the liability for maintaining their households’ honour, and that they embody concepts of purity and piety. The belief that it is their duty to preserve their family’s honour is internalized. Thus they feel their own behaviour is responsible for however they are treated.

“We have to make our own trust in our families eyes. I have that - I’ve never done anything that would jeopardise that so I’ve never been stopped form going where I want to. I can go...”

(Majeeda, Shadi Pura Lahore, homeworker, female, age 30)

The above respondent holds herself responsible for others actions towards her. She believes her own behaviour determines how she is treated and whether she is allowed to go out or not. Having internalized dominant belief systems of embodiment of purity and piety, women assume censorship of their actions and behaviour to meet relevant acceptable standards. Many women believe that their family’s treatment of them (i.e. whether they are permitted to go out etc.) is based on their own actions and whether or not they act and behave in accordance with acceptable social standards. They have internalized the belief that they can and should be controlled based on their own actions.

The internalization of responsibility for maintaining “honour” is reflected in many of the respondents’ quotes. For these women it is their duty to guard their honour as their honour reflects that of her parents and family.

“There are too many men in a factory. So it’s worse here, in a company (an office) there are fewer. But in a factory we’re not considered good women. When a girl gets
out of her home she has a responsibility to her parents - she must guard their honour-
she is their honour. But sometimes some girls don't do that and then she taints it for
the rest of us. Then we’re all considered the same and we have to live with it.”
(Anisa, Comfort Factory Lahore, (stitcher) female, age 33)

As the above quote illustrates, these women know they have a more difficult time of
maintaining their reputations and, through them, those of their parents and families in
a setting like the factory, where there are so many men. They are already entering a
place where they can be looked down upon and considered immoral women. Thus
when women come to work in a Pakistani factory, their actions, movements and
activities are subject to scrutiny and will determine whether they have maintained
their family’s honour. If they act in any way that disregards honourable behavioural
norms, they will not only harm their own reputation, but those of all women who
work within this space. One girl’s reputation can often be used to taint all women in
the factory. In that case, this woman’s behaviour will affirm the belief that only
“loose” women work at factories and this affirmation degrades this workspace for all
women.

Women working in the factory similarly internalize self-responsibility of harassment.

“No, a factory is a factory ... but a woman makes her own reputation. The thing is
when a woman first comes to work here a man will try and go after her for a couple of
days, you know - make advances to her, she’ll get some harassment, but if the woman
herself is good, if she doesn't respond she’ll be left alone. The girl who does want it
(sexual attention) will get it.”
(Ayla, Nishat Textiles Lahore, (stitcher) female, age 26)

As the quote highlights, in the factory setting, many women believe that however they
are treated, including whether they are harassed, is an outcome of their own actions,
their own responsibility and their own doing. A standard pattern of behaviour
develops when a new girl joins the factory workforce in Pakistan. The above quote
demonstrates that the respondent believes that it is natural and normal for men to try
and make advances towards new girls, and even hassle them, but that it is up to the
girl to reject these advances and remain a “good” (morally pure) girl. If however, the
girl is not “good” herself, she will continue to illicit this kind of attention, and it will
be her own doing.

Internalization of the power hierarchy and its control systems is evidenced at different
levels and scales:

Do you ever feel like going out to work?

“What’s the point of thinking about it? Nobody will let us go out and work, we’re not
allowed so why think about it?”
(Nabila, Gulberg Town Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 27)

“Like I do a lot of stitching and make a lot but I stay at home. The main thing is to
fulfil your household duties. My main duty is to take care of the home, even if we
don't have more than one meal a day, I shouldn't go out and get work. Whatever God
wants to give us He will give us. I don't let my girls go out as well. They help me at
home after school sometimes. But otherwise they stay home.”
(Naheed, Kaemari Town Karachi, homeworker, female, age 50).

As the quotes suggest, women “choose” to stay at home and work in order that they
fulfill their domestic duties. They have internalized the norm that maintaining homes
is the primary function and duty of their lives. Many women feel there is no point
contemplating the possibility of going out to work and simply stop themselves form
thinking about it. Still others talk about “never having done anything” that may be
perceived as disreputable i.e. having patrolled themselves so much, they are never
stopped from going out. Many homeworking women and factory workers in Pakistan
consider the difficulties of entering public space and the harassment they may have to
endure, as being a norm. Many also believe that they may be responsible for inducing
harassment as they have stepped out of their homes, i.e. come into public space.
Having entered public space they provoke harassment, and must respond in particular
ways when subjected to it.
The belief among the respondents is that a woman can develop a questionable reputation by responding in particular ways to attention by male workers in the factory. If the woman is a “good” girl, and takes care not to show any interest, men will leave them alone, if women do not behave in a manner that is associated with being a girl of high morals however, they will continue to get such attention, and will deserve any associated negative consequences. Self-policing is evident in women’s actions and in how they talk about their conditions.

6.9 Resistance

Foucault argues that resistance co-exists with power and whenever power is created, resistance to that power is also generated. Drawing from this, it is in fact in the essence of resistance that the precarious nature of power is revealed. As soon as there is a power relation, no matter how oppressive the system, there is a possibility of defiance and retaliation. This resistance may manifest itself in the smallest expression. A young homeworking woman explains her resistance/defiance to the powers that try to curb and control her:

“Every time I go out men (on the street) would always be looking at me and wondering where I’m going. They’d ask my brothers, ‘so, she goes to the hospital in the morning, where does she go in the evenings?’ I would go to coaching (tuition) in the evenings, but it caused a problem for my brother being questioned constantly by his friends and then he stopped me.

And so I changed my timings. I would get out earlier in the mornings; they wouldn’t know where I’m going would they? So I started to get out early, at 7(am) and go to tuition first, instead of 9(am) as I used to previously when I would go straight to the hospital. So everybody, my brothers, and the other men in the neighbourhood would just think I’m getting out once in the morning and going to the hospital. I’d get my work all done that way and then run my own training center in the afternoons in my house.”

(Shela, Kaemari Town Karachi, homeworker, age 26)

This respondent describes how she manages to pushback and outwit the power
structure that she is a part of and which operates to constrain her mobility and control her movements. In this case a very tangible male gaze creates gendered power arrangements that structure her neighborhood. Whenever this woman goes out of the home, she is gazed at, and as she needs to go out more than once, (at separate times to work and tuition), she is subject to this male gaze several times a day. The young men (her brothers friends) take note of her movements and find objection to the number of times she goes out, eventually persuading her brother to force her to stop. Not to be outdone, the young woman changes her timings and manages to go out just once but get both jobs (work and tuition) completed before returning home.

As Foucault (1980) suggests, power is relational, existing everywhere and operating at the micro levels of social relations, but “minute social shifts” can also signal resistance to power. The minute social shift of changing and adjusting timings, that this woman describes, accomplishes her resistance to the power paradigms that structure her life. As her mobility draws the gaze she is under constant surveillance. The observation that she leaves her home and comes into the public space twice a day is a cause of concern for the young men of her neighbourhood and they manage to stop her. She knows she cannot really contest the power model that gives her brother and his friends rationale and justification to stop her from going out to work and training. However, by getting out early, she devises a plan to do both and get what she wants while remaining within the frame of behaviour that is acceptable to the power structure. She navigates spaces through minute shifts in her behaviour. Although this may seem like a very small form of resistance, it is nevertheless an opposition to the status quo, and begins to allow her a means of destabilising the secondary position she occupies.

6.10 Discussion

6.11 Inclusion, exclusion and the production of gender prohibitive space

Sen (1999, 2002a) maintains that a person’s ability to participate and to choose between different sets of opportunities, reflects their position of advantage or
disadvantage. Similarly, Room (1995), Estivill (2003) and Curran et. al. (2007) argue that the levels of economic and social participation available to individuals indicate the level of inclusion and exclusion within a society. This chapter has examined women who work in Pakistan’s garment industry to understand some forces and processes of inclusion and exclusion. It assesses how gender prohibitive spaces for women are constructed, structured, and maintained and the extent to which women are able to navigate them and participate socially and economically within them.

