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Mapping the Working Conditions in the Football Production Sector in Sialkot

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Introduction:

Sialkot is famous for export of high quality of sport goods especially soccer ball to the whole world. Approximately 70% of soccer ball supplies to world through sport industry in Sialkot. The big buyers of the soccer ball are the USA, Germany and other countries of Europe. Handmade soccer ball considers as best so its importance become more than machine made balls, but the process to stitch handmade ball is very difficult and time consuming altogether. A big chunk of workers including home based women workers, who earn vary less wages engaged with soccer ball industry. But now the China compete that industry through new technology and innovated machine made footballs. But still Pakistan is a primary source for high quality stitched football.

In 2010 soccer ball world cup gave bigger opportunity to the manufacturing companies of soccer ball to supply football. That was the time when bigger buyers earn a lot and their income increased more and more. According the report of ILRF, in which they mentioned that in 2006 World Cup the Adidas company revenue was increased more than 800 million US dollar. But it is also very important question to discuss that when big brand (companies) fetched that huge profit from the goods produced by the labour, than why workers still living in very poor condition and why they not getting their just wages or earn comfort amount of money to feed their family modestly? These were the workers which make companies able to earn lot of money but the workers condition remained inhuman and vulnerable.

In 90's the soccer ball industry in Sialkot was being criticized for its poor working condition and widespread menace of child labour used as cheap labor paying few cents to stitch the balls. ILO, UNICEF, ILRF and Save the Children UK started the campaign against the child labour in the sport industry and companies and other stakeholder agreed to eliminate child labour by adopting 1997 Atlanta Agreement. So far the buyer and local employers' successes in eliminating child labour from their factories and centers and recent survey by National Trade Union Federation (NTUF) supported by ITGLWF and FES, clearly indicated that no child labor is found in factories and center. Its being strictly followed in factories to take ID card copy when management employing workers.

But that ideal situation not found at home where women home based workers stitching football. 12 home based workers were interviewed and all of them said that they also involve their children to help completing their work (stitching soccer balls). They all responded that they get work from middlemen which mean they have no direct access to the employer of the product for which they sewing. They all were underpaid and their income can barely cover even small and basic needs.

NTUF found through the survey that no genuine trade union exists in soccer ball manufactory sector. Majority of the interviewers responded that there were pocket unions formed by management to satisfy the requirement of international buyers. Not a single responded said that they were the member of any trade union in the factory and it was the serious violation of the basic fundamental/constitutional right of a worker in terms of couldn't organize and bargain collectively.

But it was good sign that all workers, except Home Workers, knew the legal minimum wages of a worker and also getting their minimum wages. However all home based workers didn't know about the legal minimum wages standard by government of Pakistan, they still getting low wages for stitching footballs.

This survey report presents main findings working conditions, union and the wages. National Trade Union Federation selected 10 factories for the purpose

Purpose of the Research:

The main purpose of the survey was

- To record the number of enterprises in Sialkot where trade unions exist
- To record the number of collective bargaining agreements in Sialkot
- To record information on working conditions and wages

Methodology:

The mapping condition in soccer ball industry conducted by National Trade Union Federation (NTUF) and supported by International Textile Garment and Leather Workers Federation (ITGLWF) and Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES).

NTUF team had chosen a method to interview the workers outside the factory in their homes or at the place of their choice.

That survey addressed the General Information, Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining, Working conditions and Wages And home based workers. Survey question divided into four sections

1. Trade union information
2. Information on the production site
3. Interviews for the conditions of workers
4. Home workers

Sample size and selected factories:

NTUF surveyed ten sports factories situated in Sialkot; however one factory, MHA Martial Art, didn't operate as factory. The owners of the factory were two brothers who get orders from the buyers but they handed over these orders to the Makers (small manufacturers) who complete the orders at their manufacturing units and give them finished merchandise back.

