

REDEFINING DOMESTIC SPACE FOR WOMEN WORKING FROM HOME IN URBAN LAHORE

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Abstract

The growing normalization of work-from-home (WFH) has transformed domestic interiors into hybrid environments where professional work, household activities, and care responsibilities increasingly overlap. This study examined how domestic space is being redefined for women working from home in urban Lahore, with particular attention to workspace adequacy, privacy, domestic pressure, spatial adaptation, family dynamics, and interior-design needs. A sequential mixed-methods design was employed, comprising a quantitative questionnaire survey of 60 women working from home and 15 semi-structured interviews selected through maximum-variation purposive sampling. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations, composite scores, and descriptive subgroup comparisons, while interview data were analyzed thematically. Results showed that 85.0% of respondents lacked a dedicated workspace and commonly worked in bedrooms, living rooms, and shared family areas. Privacy was particularly limited ($M = 1.78$), while respondents reported high domestic pressure ($M = 3.70$), substantial spatial transformation ($M = 4.07$), and a strong need for home-design improvement ($M = 4.30$). Women without dedicated workspaces and those living in joint-family households experienced comparatively poorer workspace adequacy and greater domestic pressure. The qualitative analysis identified seven interconnected themes concerning hybrid and multifunctional domestic space, negotiated privacy, fragmentation of professional work by domestic and care responsibilities, family negotiation and recognition, workspace quality, spatial adaptation and improvisation, and preference for flexible but clearly defined work-supportive design. Overall, the findings demonstrate that the redefinition of domestic space is both a physical and social process. The study highlights the need for flexible, ergonomic, privacy-supportive, multifunctional, and gender-responsive residential design strategies suited to the socio-spatial realities of urban Lahore.

Introduction

The fast growth of work at home has altered the definition of home space in the modern city. Home is no longer perceived as a private space of

rest, family life and daily life; it has become more of a hybrid place, where paid labor, care labor, household and social life are mixed up. Recent studies indicate that homeworking is not a mere

response to the pandemic, but a continuation of work reorganization, and there is increasing interest in how people use bedrooms, dining spaces, living rooms and other domestic spaces as workplaces. This change is particularly noteworthy to spatial research since it demonstrates that work-from-home arrangements are not merely economic and organizational phenomena but also architectural, social, and gendered changes that redefine the ways of using, negotiating, and valuing domestic interiors (Felstead et al., 2026; Hall et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, the feeling of working at home is not gender neutral. The literature is accumulating that despite the potential of remote work to bring about flexibility, it can also increase existing household inequalities. Even when women engage in paid work, they still bear an unequal burden of unpaid care, domestic tasks, and emotional labor. When this happens, the home is not necessarily turned into an empowering workspace but can rather turn into a place where professional activities and domestic demands come into conflict. Research in other settings has revealed that flexible work arrangements can facilitate the entry of women into the labor force, but it can also re-establish or enhance the traditional gender roles, especially when childcare, household duties, and family demands are unevenly shared. The evidence of systematic review also shows women teleworkers tend to report higher work-family conflict, increased workload, and more inability to maintain a clear boundary between work and personal life than men (Arntz et al., 2020; Chung et al., 2021; Castro-Trancón et al., 2024).

Of particular importance is the spatial aspect of this problem. Concentration, comfort and control are key issues when paid work enters the home, and questions of privacy and ownership of space are raised. Gender and homeworking studies have revealed that the privilege to have a dedicated workspace within the house is not always negotiated equally, and women tend to have more opportunities to work in multi-use or interruption-prone accommodations than in distinct rooms. These arrangements influence productivity, psychological health and capacity to maintain

work-family boundaries. The literature review of homeworking also reveals that the quality of the home environment has a considerable influence on work experience with workplace design, space conditions, health, and personal impact being the key recurring themes, as well. In the case of women, it is not only about whether they are able to work at home, but also about the space conditions under which they operate, how much they are able to control the environment, and whether it helps them or not in their professional identity (Waismel-Manor et al., 2021; Hall et al., 2024; Felstead et al., 2026).

These issues are all the more topical in Pakistan where the gender norms, family organization, and residential layout influence access to working by women differently. Recent Pakistani studies offer work-at-home as a potentially useful tool to improve the women participation in the labor force within a traditional society, but it also demonstrates that such flexibility has both social and practical costs. The professional life of women in Pakistan is usually entrenched in patriarchal demands, which still place them with the main household chores. Domestic qualitative research indicates that women need to perpetually trade between revenue-making, nurturing, and family commitments and the culturally prescribed roles. Studies by Lahore also indicate that working mothers experience severe work-life balance pressures, lack of time to themselves, and the burden of being at home and professional expectations. This implies that to most women, domestic space is not a background to work; it is a field of negotiation, in which identity, responsibility, and daily routine is continuously restructured (Khan et al., 2024; Bashir et al., 2022).