Public and private spaces

Theorists argue that public and private spheres are gendered (Valentine, 1989; Butler 1993; Duncan 1996; Alcoff, 1996; McDowell, 1996; Massey, 2005). The public has traditionally been the domain of the male – the disembodied. The private has conventionally being considered feminine, the domain of femininity – the embodied. Extending these theories, this research shows that for women in Pakistan, all spaces, whether public or private, are gendered and the boundaries between them are porous (permeable, vulnerable, liable to encroachment). The home, a private space that is gendered as feminine, and which should be the woman's domain, is in fact subject to constant male control. In the home, homeworking women in this study are not permitted, either by their husbands or, having internalized control, even themselves, to begin activity that may profit them (garment making) until all needs of the husband, the family and the house are met. These women are not allowed to leave the home without permission, and if they do, their mobility is restricted to a certain space and distance which they cannot go beyond without a male escort or without approval.

The street is a public space and is therefore regulated for Pakistani women. Specifically, when Pakistani women enter a space, which is gendered as male, i.e. which does not traditionally belong in the domain of women, they may be forcibly stopped. Pakistani men hold higher status in the existing power structure and perpetually harass women who have entered public spaces. Constant harassment and denigration of women who enter public spaces - in neighborhoods, streets, and public transport - takes place. These are ubiquitous and pervasive. Many respondents describe trying to escape the lewd looks and stares, catcalls and propositions of men on the streets that are so normal in this society. Public modes of transport like buses that have sections partitioned off for women are feminine spaces and essentially have
porous boundaries that are encroached upon by men. Pakistani women travelling on these buses are not able to occupy the full space that is reserved for them.

Data from this chapter also shows that spaces in the factory exhibit patterns of gendering and feminization. The term “feminization” extends to the type of work and activities that are often associated with “women’s work” and exhibit particular characteristics [e.g. the type of contract, the form of remuneration, the extent and forms of security provided, and the access to skill (Standing, 1999)]. The spaces that women primarily occupy on the factory floor are spaces where feminized activities function. These spaces are both literally (more women) and theoretically gendered.

As Valentine (1989) suggests space changes its character depending on time; spaces like parks and railway stations may be safe in the day and become less so at night. But for the Pakistani woman, forms of violence may be ubiquitous in any public space, day or night. Extending Valentine, in Pakistan because of the attribution of qualities of the pure to the inner, private space that women should occupy, women’s venturing into public space at any time may elicit a negative response. Here space may change its character by the entry of the other. As the Pakistani woman’s body represents concepts of piety and purity, it is believed women are responsible for maintaining that standard by remaining within the walls of their home - the private. By leaving the home, they enter a space, which, being male and having male attributes, makes them be the other - impious and impure. By entering a space demarcated as and for male, the woman, and her body, is considered tainted. In Pakistan, rules of “Chador aur char divari” (the four walls and the veil) construct a particular kind of space where a woman going out for whatever reason becomes questionable and can now be ridiculed and derided by men and other women. The construction of public space influences the production of the insecure woman and the self-assured man (Low, 1993). This can explain why, having left the sanctity of the home, a woman in Pakistan is considered fair game to be treated as impure, violations can be committed against her, and it is often not considered unreasonable to abuse, deride and harass her.

Sharp (1996) argues that the woman’s body is often embodied with concepts of national identity. In Pakistan, the national ideal of “purity and piety” is articulated through the woman’s body. Bordo (1993) has shown that power is exercised when
women are compelled to attain *ideals* through their bodies. Extending this theory, in Pakistan concepts of purity are expressed through women’s physical stance, their posture, their gait and the way they move, the averting of their own gaze, the modesty of their dress. The woman’s body represents purity and becomes inseparable from it and is the means for control.

6.12 Mobility and Spaces

Labour market mobility consists of various forms and operates at various scales. Labour market mobility is often described at the scale of workers’ movements between villages, towns, cities and countries in pursuit of work. Mobility at the scale of specific labour markets refers more generally to workers’ movements between segments like the primary and secondary segments, between tiers within the segments, and between occupations and jobs.

One glaring omission in the traditional treatment of scale is highlighted by female geographers’ focus on the scale of the body. Many feminist writers (Duncan, 1996; Alcoff 1996; Massey 1996, 2006; etc.) agree that mobility is an “enabling” factor for individuals and they argue that mobility also functions at more intimate scales – at the scale of the body. They explore ideas of mobile/static and mind/body dualism at the level of male and female bodies and the subsequent creation of gendered spaces. Women are traditionally associated with the body and private sphere and men with the mind and public sphere. Theories explore the idea that knowledge is embodied, engendered and embedded in place and space and argue that the woman’s association with the “body” and the man’s with the “mind” creates gendered spaces with exclusionary impacts on women. As women are traditionally retained in private spaces, mobility and movement of women from the private to the public spaces becomes problematic.

However, while these writers extend mobility to the scale of the body, they rarely explore mobility at the level of the minutest movements of the body. This research finds that mobility at the scale of body movements is a mechanism through which
women are controlled and gendered spaces are created. This chapter shows that mobility at the smallest scale is challenging for my respondents. Control of microphysical movements of their body enables power and domination over them. For many of my study-group, the slightest body movement can have enormous implications. Glancing up, moving the angle of a head, standing up, stretching legs or arms, walking on the streets, squeezing bodies into small spaces on a bus – body movements at every scale are problematic for these women. As every movement can elicit negative responses, the mobility that these women have the potential to express cannot be experienced. Controlled mobility at the micro-scale is the instrument through which gender prohibitive spaces are produced and women experience continued subjugation.

6.13 The female body, movement and the Gaze

The “panoptic gaze” has the ability to control, manipulate and wield a power that Foucault (1977) argues is an important source of control in society. Once a subject is aware of their behaviour being watched, and watched ceaselessly, surveillance is internalized; after a while there is no longer a need for external policing as with the internalization of the process the subject becomes the monitor and surveyor upon themself and acts in the manner that is conventional and acceptable. The internalization of this process is key to embedding acceptable norms and establishing control. In theory the panoptic gaze is somewhat symbolic. Bentham’s Panopticon was never built and therefore the panoptic gaze never physically developed as a curator of power and control, but as Foucault (ibid.) stressed, it is a mechanism of power reduced to its ideal form.

In Pakistan, the “gaze” is not only symbolic or theoretical but is a specific, tangible force that has physical expression. Foucault has explained how the gaze acts on the body and can control individuals’ actions, making them act and behave in particular ways. However while Foucault analyses a symbolic panoptic gaze and it’s effect on behaviours he pays little attention to mobility. This research finds that the gaze and mobility interact to control women in Pakistan. The respondents within this research
demonstrate that a deeper level of control is experienced by the women in this society through regulation of their mobility and their microphysical body movements.

In Pakistan the male gazes and this male gaze is legitimized as a force on the female body. The Pakistani male is conditioned to gaze, the Pakistani woman to be gazed at and to bear it. The gaze acts to control these women’s movements and mobility at the smallest scale. Every movement these women make attracts the gaze and reciprocally, the gaze manipulates their movement. Foucault (1980) argues that the gaze men cast on women’s bodies is often infused with power dynamics (Löw, 2006). This can explain the manipulative nature of men’s gazes.

The male gaze scrutinizes every movement of the female body. As soon as these women leave the private spaces of their homes and step into the public space - even within their neighbourhood streets - they draw the male gaze and are under surveillance. The women in this study find all their movements watched – when they leave the home, how far away from home they go, how many times they go out, what modes of transport they use, etc. Their mobility is under constant surveillance and is controlled by male watchfulness. This gaze comes not only from family (fathers, brothers, uncles, cousins), but from neighbours, friends and colleagues as well. Respondents may alter their behaviour and mobility patterns as a consequence. Public buses are spaces where harassment in the form of staring and groping etc. easily occurs and women try to crush their bodies into spaces that are furthest from men.

Perhaps nowhere is the power of the gaze - to manipulate, to move and to monitor - so intense and pervasive as on the factory floor. Respondents including managers and factory workers (both men and women) describe an ostensibly instinctive gravitation of women to certain spaces of the factory floor. What seems like a natural gravitation however is in reality no such thing. On a normal Pakistani garment factory floor, the average ratio of men to women is 10:2, i.e. there are often at least ten or more men to every two women. On entering the factory floor a woman is surrounded by men who have been conditioned to gaze, and these men will look at her. The woman looks for areas that have fewer men and thereby, where there is less chance that she is subject
to watchfulness. Her “choice” to sit with other women is thus controlled and manipulated by the male gaze and her desire to avoid it.