The factories names are as under which were selected by NTUF for the survey,

- i. Awan Sports Unit 5 8 KM Daska Road 51310 Adha Sialkot Punjab
- ii. Forward Gear (Pvt) Ltd. Adha Sahowala Wazirabad Road 51310 Sialkot Punjab
- iii. Forward Sports Pvt. Ltd. P.B. Box 1704, Adda Sahowala Wazirabad Road 51310 Sialkot Punjab
- iv. Kampala Industries Pvt. Ltd. Sade Pur Road Rahim Pur Khitchian Sialkot Sialkot
- v. Silver Star Enterprises Private Limited 19-km Silver Star Campus Daska Road, Sialkot, Punjab, 51310
- vi. JSD Sports Mir Street , Mir Mohammad Younas Road, Sialkot
- vii. MHA Martial Arts Al-Sarwer House, Mohammed Ali Str. Commissioner Road, Sialkot.
- viii. Swiss Pro Manufacturing Said Pur Road Khichian Sialkot.
- ix. Capital sport, Circular Road Paka Ghara, Sialkot
- x. Talon Sports, Daska Sialkot Road Addha Bus Stop Sialkot
- xi. Home workers

The total sample size of the survey was 121 workers including male and female from ten sport industries. The distribution of interviewed workers is given in chart below. Out of total, 22 women workers were interviewed during the survey majority of them were home workers (See the table gender). 7 female workers were from Forward Gear. 2 were from Capital Sport and only one from Awan interviewed.

Table 1: number of the interviewers form 10 units



Table 2: Gender of interviewers

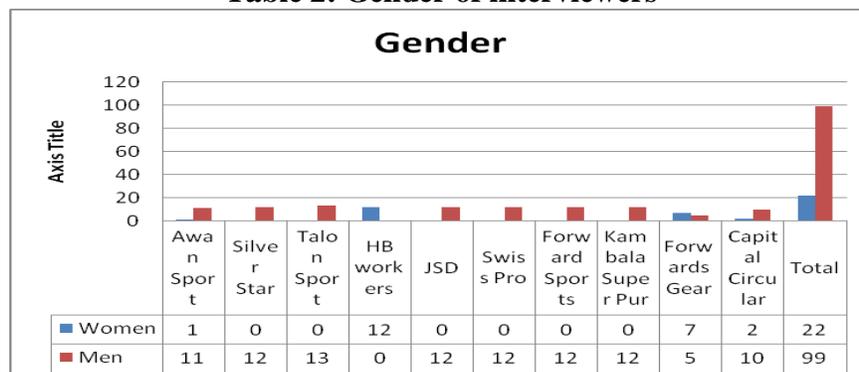
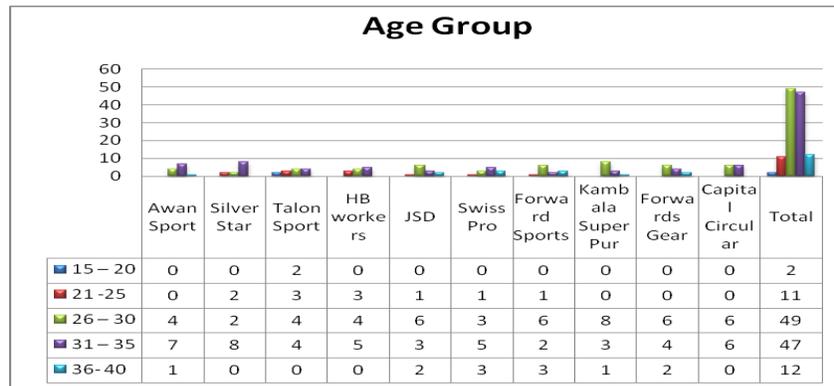


Table 3: Age group of the interviewers:



Above table 3, indicate the age group of the workers interviewed during the survey. The majority of the workers (49) were in the age range of 26 to 30 years while total 47 workers were in the 31 to 35 years age group. Only 2 workers were in the age of 15 to 20 years.