Mobility and movement within the factory is limited and restricted for the few women who work at the stitching machines as higher paid stitchers. As the male gaze is constant and every movement of the woman draws the gaze, in an effort to stop being watched, some women try to not move at all. As evidenced in the words of the stitcher who did not “raise her head” for fear of meeting the male gaze, garment factory women who manage to get higher paying and status jobs operate in gender prohibitive spaces. They are subject to intense control of their physicality and microphysical movement. This control may lead to experiences that are painful and potentially harmful to the body and detrimental to women’s physical health and wellbeing. These women’s inability to move – to stand up, stretch their legs or their body, turn around or sideways to speak to someone, or even raise their head and lift their eyes, i.e. to look - all may have physical consequences that negatively affect women's health. Respondents speak of the corporeal demands and toll of sitting all day in these spaces, and compare it to the hardest manual labour. As they argue, constrained movement and immobility is an extreme physical challenge. It is possible that women consequently develop health issues that may make them leave their job thereby opening up vacancies and space that could be more easily filled by men.

6.14 Restricted economic opportunities

The relationship between mobility and the gaze in Pakistan thus becomes an active force of inclusion and exclusion. Mobility is controlled and leads to a severe reduction of spaces that Pakistani women are able to traverse and navigate and those they are able to occupy. This leads to a contraction in the nature of economic activity they can undertake, limits participation in financial opportunities and their career progression.

In the case of homeworkers, Pakistani women are either not permitted to leave the home or to go far from home, which affects their negotiating power to demand a higher wage, or better price for their goods. While male workers can go to any length (literally) and distance until demand for their price is met homeworking women must
settle for whatever they can negotiate in the limited space available to them. Pakistani homeworking women are inevitably paid less than men for the same work, and eventually, with most women being paid similar rates, this rate becomes the regular price for items made by women - a price significantly lower than what men command.

Immobility also affects these women’s capacity to get materials and items from factories and other manufacturing outlets (boutique shops) themselves. This has significant impacts on women’s career progression. Men who are able to go to factories not only receive higher pay similar to factory rates for their work, but also often become the go-betweens (middlemen) and advance their careers by becoming suppliers and contractors. Such career progression is denied to women.

In Pakistani garment factories women move away from the intense male gaze to particular spaces of the factory floor. The activities occurring here are unskilled, lower paid and lower status. The space that these activities are carried out is gendered both for being largely populated by women, and for having characteristics of a more “feminized” labour market. The space is gendered, as theory suggests, because of the activities that are conducted here and the power structure that exists between the people that occupy it (Alcoff, 1996; Duncan, 1996; Rose, 1996). As such, the gaze acts as an exclusionary force for areas that have higher paid work and the process constructs them as gender prohibitive spaces for these women. Pakistani women who do work within these gender prohibitive spaces endure the male gaze in a manner that constrains their mobility and causes them severe physical pressure. Some may choose to leave; others may develop health concerns that force them to.

6.15 Internalization

Pakistani women in this study have internalized belief that all activities of social reproduction, fulfilling family and home requirements and catering to their husband’s needs come before addressing any of their own. Most of these women believe their primary duty is to look after the home and that everything else is secondary. Female homeworkers do not travel to places or distances that are not acceptable to existing power structures. Many speak of their personal choice to remain in their own homes where they can live a “decent life” and even be paid less so long as they can “remain
with decency” in their homes rather than to go out.

Most of these women have internalized concepts that their persons, their bodies, embody purity and piety. Many respondents feel responsible for maintaining their parents’ and families’ honour and their husband’s respect in the community. This preservation of honour is exhibited in different ways and particularly demonstrable through movement. Several women speak of behaving and moving in particular ways so that their reputations as “good”, “decent” girls are not damaged. Women on buses squeeze themselves into particular spaces to avoid being groped but nothing is said to stop the men from coming onto their side of the bus. Thus all accountability for acts of harassment and even sexual violence against themselves is taken on by the women, and the belief that they are responsible is internalized.

This belief-system is paralleled in the factories. Obtaining respect from co-workers, maintaining honour and whether or not their male co-workers harass them is considered women’s responsibility. Women internalize blame of any acts of antagonism committed against them. They blame themselves, or the actions and behaviour of specific other women, for whether or not they are treated with respect and dignity or are harassed. All body movements, even the slightest gesture signals something - whether they are “good” or “loose” women - and elicits particular reactions from the gazing men. The women have internalized guilt and accountability for the way they are treated.

Foucault has argued that the gaze has the ability to make individuals conform to the rules and parameters operating in society. The body has been historically disciplined to make it socially constructive and it is through the body that lessons about power structures are learned. Drawing from Foucault, as power is learned through the body, every gesture and movement is significant. For the women in this research, mobility at every scale – being able to leave the home, navigating the streets, the minutest body movements – have meaning. The routine, habitual activity of women, the gestures that are permitted or prohibited, how much space a woman’s body can occupy, how much mobility they can access, the forms of mobility available to them (distance, micro-movements), all signal the power structure of the society and make the
individual abide by the rules operating within their particular power structure.

6.16 Conclusion

This chapter has addressed the third research question:

How is “gendered space” produced, constructed and structured in Pakistan’s labour market?

➢ How does the structure of “gendered space” influence employment patterns for women in Pakistan?

As we see, the nature of public and private spaces and the manner of their construction reveal gendered patterns that are inclusive or prohibitive for women in this research group. Gender prohibitive spatial arrangements and labour market mobility at every scale impact employment patterns for women. These women are either unable to work in factories or must take jobs that have low pay, low status and greater precarity. In Pakistan the “gaze” is not only theoretical. The relationship between the male “gaze” and mobility acts on the female body to control women’s movement and navigation of spaces.

But as Foucault argues, when power is created, resistance to power is also produced. As the slightest movements are used to control women in this study, they may pushback and resist through small manipulations of mobility. Homeworking women engage in economic activity despite not being allowed to go out; others change work hours to ensure their desired undertakings are accomplished; still others continue to work in better jobs on the factory floor.
Chapter VII

Conclusion

_I consider it presumption in anyone to pretend to decide what women are or are not, can or cannot be, by natural constitution. They have always hitherto been kept, as far as regards spontaneous development, in so unnatural a state, that their nature cannot but have been greatly distorted and disguised; and no one can safely pronounce that if women’s nature were left to choose its direction as freely as men’s, and if no artificial bent were attempted to be given to it except that required by the conditions of human society, and given to both sexes alike, there would be any material difference, or perhaps any difference at all, in the character and capacities which would unfold themselves... What is now called the nature of women is an eminently artificial thing - the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others."

— John Stuart Mill, 1869, The Subjection of Women

John Stuart Mill’s argument, made one and a half centuries ago highlights the difficulty of untangling the “real nature” of women’s capabilities from a constructed “fabrication”. Mill asserts that women have continuously been placed and arranged in accordance with contrived assumptions of their potential. Mill understood that conceptions of feminine nature are socially constructed and are not the true constitution of “woman”.

Since ancient Greek times distinctions have been made between the mind and the body and women held inferior because of their association with the body. In “Politics” Aristotle categorically asserts, "as regards the sexes, the male is by nature superior and the female inferior, the male ruler and the female subject" (4 (1254b13-14) cited in Smith, 1983) and relegates women to traditional roles in the home, subserving men. Aristotle argues that biologically the female is a reproductive failure and is in fact no better than a "mutilated male" (D.G.A. 737a28, ibid.).
Modern theorists (Valentine 1989; Bordo, 1993; Butler 1990, 2004; McDowell, 1996, 1999; Massey, 2005) have argued that gender and gender roles are scripted and men and women act according to the prescribed and socially approved functions of their gender in time and place. Hence as Mill argues, the idea of woman has for centuries been so distorted, and they have been so regulated, monitored and controlled that “the (true) character and capacities” of women that might “unfold themselves” have long been stifled.

This thesis has explored women’s position in labour markets of labour intensive industrializing countries. More specifically it has examined a workforce that operates in gendered spaces, the nature of inclusion and exclusion resulting from the character of these spaces, and their impact on women. This research makes a theoretical and empirical contribution to these debates through the lens of the garment industry of Pakistan.

This research also highlights the wider challenge of low female participation in the overall economy of Pakistan. At only 28%, Pakistan’s female employment rate within the garment industry is the lowest in the world. However, women’s employment within the garment sector constitutes 84.6% of the total employment of women in the entire manufacturing industry. Thus the garment industry still hires the highest number of women in the industrial sector of Pakistan.

With the overarching objective to understand the nature of women’s participation in Pakistan’s industry, through the lens of the garment sector and its associated actors, this thesis set out to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do institutions (federal state/firms) influence gendered patterns in Pakistan’s garment industry?
   - To what extent do formal and informal institutions interact to promote or restrict inclusion or exclusion of female workers in Pakistan’s garment industry?
2 To what extent is the secondary segment of the segmented labour market in Pakistan’s garment industry divided along the lines of gender?

- How do features of segmentation and precarious work mediate the gendered structure of the secondary segment of Pakistan’s garment industry?

3 How is “gendered space” produced, constructed and structured in Pakistan’s labour market?

- How does the structure of “gendered space” influence employment patterns for women in Pakistan?

In the last three decades, the study of globalization has gained currency in the geographic sciences as a paradigm for explaining a wide variety of physical, social and economic transformations around the world. Harvey (2010) and Wolf (2010) explain that the forces of globalization have altered the institutions effecting manufacturing, commerce and business and their corresponding markets. All around the world the integration of rural and hitherto independent peasant populations into the workforce has occurred and most dramatic of all has been the mobilization of women who now form an integral part of the global workforce. But despite economic growth and entry into paid work, not all women around the world have been impacted equally by these economic developments.

This study is of a subsection of Pakistani women. It analyses women working in the secondary segment of Pakistan’s industrial labour market, and examines factory women and homeworkers of the garment industry. Members of the low-income class (just over $2/day), these workers’ income opportunities are generally irregular and precarious. The women of this class/socio-economic background are largely settled in the outskirts of the cities of Lahore and Karachi where housing is cheaper, although some opt to live within easier commuting distances from the factories. The education qualification of the women (and men) of this group is low - few have graduated high school or even primary/elementary school and many homeworkers are illiterate.
The discussion was divided into three thematic sections to analyze the factors influencing the marginal position of women in the labour market. The recurring themes in all the sections are the structures and arrangements that inhibit women from access, mobility or progress in their economic pursuits.

The first theme examined in this thesis is institutionalism.

**Economic Institutionalism**

This study used institutional economics to understand how social systems promote or constrain labour. It examined the role of formal and informal institutions and their enforcement characteristics in shaping behaviour. Institutions establish the "rules of the game" – the formal laws, the accepted norms and conventions - according to which members of society, and the economic system operates.

I find that the relationship between formal and informal institutions can be synergetic but also filled with tension. Formal institutions are partly effective in constructing and shaping labour market structures. Theorists (North, 1991; Assaad, 1993; Hodgson 2006; Rodgers, 2007) believe informal institutions are more crucial to establish social (and economic) norms within a society. They argue that informal institutions - norms, rules, customs, taboos, traditions, codes of conduct, and social sanctions - functioning in particular spaces are often more powerful in constructing and regulating activities and practices within that space than formal institutions.

While this is true, I find that formal institutions are not entirely ineffectual in producing systems, including those that maintain gender relations. This research finds that formal institutions can provide a framework within which behaviour patterns and structures of society develop.

The formal institutions examined within this thesis were the federal state, firms, and to some extent, through an examination of the social production and reproduction of labour, the home.

I find that the Pakistani state has made little to no attempt to improve employment opportunities for women. Theorists argue that when formal institutions pass laws,
they are meaningless without the reinforcement of informal institutions. However, I find that the creation of policy and passage of laws is a necessary starting point. The position of power of the state over its people allows it to regulate gender and sexual relations through several means. In certain instances, (like employment policy), the initial framework provided by a formal institution (state), can initiate and encourage particular behavioural patterns. A policy can introduce rules and mechanisms within society that include or exclude particular sectors/individuals into systems. Once a policy is passed, it can and must, then be supported by informal institutional mechanisms for meaningful implementation, but it’s initial passage into law provides a starting point.

My research finds that institutions (state and firm) reinforce each other to construct gendered, inclusive or exclusionary labour markets in Pakistan’s garment industry. The state and firms in Pakistan act together in limiting women’s access to higher paying occupations. The state sets laws, and firms set work-shift timings that together disenable women from working at certain hours of the day. Informal rules operating within this society disallow women from being out of their homes in the evenings. In this instance both formal and informal conventions act as forces of exclusion and prohibit women from working at factories late into the night and thereby taking jobs that require this, but it is formal institutions that give regulatory sanction to the rules.

Another implicit alliance among formal institutions is between the state and training centers. Training institutions in Pakistan maintain women’s subordinate position by not equipping them with skills to work in industry. Instead, all training provided to women in these institutes prepares them to work at home. Thus formal institutions are instrumental in constraining women’s inclusion within the formal industrial labour market.

The state and firms do not always work together however. The firms’ effectiveness as a formal institution is apparent in it’s interactions with the state and in Pakistan the firm is often more powerful than the state. Within its range of influence the firm is able to introduce institutional systems and rules that require compliance and which can initiate a change within the existing environment. This study finds that the state and firms’ relationship can be contradictory and full of tension and they do not always
reinforce each other. This is evident particularly in their attempts to exploit informal institutional norms that exist within this society.

Research in some industrializing countries (e.g. China, Sri Lanka) has shown that the state is often able to exploit informal institutional norms to its advantage. Similar patterns are evidenced in this research. Women’s subjugated positions in Pakistani society, and the resistance to women going out of their homes for economic employment is customary; this is a conventional attitude of many (if not all) men within the scope of this research. Although the federal state claims to support women’s emancipation, very little action has really been taken by the state towards women’s empowerment. One reason for the state’s apathy towards women’s advancement is that politicians and governments are concerned with retaining their “vote-bank” (constituency or voters loyal to them). This vote-bank largely comprises uneducated, conservative men who predominantly hold the views described above and are likely to resist changes to existing social power hierarchies within their homes. Preserving and reproducing the subjected position of women and the informal norms that maintain this position is thus in the (political) interest of state government which utilizes informal institutions to serve its needs.

Firms in Pakistan are less able to utilize informal institutional norms to their benefit, illustrating informal institutions’ resilience and dominance over societal patterns. Research findings of some other industrializing countries illustrate how firms have employed informal institutions to their advantage by devising ways to make multitudes of women work in their factories. However despite attempts to encourage women to work in factories in Pakistan, informal customs have prevented firms from the large-scale employment of women. For example, firms that established factories in semi-rural areas have made numerous attempts to recruit rural women from surrounding areas to work in them. Recruitment methods comprise sending hiring women into the districts to describe the advantages of working in the new factories to rural women and their families and coax them to join the workforce. However the informal beliefs that exist within these regions, which disparage women who work in industrial settings have mostly proved insurmountable. Conforming to existing theory, informal norms of Pakistani society have an overwhelming influence in
constructing gender exclusionary industrial labour markets and women workers are not employed in large numbers.

Thus formal and informal institutions have interacted in specific ways to include or exclude female garment workers in Pakistan, and construct gendered labour markets.

**Effect of Religion**

Research of institutions in a traditional society like Pakistan may inspire questions regarding religion. “Is religion a determining factor in influencing women’s place in this society and the way they live their lives?”

Pakistan is a country where 97% of the population is Muslim. To an outsider, and often internally as well, practices of the religion of Islam are sometimes considered responsible for creating conditions for women’s subjugation. Hence women's relative absence from industrial workplaces in Pakistan may be thought of as attributable to an outcome of Islamic observances.

This research finds that the Pakistani State has sometimes used aspects of religion to help legitimise authority and control over its people. Many Pakistani politicians have often encouraged discriminatory interpretations of Islam that uphold archaic customs in order to appeal to their male voters and maintain male dominant hierarchies within their constituencies. Historically also, some politicians and dictators placed the burden of making Pakistan a model Islamic country on the shoulders of women. Women were made symbols of purity, piety and the embodiment of biased interpretations of particular Islamic injunctions. These have worked to subvert women’s ability to work outside of their homes and essentially sustained male authority within households.

However, rather than legitimate Islamic instruction this research finds that it is traditional norms and customs that have prevailed to structure Pakistani society. If Islam or religion is a compelling factor determining the presence or absence of women in industrial settings, or even women's ability to leave their homes (for whatever reason), comparable situations should be evidenced in most countries that
have large or dominant Muslim populations. Women should be noticeably absent from industrial spaces in countries where Islam is the major religion practiced. This is not the case. Analysis of the number of women working in many Muslim majority countries negates assumptions that Islamic injunctions are responsible for the meager percentage of women in Pakistan’s industrial workforce.