Profile of factories:

i. Awan Sports Unit 5 8 km Daska Road, Adha Sialkot Punjab

Brand: Puma

Products: Bat, soccer ball, Hockey

Work: stamping, soccer ball packing, quality Controller, curving hockey, dye maker

Size: 1200 workers

S.No	Work of interviewers	Awan Sport
1	Stamping	2
2	Soccer ball packing	6
3	Quality controller	1
4	Hokey curving	2
5	Dye maker	1
	Total	12

ii. Forward Gear (Pvt) Ltd. Adha Sahowala Wazirabad Road 51310 Sialkot Punjab

Brand: Korean Company

Products: Bag

Work: stitching bag (all responded were bag stitchers)

Size: 1000 workers

iii. Forward Sports Pvt. Ltd. P.B. Box 1704, Adda Sahowala Wazirabad Road 51310 Sialkot Punjab

Brand: Adidas and Diadora

Products: soccer ball

Work: Stock report, helper, quality controller and P.O wires reporter

Size: 1200 workers

S.No	Work of interviewers	Forward sport
1	Stock report	1
2	helper	8
3	quality controller	2
4	P.O wires reporter	1
	Total	12

iv. Kampala Industries Pvt. Ltd. Sade Pur Road Rahim Pur Khitchian Sialkot Sialkot

Brand: Foreign countries (not a single worker responded the brand name)

Products: Gloves

Work: stitching, packing, cutting, quality controller,

Size: 400 workers

S.No	Work of interviewers	Kampala
1	Stitching	9
2	Packing	1
3	Quality controller	1
4	Cutting	1
	Total	12

v. Silver Star Enterprises Private Limited 19-KM SILVER STAR CAMPUS DASKA ROAD, SIALKOT, PANJAB, 51310

Brand: Nike, Umbro and Jako

Products: soccer ball

Work: Laminator, folding of soccer ball on machine, soccer ball washer, UPC label operator, Quality controller, soccer ball packing, soccer ball stitching

Size: 2000 workers

S.No	Work of interviewers	Silver Star
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1	Laminator	1
2	Soccer ball packing	1
3	Quality controller	3
4	Folding soccer ball on machine	1
5	Washer	3
6	UPC label operator	1
7	Stitching	2
	Total	12

vi. JSD Sports Mir Street , Mir Mohammad Younas Road, Sialkot

Brand: Foreign countries (not a single worker responded the brand name)

Products: soccer ball

Work: soccer ball washer, Quality controller, soccer ball packing, soccer ball stitches and air filling

Size: 400 workers

S.No	Work of interviewers	JSD
1	Soccer ball packing	4
2	Quality controller	2
3	Washer	2
4	Stitching	3
5	Air filling	1
	Total	12

vii. MHA Martial Arts AL-SARWAR HOUSE, MOHAMMAD ALI ST. COMMISSIONER ROAD, SIALKOT.

Al Sarwar was like a bungalow style home where no workers work. From two brothers the survey team knew that they get work from foreign countries and the order completing by the local makers.

viii. Swiss Pro Manufacturing Saidpur Road Khichian Sialkot

Brand: Foreign countries (not a single worker responded the brand name)

Products: Track suits

Work: Quality controller, soccer ball packing and soccer ball stitches

Size: 150 workers

S.No	Work of interviewers	Swiss Pro
1	Soccer ball packing	2

2	Quality controller	1
3	Stitching	9
	Total	12

ix. Capital sport, Circular Road Paka Ghara, Sialkot

Brand: Adidas

Products: Soccer ball

Work: Quality controller, soccer ball packing, soccer ball stitcher and washing

Size: 400 workers

S.No	Work of interviewers	Capital sport
1	Quality controller	3
2	Packing	4
3	Sitchers	2
4	Washing	2
5	No answer	1
	Total	12

x. Talon Sports, Daska Sialkot Road Addha Bus Stop Sialkot

Brand: Sindco

Products: soccer ball

Work: soccer ball packing, quality controller,

Size: 1500 workers

S.No	Work of interviewers	Talon Sport
1	Soccer ball packing	12
2	Quality controller	1
	Total	13

xi. Home Based Workers

All home based workers interviewed were women and engaged with stitching sector of the industry.