For example, Bangladesh, (erstwhile East-Pakistan) has 90% Muslim population. Indonesia has the highest Muslim population in the world with approximately 225 million Muslims, or 87.2% of its total population. Islam is Malaysia’s official religion and more than three fifths of its populace is Muslim. All of these countries’ female participation rates in the workforce, especially in the garment industry, are very high however. At almost 90%, Bangladesh has the largest population of female garment workers in the world. Bangladesh is also a country where women garment workers earn higher pay than their male counterparts (ILO 2015). Malaysia and Indonesia also have high female participation rates in garment factories and approximately 60% of their garment workforce is female.

Throughout my data collection, during interviews with elite managers and interviews and focus groups with non-elite workers, the instances where religion was mentioned were few and respondents’ claiming Islam as a factor that drives prevailing conditions was rare. For instance, one homeworker professed that men are better at stitching than women because they are different and “God has created this difference,” making men better at most things. Conversely, a factory CEO described some of the enormous functions that are expected of village women in Pakistan wherein they are burdened with all domestic duties as well as cattle rearing, collecting fodder, and other agricultural tasks in the fields. He explains however that Islam and Islam’s Prophet’s teachings are in direct contrast with women’s treatment in Pakistan. The Federal Secretary of Textiles also explains that an uneducated clergy has wrongly attributed traditional practices to Islamic injunctions, whereas these are not valid instructions within Islam.

Thus, this research does not find Islam to be a legitimate driving factor of women’s position in Pakistan’s workforce.
II. Labour Market Segmentation and Precarious Work

The second section of the thesis investigates the development of segmented labour markets and patterns of precarious work within the industrial sector. It examines how their characteristics mediate the gendered structure of Pakistan’s garment industry. More specifically the tiers within the secondary segment and potential barriers obstructing the advancement of women are examined.

Theories of segmentation make a broad based division of the labour market into primary and secondary segments. The primary sector of the segmented labour market has better employment security and career advancement is commonly found here. Working conditions are generally good and entry, exit and progression/promotion points are well defined. Secondary segment jobs are more precarious. Theories of precarity highlight characteristics of precarious work and flexibility as lack of security, deficient employment alternatives, uncertainty of job tenures, shifting balance of market power between employers and workers and diminishing standardization of jobs. Precarious jobs usually have poor conditions of work and pay, and relatively little prospect for advancement, which often stimulates workers’ movement from job to job. Restricted mobility between the segments makes moving from the secondary to primary sector very challenging. Primary sector jobs are rationed and access to labour market opportunity that exists in the primary segment is systematically restricted from certain groups such as women, ethnic minorities and migrant workers, the disabled and young people (Devine, 1999; Vallas, 2006; Piore and Safford, 2007; Kalleberg, 2009, 2013).

Globalization and the subsequent global spread of industrialization led to the creation of millions of new factory jobs in developing countries and generation of an increase in the secondary segment labour force throughout the world. A growing proportion of women occupy the secondary sector jobs that have been generated. Theories of gendered work like “nimble fingers” help explain why women are considered ideal workers of the secondary segment, and also explain why they are mostly paid lower wages than men (often for the same work) (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Elson, 1999; Cejka and Eagly, 1999).
The secondary segment provides the main focus for this research. I find that robust segmentation and precarity exist within the labour market of the garment industry of Pakistan, with well-defined primary and secondary segments. Barriers between the segments are resilient. Piore (2002) bifurcated the primary segment into lower and higher tiers highlighting that the lower tier of this segment mirrors patterns of the secondary segment. Little research has focused on tiers that exist within the secondary segment however. This research finds that similar to multi-tiers existing within the primary segment, tiers also bifurcate the secondary segment. The secondary segment has higher and lower tiers that replicate characteristics of primary and secondary segments and the barriers between them.

The secondary segment has characteristics of precarity and feminization including the type of contract, forms of remuneration, unpredictable incomes, insecurity and precarious working conditions. However a conspicuous distinction that Pakistan’s garment industry offers compared to other feminized garment labour markets, is a scarcity of females. This research finds that Pakistan’s garment industry has the lowest female participation rate in the world by a considerable margin. Additionally, women working in the secondary segment are mostly employed in the lowest tiers.

This research finds distinct tiers in the secondary segment and establishes that the lower the tier, the higher the concentration of women it engages. I define the “lower tier” of Pakistan’s garment factories as that which comprises jobs like trimming, threading, packing and quality control. Stitching and pattern making occupations constitute the “higher tier” of the secondary segment. Secondary segment tiers mirror patterns of segmentation in the features of higher insecurity and precariousness, resistance to mobility, low remunerations etc. and these are more prevalent in the lower tiers. Additionally employment in higher tiers of the secondary segment in Pakistan is systematically denied to the majority of women. For example, this research finds Pakistani women primarily work in the trimming, threading and packing occupations within factories, which are the lowest paying and most easily replaced jobs. Very few women work in the “higher tier” stitching and pattern making occupations.

The lack of mobility between the primary and secondary segments is a prominent characteristic of segmented labour market theory. Labour market restricted mobility
patterns are replicated within the tiers of the secondary segment. I find that the ability of women to advance from the lowest tier of the secondary segment to a higher tier is negligible. Women lack labour market mobility, are mired in “sticky floors” and are unable to progress. Women are effectively “included” in certain tiers of the secondary segment and “excluded” from others. For example, women working in the cropping (threading) jobs find it very difficult, if not impossible, to advance into the stitching professions. Conversely, men who may also have started out in the lowest tiers often manage to become stitchers and pattern makers/cutters. Thus although women do not “form the backbone of the manufacturing industry” (Harvey, 2010) in Pakistan, precarity and segmentation exists and women bear the weight of their discriminatory patterns within these systems.

**Inclusion and exclusion based on masculine and feminine characteristics**

This study finds processes through which women are partly or fully excluded from participating in certain jobs. These processes categorize particular jobs as “male” or “female”. Theorists (Elson and Pearson, 1981; Barron and Norris 1991; Elson, 1999, 2009) argue that certain jobs are traditionally ascribed “male” or “female” based on the “masculine” or “feminine” characteristics that are supposed to be required to do them. Occupations with “masculine” characteristics tend to command higher pay and greater prestige, while the opposite is true for those with “feminine” characteristics. Additionally, women are often believed to have smaller hands and “nimble fingers” that make them ideal to carry out tasks that require nimbleness and dexterity. Women are also considered well suited to monotonous, repetitive jobs. Consequently, jobs within the garment industry (stitching, sewing, pattern cutting, threading hemming etc.) are presumed ideal for women, who populate factories in South and South East Asia within these occupations. Comparable female participation rates are not evidenced in Pakistan’s garment industry however, as men consistently work in stitching and sewing – professions that globally are traditionally associated with women.

I find that in order to make them acceptable as “men’s” work, stitching and sewing, and indeed all jobs of the higher tier, are given “male” characteristics, and features
commonly associated with men are believed necessary to perform them. For example superior physical strength, mathematical ability and an aptitude to operate machines is commonly associated with men. Hence in Pakistan’s garment factories these traits are assumed essential for the stitching profession. In Pakistani garment factories men are sewing and stitching, pattern making, cutting etc. and women are largely excluded from these, higher tiered, higher paying jobs because it is said that they do not have masculine strength or mathematical skill necessary to operate machines or to hold cloth straight.

Thus widespread justification for women’s “nimble fingers” as a cause for keeping them in certain occupations in the global garment industry does not apply in the industry in Pakistan. However, “nimble fingers” is, in essence, an example of theories that male and female characteristics are used to justify higher or lower pay and prestige for different jobs. In the industry under study men are doing most of the jobs in the higher tier of the secondary segment. Consequently stereotypical male physical and mental characteristics are declared as vital requirements for success in this tier. Substantiating theories that male characteristics grant better pay, greater stability and prestige to jobs that require them, these higher tiered jobs are “male”. Access to these jobs is systematically denied women as, being female, they simply do not possess the requisite “male” attributes. There is no reference to women’s small, dexterous or nimble fingers. Indeed in Pakistan’s garment industry, these “female” characteristics are what make women unsuited for these jobs, largely excluding them from these occupations.

This research finds that the status of particular jobs of the higher tiers of the secondary segment, and the need to employ men in these better-paid jobs determine which characteristics qualify workers for the professions. Stitching, sewing, pattern making and cutting are higher paid and therefore constitute the higher tier, and the qualifications claimed to be required to perform them are “male”, which effectively prohibits women from getting these jobs. The lower tiered threading, hemming, quality control and packing are assigned female characteristics and including women within these professions is justified accordingly.
Homework and Monopsony

A large part of my research sought to understand why so many women in Pakistan are ready to work within their homes for much less pay, rather than going to factories. To understand this phenomenon an examination of homeworkers of the garment industry was undertaken. I argue that homework is the lowest tier of the secondary segment of the labour market. I find tiers of the secondary segment primarily have women occupying the lowest levels, thus women are predominant as homeworkers. Observations of the case study establishes theoretical arguments that homework benefits employers by keeping down fixed and variable costs, achieve heightened levels of production flexibility and deters collective bargaining. As a consequence employers in the industry often encourage homework.

Through monopsony, wages paid to homeworkers are kept to a minimum. Monopsony is theoretically described as a market that has many sellers but only one buyer (Manning, 2003; Ashenfelter et.al., 2010). Additionally the rate at which job opportunities within a labour market appear can shift the balance of power between employers and workers to benefit employers. The more infrequently job opportunities occur, the more power employers have. Theorists contest whether pure monopsonies exist in labour markets as they argue that rarely does a market have only one single employer, and that workers always have some ability to move location. An alternate suggestion is of a “thin” labour market (Bhaskar et.al. 2002; Manning, 2003), which has few potential employers within ‘reasonable’ distance of workers; sometimes employers may collude to keep wages down, further manipulating the “thin” market.

Although classic monopsonies are theoretically considered improbable, my research extends theories of monopsony by examining workers engaged in homework. I argue that the situation that homeworking women in the garment industry of Pakistan experience is one of a classic monopsony. Typically, a single middleman or contractor, who comes to their homes to give and collect their work, employs homeworking women. He is able to fix wages and if there is more than one middleman (or woman) they often collude to keep wages down. The frequency of jobs may be irregular, further shifting the balance of power between employers and
workers, to the employer (the middleman). In the Pakistani context, homeworking women rarely have the option to move location or travel even short distances for work.

Theorists argue that mobility (the option to move to locations) gives workers greater prospects for employment (Bhaskar et. al. 2002; Manning, 2003). Worker mobility is a primary reason that theorists argue a classic monopsony or single buyer model does not really exist. As my research demonstrates however, in Pakistan the female garment homeworker, especially of the less financially privileged sector, truly does not have access to mobility. These women cannot move to a place that may offer better economic opportunities. In fact, in many cases the primary reason that women choose to become homeworkers is because they cannot go out, or travel far from their homes. Mobility has emerged as a critical factor of exclusion and disadvantage that creates labour market monopsonies. Homeworking women in this study have little to no access to mobility. Women are often unable to leave their homes to go to work or to travel distances to negotiate better prices for their goods. I find that most homeworking women cannot go to factories to collect the work they do and so must rely on a single contractor who is consequently able to fix rates and wages for the goods they produce. The middleman is also able to withhold work from particular workers if they demand higher wages and give it to others who agree to his terms. Hence due to their restricted mobility these women are rooted in a classic monopsony. Gendered spatial mobility creates labour market monopsonies benefiting middlemen and factory owners.

Thus characteristics of precarious work and a segmented labour market have greatly impacted the gendered structure of Pakistan’s garment industry

### III. Spaces

This research shows that gendered labour markets are an outcome of a diverse set of social and institutional influences and dynamics. Additionally, theorists (Hanson and Pratt, 1995; Peck, 1996; Massey, 2005; Adey, 2010) argue that “space” is an essential component in sculpting the specific nature of particular labour markets, and local
institutions and social processes within spaces are important features and mechanisms of this specificity. The third part of this thesis examines “space” as an essential force and dynamic of the construction of gendered labour markets. I explore how through an interaction of both social and relational processes space is genderized. The unique characteristics of gendered spaces can determine their inclusive, exclusionary or prohibitive natures. This section also examines how power is created within spaces and how gendered spaces and arrangements inhibit women from access, mobility and navigation, and progress in economic pursuits. Through this research I uncover how human agency sculpts its spaces and draws its surfaces, with empowering or inequitable results.

Conceptions of space have traditionally been contained in binary thinking (public and private, inside and outside, above and below, here and there, near and far). But spatial concepts also offer an opportunity to embrace multidimensional approaches and theories. People are constantly navigating space. Theorists (McDowell, 1996; 1999; Massey 1992, 2005; Adey, 2010) have demonstrated the relational feature of space in that all social relationships occur somewhere and result in connections between people and places. Spatial patterns are the outcome of social processes created by vast intricate networks, which are relations at every scale from the global to the local (McDowell, 1996).

The construction of gendered space is fundamentally an outcome of the power relations and gender relations between the genders/people that inhabit and navigate a particular space. Butler, (1990) and Sharp, (1996) argue society and culture produce gender roles, and these roles are recognized and approved as ideal or suitable behaviour for a person of that particular gender. Consequently, gender and the power relations between the genders are scripted according to the norms that exist in a particular place and time - in “space”. Women’s place and position within particular societies corresponds to the power and gender relations that become the accepted norm within that society. Women’s agency, or lack of it, hence, both sculpts and is moulded according to the spaces they inhabit, with repressive or empowering results.

Other scholars (Duncan, 1996; Alcoff, 1996; Rose, 1996) make distinctions between the public and private spaces wherein the public is ascribed as male and the private as
female. My research finds that while public spaces in Pakistan are associated with the male, in addition, even private spaces are gendered, and women have very little power in spaces designated as “female”.

Research on Pakistani homeworking women in particular reveals characteristics of gendered space. With restricted mobility, homeworking women are generally not able to leave their homes for work, either because male members of their household do not permit them and/or they are extremely concerned about their household and child rearing duties. But additionally, any economic activity these women undertake within the home is also subject to male scrutiny and implicit male consent. For example, I find some women are not able to begin any of their own garment making work unless they have fulfilled the needs of their husband and completed household responsibilities. Additionally many women do not engage in any economic activity, even within their homes, unless their husbands permit it; this permission may be tacit or explicit. The private space of the home, essentially ascribed as “female” is effectively really “male” and women of this society have very little power even in this feminine space.

In Pakistan relegating women to the private space has historically been given additional institutional sanction by the concept of “chador and char diwari” (the veil and four walls) introduced by Zia-ul-Haq\(^{15}\) (1977). Through this and other traditional institutions the woman’s place is designated to be within the four walls the home. Zia’s ideas coupled with Foucault’s theory of power that is learned through the body, helps to understand women’s subjugated position within Pakistani society. Sharp (1996) explains how women’s bodies symbolize national identity. In Pakistan the woman’s body is representative of several different concepts and important of them are those of purity and piety. In turn, ideas of purity and piety are symbolic of Pakistan’s national identity. Under Zia’s concept and biased interpretations of some Islamic injunctions, the responsibility for maintaining societal purity and piety was placed securely on the shoulders of women. According to the “chador and char diwari”, the woman is considered most chaste and virtuous if she remains within the four walls of the home. Hence as a Pakistani woman’s body symbolizes purity and

\(^{15}\)General Zia initially ruled as Chief Martial Law Administrator (1977), but later assumed the post of President of Pakistan in September 1978
piety for the entire nation it can be subject to regulation and under constant surveillance – thereby sanctioning and justifying the regulatory “gaze”. The successive control over a woman’s body through the gaze has caused an internalization of Pakistani women’s belief - that in order to be perceived as moral and unsullied, their correct position is to remain in the home and tend to family, household, production and social reproduction duties.