National Trade Union Federation (NTUF)/ First Stage Form

National Trade Union Federation (NTUF) is one of the vibrant workers bodies of Pakistan that have 100,300 memberships out of which 97000 are male and 6000 are women members in all over Pakistan. In Sialkot Federation has 387 members out of total,

87 are women members and rest are men who worked in different factories in Sialkot such as Silver Star, Awan Sport and Talon Sport.

In Sialkot one organizer work for NTUF whose name is Robert Bhatti and he was every active members of NTUF in Sialkot.

The first stage of the survey form revealed that legal age for joining any trade union in Pakistan is 16 years. The minimum wage in Sialkot is 7000 and legal maximum working week is 48 hours (one hour rest each day) according to the Factory Act of 1934. The legal maximum working week including overtime is 72 (28 + 24) including 2 hours rest each day.

Key Finding:

Freedom of Association and Collective Bargaining

Pakistan's constitution (Article 17) gives every citizen the right to organize and form their association. Pakistan also signed ILO's convention 87 and 98 regarding freedom of association and collective bargaining. That right protects them from unfair labour practices and to recognize the right to bargain collectively for their betterment. However it was not followed in many industrial sectors.

Freedom of association emancipate workers to bargain for their just rights and increase the productivity of the factory in good environment but the factory owners don't want to allow any genuine union in the factory to avoid from giving benefits to the worker who worked for him and played a vital role to generate profit for the employer.

Survey revealed that not a single interviewees were the members of any trade union in any surveyed factories. Majority of the workers who were interviewed during the mapping survey claimed that there was no union or that they didn't know about any union. Only seven from Capital Sport responded that they have had union in the factory but it was the pocket (yellow) union (see table 4). On the question regarding type of the union, great majority of the workers responded, in spite of saying there is no union in the factory, that the union which exist in the factory were pocket union and were operated by management (see table 5) and no collective bargaining process were take place in their factories and even no serious efforts were made to form union for the legal rights by the workers of these 10 factories (see table 6 & 7). That all table clearly indicate that the worker works in very difficult condition as they have no right to organize themselves in union so as a result they can't demand their just rights from the management. Even all reported that they didn't do any effort to form their representative union.

Table 4: Is there a Trade Union present in the enterprise?



Table 5: What type of Trade Union is it?

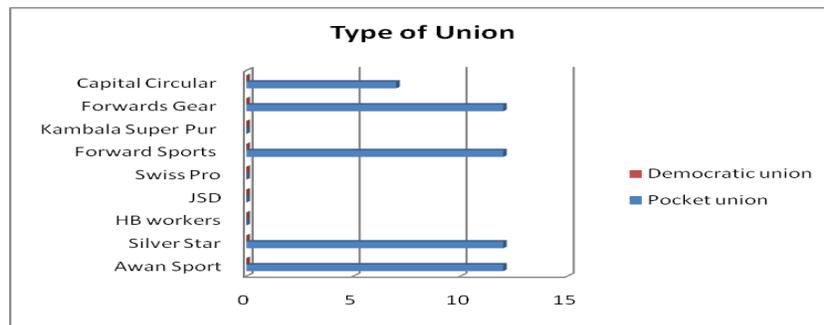


Table 6: If there is no trade union present has any attempt been made to establish a trade union in recent years?

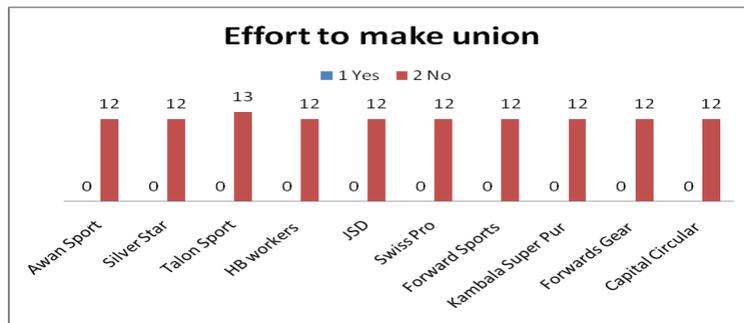
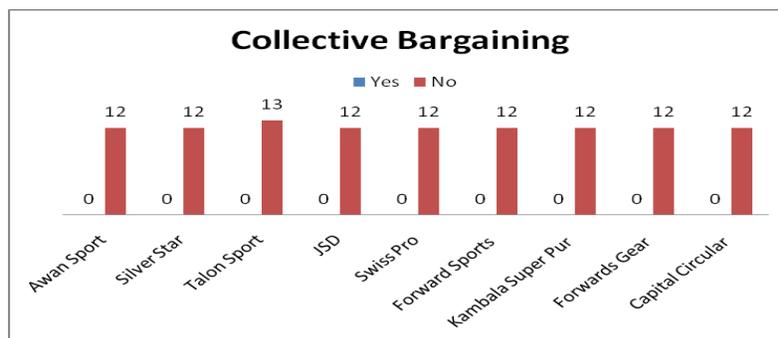
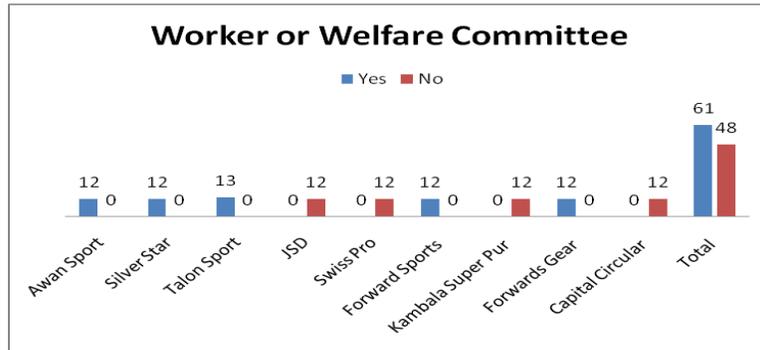


Table 7: Is there a Collective Bargaining Agreement in place?



On the question regarding the member of any workers or welfare committee, majority of the interviewees (61) responded that the committee is exist in the factory but it was made by the management and 48 responded said that there was no such committee in their supply chain (See Table 8).

Table 8: Are there any worker committees/welfare committees?

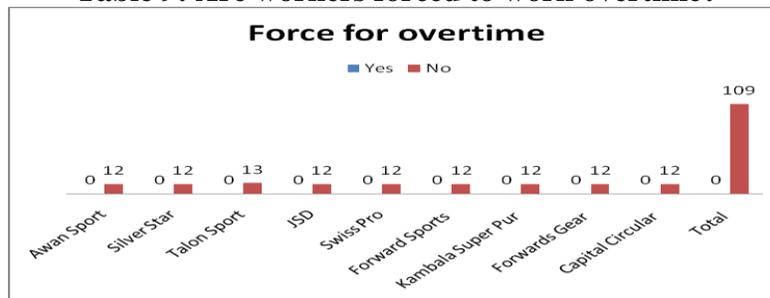


Working Conditions and Wages

1. Working Hours:

Majority of the workers normally works for 8 hours in a day and four weeks in a month. Minimum working hours in factories were 8 hour but majority of the workers do overtime to earn more money, which is up to 2 hours per day. so our survey indicate that no workers do more than 12 hours work in a week which means that the legal working hours was observed. All workers excluding home based workers, 109 workers reported that they do overtime on their own will and no one force them for the overtime work (See Table 9).