In Pakistan a relationship exists between mobility and the “gaze”. Feminist writers (e.g. Bordo, 1993; Alcoff, 1996; Duncan, 1996; McDowell, 1996, 1999) have extended the study of mobility and the binary nature of spaces to the scale of the body. However these writers pay less attention to the forces of mobility that operate at the microphysical level of the body. Foucault argues that the body is the instrument through which power is created and control administered. Regulation and control of women is critical to maintaining women’s position within gendered spaces in this society. I find that the bodies of Pakistani women in this research are under constant inspection and every movement, including microphysical movements of their bodies are under male surveillance. Women’s movement draws the male gaze. With their movements under scrutiny, Pakistani women’s mobility and ability to navigate spaces is manipulated and curtailed. Women experience difficulty leaving the private space of their homes and entering public spaces. Restricted mobility contracts their employment opportunities as many women are unable to leave their homes to go to work, or navigate spaces far from home to negotiate wages or prices. Once on the street women are watched, and how much time they spend in public spaces is monitored. On the factory floor I find that the gaze sculpts and cultivates spaces to be gender inclusive or gender prohibitive for women. The gaze is able to manipulate women’s physical mobility at the minutest scale. Many women try to escape the male gaze and move to areas where there are fewer men. These are spaces where low pay and status work is carried out. In spaces where men greatly outnumber women (stitching, etc.), women find the body’s slightest micro-movements challenging. Through controlling women’s mobility and movements at the microphysical level, the gaze effectively makes these spaces gender prohibitive for women. Thus women are unable to move to and sit in areas where higher paid work takes place. Men occupy spaces where “higher tiered” work like sewing, stitching and pattern making and cutting is carried out. These gendered spaces are substantial in limiting and
restricting better employment opportunities and career progression for Pakistani women.

Valentine’s suggestion that spaces change their nature based on time is somewhat contradicted in my research. That spaces within this society are gendered is indisputable. While it remains true that public spaces like parks, bus stations and even factories change from being safer during the day to less safe at night, as Valentine suggests, I argue that for women in the society and labour market of Pakistan these spaces are dangerous at all times. The public space is distinctly “male” and woman’s entry into this space is not only difficult but sometimes borders on dangerous. When women leave the private space and enter the public, no matter what time of the day, they can be subject to disparagement and ridicule. Pakistani women find navigating public spaces extremely challenging. These women are constantly harassed on the streets, in public transport and in factories and their employment patterns are crucially limited as a consequence.

My research does find some resistance to the power structure and the gaze however. As Foucault has argued, when power is created resistance to that power is also produced. Albeit in minute ways, some women will contest the power imposed upon them. For example, women’s entry into the public domain permits the authorities (young men) to dictate women’s navigations through subjecting them to the gaze. But if a woman limits the number of times she allow herself to be seen - gazed at - she is able to escape the gaze and its power. One respondent describes how she contrives to accomplish all her work that requires her to be out of the home. She needs to work long hours, so changes her work schedule, thereby decreasing the number of times she leaves the home and enters public space, and can be gazed at. Through this “minute shift”, she is able accomplish her goals. A manipulation of the gaze enables this woman to resist and undermine (in a small measure) the power structure that she is a part of.
Contributions

This research makes an original contribution to theoretical and empirical debates around gendered labour markets through the lens of Pakistan’s garment industry. This research uses an extreme example to uncover factors and features of inclusion and exclusion in labour markets and societies. I do not claim the findings to be completely universal but I believe there is a methodological strength to the study of extreme situations. An examination of the extreme can make visible characteristics that may remain hidden in other, less severe cases. Findings can build theory and expose obscure, concealed features within more moderate cases. Existing differences and similarities between labour markets and societies may also be revealed.

My study exposes a very unique set of systems that exist in an industrializing country’s society and corresponding economic system. Through this study I demonstrate as McDowell (1996) argues, that western theories cannot be universally applied, nor can findings of one industrializing economy be employed to understand all others. Women in traditional societies like Pakistan have been largely ignored in academic research but my study uncovers some distinctions that provide a more thorough comprehension of gender functioning in their economies. For example, an examination of the lived realities of this sector of Pakistani women exposes the variation in outcomes that phenomenon such as globalization and the spread of transnational corporations can produce. Theorists like Harvey and Stiglitz have asserted that forces of globalization have reshaped labour markets around the industrializing world and inundated the manufacturing industry with women, but this is not universal and similar outcomes are not witnessed in Pakistan. Through the interaction of formal and informal institutions, women have been prevented or hindered from joining the workforce.

However, although a specific industry is examined as a case study, the findings from my research also have a degree of generalizability. Inferences are applicable both to other industries as well as other places, particularly those that have features of inclusion and exclusion. While the nature of the firms and homeworkers is locally contingent, this case study speaks to several broader issues of institutions, precarious work and labour market segmentation, tiers within the segments, and inequality. I
find that particular societal and economic systems result from an interaction of specific structural factors of inequality, like those of gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic standing, education etc., and institutions and institutionalism contribute to these inequities with distinctive outcomes. Similarly inequalities within labour markets are manifested in the nature of precarity and segmentation in many industries. Female workers of the industrial sector are habitually the most adversely impacted, whether of the garment industry or other industries, no matter which segment, or tier within segments, they are employed.

Theorists of precarity often describe precarious work as “non-standard”. Non-standard jobs may be temporary or part-time, an intermediary may employ workers or there may be no employer at all, and they may be non-contractual. Davies et al. (2017) demonstrate that many secondary segment jobs have often been non-standard. I find that the jobs in the secondary segment of Pakistan’s garment industry mostly have traits of non-standard work. However, although they may be theoretically characterized as such, the Pakistani workers (and management) consider them to be standard work. Many higher tiered workers (especially men) have specialized skills and have been employed at the same place for several years. They work everyday, are not easily replaced and regard their jobs as “standard”.

Despite theoretical arguments to the contrary (Manning, 2003; Ashenfelter et.al. 2010), classic monopsonies exist in the Pakistani context. In this economy, women homeworkers do not have the option of mobility to places where better employment opportunities may exist and immobility creates labour market monopsonies.

“Female” skills continue to be devalued in this economy. Women’s skills are often naturalized into non-existence (Bhattacharia, 2017). My female respondents’ work is less valuable as it is believed to be an outcome of natural skills. I find a process of “masculinization” of skills exists in Pakistan’s garment industry in which skills that are globally considered “feminine” (like stitching) are masculinized to benefit men.

Valentine’s (1989) suggestion that spaces change their nature based on time is contradicted in the Pakistani context, as public spaces may produce varying levels of danger to these women, at all times. Duncan (1996), Alcoff (1996) and McDowell,
(1996, 1999) argue, public and private spatial arrangements are engendered as male or female, however my research reveals that in this society, male power is produced in all spaces.

Mobility within the labour market is most often referred to as the mobility that allows workers to move between different jobs, different sectors and different segments, as well as movements between towns and cities and to other countries for work or in pursuit of work. Feminist writers have extended the study of space to the “body” and examine mobility as an important dimension of public and private spaces. But their examination of the micro-movements at the scale of the body is limited. My research exposes that microphysical movements of the body are important mechanisms that enable a deeper level of control over women.

This research draws parallels between the mobility of the woman’s body - as evidenced in the home, the streets and especially in the factory where their every movement is scrutinized, restricted and constrained - and the mobility of women’s position within the labour market. Sen (1999, 2002a) argues that the opportunity to travel provided by physical mobility can improve individuals’ choices of what to do and where to do it. Women of this research as a group experience greater difficulty than men to advance within the labour market. Pakistani women’s body embodies concepts of purity and piety for all society and their position is subject to regulation. Women’s mobility is regulated and restrained and emerges as one of the vital processes that create gender inclusive or prohibitive spaces. The physical mobility of my respondents is challenged at every scale. These women’s physical immobility - their inability to navigate spaces, move freely, move to, sit, learn and work at different spaces where better paying and higher status work is being carried out, mirrors their labour market immobility at the every level. In addition, women’s physical mobility at the microphysical level creates processes that inhibit and constrict their advancement. It is not surprising that the woman who fears “raising her head” or “lifting her eyes” finds it difficult to move up the chain of better work.

The relationship between mobility and the gaze creates gender prohibitive spaces for women in this society. The body is the instrument through which power is created
and control administered (Foucault, 1977). Every movement of the female body can draw the male gaze. Reciprocally, the gaze can manipulate movement into or away from particular spaces, effectively constructing them gender prohibitive. The male gaze often curtails women’s entry into public spaces. This surveillance controls whether homeworking women can leave the home at all, how many times they can do so, and the distances they can traverse. In factories the gaze manipulates movement including or prohibiting women from particular spaces. Women move away from male watchfulness to specific places where male scrutiny is less intense. In spaces that the male gaze is forceful and concentrated, women may try not to move at all.