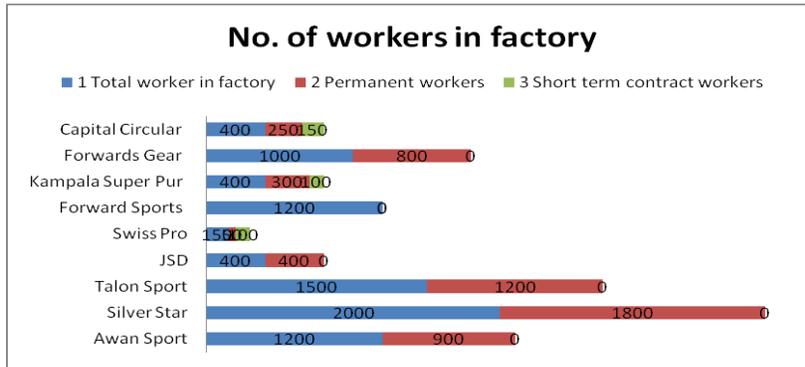
Table 9: Are workers forced to work overtime?



2. Employment Type:

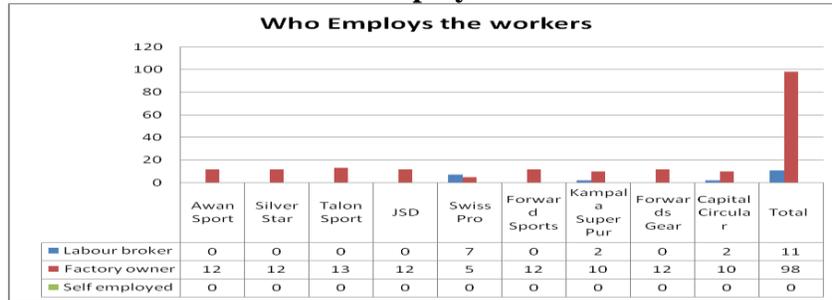
Below table (see table 10) shows the total numbers of workers in the factory reported by the workers and the numbers of permanent and contractor workers in a factory. Total workers of 9 factories were 8250 out of which 5700 workers were permanent in the factory and only 350 workers working on short term contract worker, indicated by workers during survey. Regarding remaining workers (2200) from 8250, interviewees didn't responded. (Note: majority of the workers interviewed were permanent workers).

Table 10: Numbers of workers?



Large numbers (109 workers) of the workers reported that after 90 days worker become permanent and get appointment letter. But the home based workers and the contract employees were still working on causal or contract basis and gets piece rate of their work.

Table 11: Who employed the workers?



Above table 11, shows that 11 out of 109 interviewees were hired by labour brokers and 98 workers were employed by factory owner. But home based workers get their work from middle men. They were not permanent workers of the factory or center. Even they didn't know from which factory they got work.

3. Wages:

All workers in Awan, Silver Star, Talon factory and other 6 factories knew regarding legal minimum wages in Sialkot and workers got paid on time. Worker of Silver Star, JSD, Capital and Swiss Pro workers got their wages on 7th of every month and rest of the workers got wages on 5th of every month.

Minimum wages of the unskilled workers is 7000 which was committed by the current government which was not covering their living expenses. For that reasons trade unions' demands PRs 15000 per month as minimum wage of a workers which can cater the need of the family in current high inflation period. The responses showed that the factories in Sialkot usually follow legal minimum wages announced by the government.

But on the question of weekly wages of permanent and contract worker, all responded that permanent workers got weekly wages according to their salary which was started

from 1800 to 3000 other than the contractor workers got 1600 as wages per week majority of the respondents were from Awan Sport, Silver Star, Talon, Capital Sport and Swiss Pro factory. Contractor workers got their wages according to the piece rate. 23 workers said that workers got wages according to piece rate and rest of the interviewees (98) said that workers paid on daily rates (see table 12). All workers also reported that no deduction made by owner or labour broker (Contractor) from their wages (see table 13).

Table 12: Are workers paid on a daily rate or a piece rate?

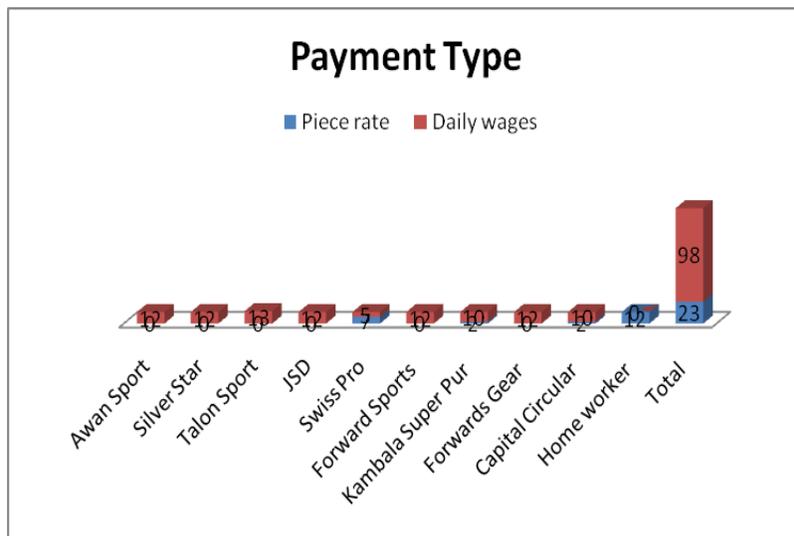
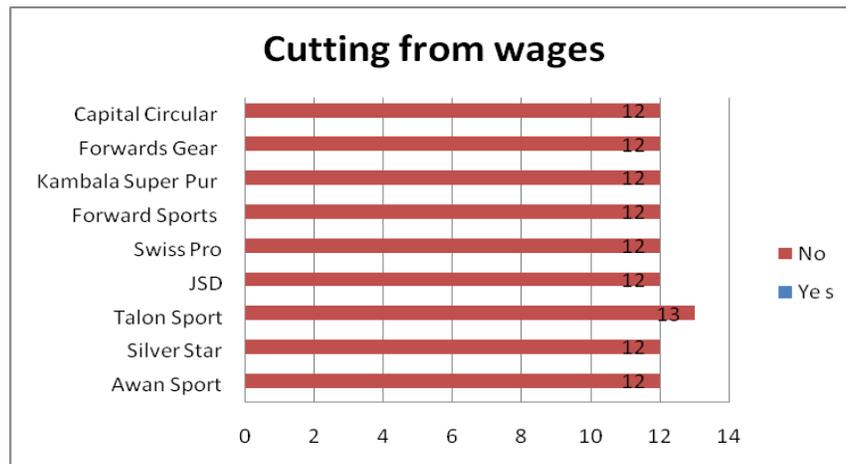
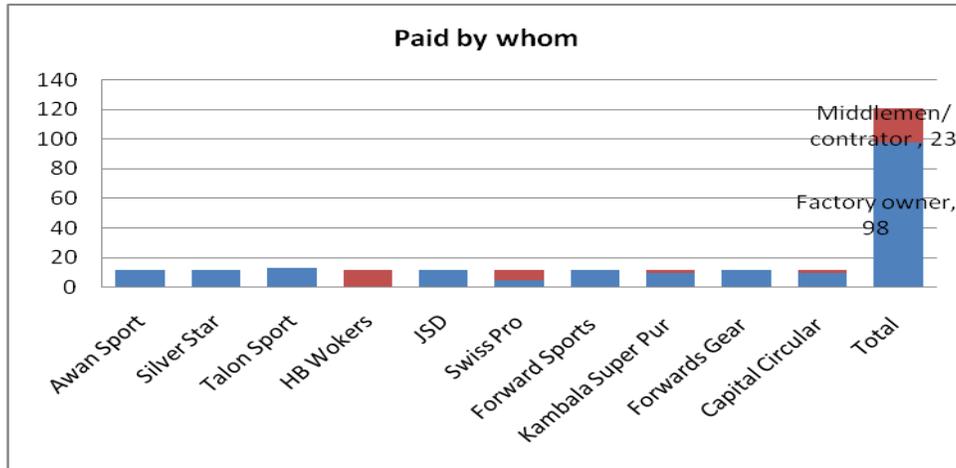


Table 13: Are wages reduced if a worker does not meet their daily production targets?