Conclusion

Through an examination of institutions, segmented labour markets and the forces and mechanisms of gendered space, this thesis explores the nature of inclusion and exclusion in a section of Pakistan’s labour market, and uncovers economic, social, cultural and political structures. Forces and processes of inclusion and exclusion deny certain individuals and sectors of society the opportunity to partake wholly in social and civil life in general, and labour markets in particular. Inadequate social and labour market participation leaves people in a position of inferiority in relation to centres of power and often leads to material deficiency and situations of disadvantage (Rodgers et. al. 1995; Room, 1995; Estivill, 2003; Curran et. al., 2007). The features of gender inclusive and gender prohibitive spaces expose the prevailing socio-political and traditional structures that underline Pakistan’s particular labour market. Ascribed identities, notably the intersections and relationship between gender, class and socio-economic background, are a foundation of exclusion or inclusion and manifest in the division and development of labour markets along the lines of gender. The interface of institutions, precarity, segmented labour market structures and gendered spaces creates inclusive or exclusive labour market outcomes in this economy. For example, in gender prohibitive spaces formal and informal institutions impact economic systems, and control social structures that grant particular workers access to economic opportunity and advancement and prohibit others. In these spaces orthodox beliefs may continue to deny women mobility to go out of their homes to work; and societies and labour markets of this workforce are intensely segregated.
This thesis explores the construction of gendered labour markets to understand why so few women work in industry in Pakistan. Through the research, this thesis has illuminated that, as Mill suggests the widely accepted “nature” of women in Pakistan is indeed “an eminently artificial thing - the result of forced repression in some directions, unnatural stimulation in others”. Forces and mechanisms of oppression of women include a combination of exclusionary practices that restrict access to economic and social resources - such as education, jobs or formal political power - and enforce restrictions such as on mobility. Systematic subordination causes subjected groups to internalize all sense of their own inferiority. Members of the low-income class, the women of this research are constantly told how to navigate space - where they can and cannot go, what they can and cannot do, and taught how to behave in every situation. Constraints on women’s mobility, restrictions on their access to economic opportunities, limited alternatives to choose between, behaviours they must embody when in factories or other enterprises, and above all, their subservient position to men both in the home and outside, is internalized by the women of this sector of the labour market, and continuously perpetuates their position.

“And yet it moves” Galileo (circa 1633).

Albert Einstein (1930) advises, “To keep your balance [in life] you must keep moving”. Many women counterbalance the forces that constrain them in different ways. Newton’s (1687) third law of motion determines: “To every action there is always opposed an equal reaction”. We see opposition to repression manifested in the smallest actions. Whether expressed in Pakistani homeworking women accomplishing financial work despite restricted mobility; “brave” women becoming stitchers in factories; or others adjusting timings to go out so that all desired ambitions are fulfilled; many women do find ways of navigating gendered space.
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Appendices

Appendix 1

Institutions

Textile Industry Division (Ministry)
Government of Pakistan
Constitution Avenue
Islamabad, Pakistan

International Labour Organization (ILO)
Islamabad Capital Territory,
Islamabad, Pakistan

HomeNet Pakistan (NGO)
Lawrence Road,
Lahore, Pakistan.

Factories

Lahore Garment City
Sundar Industrial Estate,
Raiwind Road
Lahore, Pakistan

Nishat Textile Mills Limited
Nishat Group Of Companies
Jubilee Town,
Lahore, Pakistan

Nishat Textile Mills Limited (Exports)
Nishat Group Of Companies
Ferozepur Road,
Lahore, Pakistan

Comfort Knitwears (Pvt.) Ltd.
Quaid e Azam Industrial Estate,
Lahore, Pakistan

Style Textile
Quaid-e-Azam Industrial Estate
Kot Lakhpat,
Lahore, Pakistan
Homeworkers’ Districts

Shadi Pura
Bund road
Lahore

Gulberg Town
Shalimar Road
Lahore

Kaemari Town
Hawkes Bay
Karachi
Appendix 2

**Interviewees** (Including place of work, job, sex, age)

**Elite**

Amir Marwat, Federal Secretary of Textiles, Pakistan, male, age, 65
Saad Gilani, Senior Programme Officer, ILO Pakistan, male, age, 60
Ismail Khurram, Chairman, Comfort Factory Lahore, male, age 65
Farooq, Comfort Factory Lahore, manager, male, age 48
Latif, floor manager, Nishat Textiles Factory, Lahore, male, age 60
Naseem Khokhar, Human Resources Manager, Style Factory Lahore, male, age 40
Khalid Chaudhry, Manager, Comfort Factory, Lahore, male, age 55
Shamaila, Brand Product and Design manager, Nishat Textiles Lahore, female, age 28
Riffat, senior officer and store manager, Nishat Exports Lahore, female, age 27
Raza Bukhari, Manager, Lahore Garment City, Sumdar Industrial Estate, male, age 35
Shuja, Nishat Exports Lahore, Floor Manager, male, age 47 years
Qamar Raza, HR Manager, Style Factory Lahore, male, age 35
Tanveer, Account’s Manager, Nishat Textiles Lahore, male, age 40
Appendix 3

Interviewees (Including place of work, job, sex, age)

Factory workers (Some of these are anonymised)

Yasmeen, Nishat Textiles Export Factory, Lahore, (stitcher), female, age 35
Riffat, Nishat Textiles Export Factory, (floor manager), female, Lahore age 27
Fauzia, Nishat Textiles Lahore, (stitcher), female, age 38
Sumaira, Nishat Textiles Lahore, (garment factory worker), female age 46
Safia, Comfort Garment Factory Lahore, (cropper), female, age 30
Alia, Comfort Factory Lahore, (cropper), age 40
Nargis, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, cropper, female, age 35
Sajida, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (embroidery worker), female, age 23
Nasreen, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitching), age approximately 35
Shugufta, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (cropper), female, age 45
Seema, Comfort Factory Lahore, (cropper), female, age 38
Saima, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitcher) female, age 28
Kausar, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitcher) female age, 38
Salma, Comfort Factory Lahore, (cropper) female age 45
Naheed, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitcher), female age 28
Jamila, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitcher) female age 45
Shazia, Nishat Textiles factory Lahore, worker (stitching) female age 40
Bushra, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (cropper), female, age 35
Rabia, Style Factory Lahore, (garment factory worker), female, age 23
Nazi, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (factory worker), female, age 29
Seher, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitcher), female, age 35
Kausar, Comfort Factory Lahore, (cropping), female age 22
Ghafooran, Comfort Factory Lahore, (stitching), female, age 55
Nusrat, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitching), female age 23
Parveen, Comfort Factory Lahore, (stitching), female, age 33
Ashraf, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitcher), male, age 30
Ayla, Nishat Textiles Factory Lahore, (stitcher) female age 26
Asma, Nishat Textile Exports Lahore, stitcher, female, age 35
Anisa, Comfort Factory Lahore, (stitcher) female, age 33
Appendix 4

Homeworkers (Some of these are anonymised)

Rubina, Gulberg Town Lahore, homeworker, female, age 30
Nasreen, Kaemari Town Karachi, homeworker, female, age approximately 55
Naheed, Gulberg Town Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 26
Allah Rakhi, Shadi Pura, Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 50
Farida, Gulberg Town, Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 36
Bilkees, Gulburg Town Lahore, homeworker, female, age 45
Alia, Gulberg Town, Lahore homeworker, female, age 30
Shakila, Shadipura, Lahore, homeworker, female, age 40
Saifa, Gulberg Town Lahore, homeworker, female, age 38
Razia, Shadipura, Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 30
Humera, Shadipura, Lahore, Homeworker, female age 45
Shugufta, Gulberg Town Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 30
Sumera, Gulberg Town Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 45
Nasira, Shadipura Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 35
Naila, Gulberg Town Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 30
Hanifa, Shadipura Lahore, homeworker, female 45yrs
Shaista, Shadipura Lahore, homeworker female, age 26
Abida, Shadipura Lahore, homeworker, female, age 30
Azra, Shadipura Lahore Homeworker, female, age 35
Majeeda, Shadipura Lahore, homeworker, female, age 30
Nabila, Gulberg Town Lahore, Homeworker, female, age 27
Shela, Kaemari Town Karachi, homeworker age 26
Bilquees, Shadipura Town Lahore, homeworker, female, age 38