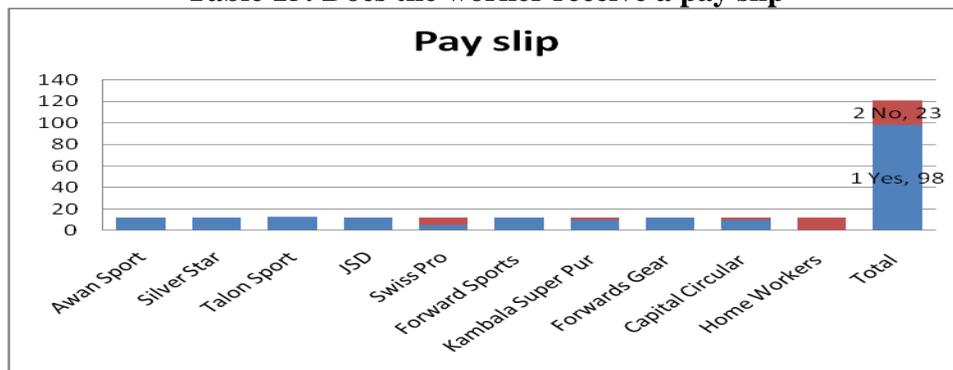
Below table showed that 23 workers paid by the middle men or contractors and majority of the surveyed, 98, got their payment through the factory owners/management.

Table 14: Who pays the worker?



98 factory workers reported that they received pay slip and premium/extra pay for overtime worked (see table 15). However the same facility was not cover the home based workers and contract workers.

Table 15: Does the worker receive a pay slip



Home workers

The number of home based workers is increasing in region day by day. There are 100 million workers engaged with home based worker in the world out of which 50 million exist in South Asia. In Pakistan home based workers number is increasing up to 11 to 12% per year due to high rate of unemployment and poverty. According to the official statistic data of Pakistan 65% workers are engaged with informal work but in actual the figure is more than 65%, as the number of informal worker rapidly increasing.

Home based women workers are the most vulnerable section of informal economy. Their numbers have been increasing rapidly because of the implementation of neo liberal economic policies of capitalist globalization. They are more than 12 million and produce more than 4 billion US\$ merchandize but still not recognized as worker in Pakistani labour laws. So they are not protected under any social security covers, they work for 14 to 18 hours a day and earn less than 1\$ as wage. They work in export related industries

including textile, garments, sports and electronics and also work for local markets in embroidery, traditional dress, dairy farming, shoe making and carpet weaving. The majorities of HBWW are not well aware about their rights and traditionally compel to segregate from the society which make difficult for them to organize for their rights. The growing poverty and rise of religious fundamentalism had shrunken the space for them to raise their voice. It gives immense opportunity to investors and market forces to exploit them the most.

12 women were interviewed during the mapping condition in soccer ball industry and all were casual/temporary/piece rate worker who get work from the middlemen on piece rates. All these workers engaged with stitching work and they took help from their children to complete the order. These women responded that they didn't know about the legal minimum wages of the workers. Home workers didn't belong with any cooperative and workers representative body.

Recommendation:

- Training is required for workers in connection with labour laws, safety etc
- Some serious strategies should be evolving to initiate the process of workers representative union formation in these factories and eliminate bogus union or management formed union from the factory.
- Election of the union should be held in the factories and record of union activities and meetings should be maintained.
- Home base women workers should be treated as formal workers and get equal pay.
- Awareness training should be organized for the HBWW