In the city of Lahore, the issue of domestic space is further complicated due to the unequal housing conditions, different family forms, and material constraints in the city. Studies conducted on urban Pakistan have indicated that housing inequality is a significant problem that faces unequal room distribution and unequal provision of utilities which directly impacts the usability of house interiors. Lahore-based scholarship also

shows that domestic practices of women are conditioned by socio-material features of the house such as the utilization of space and energy, the control of various domestic space by different people and the organization of daily life by social classes and infrastructure. Recent works in Lahore show that gender experiences within the domestic and neighborhood contexts are highly mediated by spatial justice, infrastructural access and intersectional inequalities. These results are significantly applicable to a study of female home workers since they imply that the reorganization of domestic space in Lahore can be interpreted not only in the context of interior design but also through the larger realities of urban housing, gendered praxis, and social-cultural norms (Munir et al., 2022; Khalid et al., 2022).

Collectively, the new literature implies a significant gap. The literature has addressed telework and gender inequality, work-life balance between women and housing or socio-spatial disparities in Pakistan and Lahore, but these strands have seldom been tackled together to explore how the interior of the home is being reconstructed in particular to women working at home in urban Lahore. The gap is especially relevant to design-oriented and spatial studies as it redirects the focus away of work-from-home as a general labor problem to the lived change of the home itself. This research paper will therefore attempt to analyze how the concept of domestic space is being redefined in respect to women working at home in urban Lahore. To be more precise, it aims to examine how women occupy and utilize household space in the context of paid work, what are the significant spatial and functional problems that women encounter, how domestic tasks affect the organization of the workspace and daily practices, and produce context-specific information that could guide more responsive interior, housing, and gender-aware design solutions in the urban Pakistani setting (Hall et al., 2024).

Literature Review

1. Domestic Space as a Hybrid and Multifunctional Environment

According to the recent literature, working at home has completely transformed the role of domestic space. The house has ceased to be a strictly personal domain of repose, family life and the daily routine household activities; it has become more and more like a hybrid space where paid employment is placed in areas that traditionally were home to domestic activities. Modern research terms this change as a spatial lapsing of work and home where boundaries are blurred and rooms like bedrooms, dining tables, living rooms, and spare corners are redesigned as temporary or permanent workstations. According to Hall et al. (2024), workplace design and space conditions influence the experiences of homeworking strongly, whereas Felstead et al. (2026) believe that the type of spaces used at home is important as some workers have their own rooms, whereas others have to work in communal or household settings. In line with that, Mura et al. (2024) demonstrate that remote work has compelled households to reorganize spatial arrangements to accommodate the workers in terms of autonomy, competence, and comfort. The significance of this literature is that it looks at domestic space as dynamic and fluid and not a static space. In the current analysis, this implies that the residential spaces of women in urban Lahore have to be perceived as shifting spatial networks where household and work roles are more and more in contact, overlapping, and even conflicting (Hall et al., 2024; Felstead et al., 2026; Mura et al., 2024).

2. Gendered Negotiation of Space, Time, and Unpaid Work

As much as the idea of working at home may be touted as being flexible and convenient, literature continues to demonstrate that it is not an experience that is even shared by men and women. Arntz et al. (2020) posit that remote employment can lead to female involvement in the labor market, yet it can also rejuvenate traditional gender roles, particularly when childcare and

domestic responsibilities are still based on women. This worry is reinforced by more recent evidence. In their systematic review, Castro-Trancón et al. (2024) identified that women teleworkers usually report the increased work-family conflict and that gender roles still define the work-home boundaries. Simultaneously, Chauhan (2022) establishes working from home as not gender neutral due to the fact that women are restricted in their decisions on where and when to work by unpaid labor and the household demands. Waismel-Manor et al. (2021) also demonstrate how workspace at home turns into a location of gendered negotiation with the work of men more likely to be spatial-temporally prioritized and the work of women more likely to be fragmented over the home and day. Sahni et al. (2025) also substantiate the claim with a systematic review that women are still more vulnerable to gender disparity in work-life balance due to the fact that the issue is generated at the household, institutional, and broader social levels. Combined, these works prove that the reorganization of domestic space is not the reorganization of space by remote work but rather the reorganization of space by gendered power relations. This is a lens that is critical in comprehending how women in Lahore can feel home as a work place and a location of unfair domestic demands (Arntz et al., 2020; Waismel-Manor et al., 2021; Chauhan, 2022; Castro-Trancón et al., 2024; Sahni et al., 2025).

3. Privacy, Comfort, Productivity, and Well-Being in Home Workspaces

The second important theme of the new literature is that success of work at home greatly depends on the quality of the material and environmental workplace. Research is starting to shift away from the general arguments of flexibility to concentrate on privacy, ventilation, ergonomics, comfort, and concentration. According to Hall et al. (2024), the key themes in the works on homeworking are the workplace design, space conditions, health, and personal impact, which reveal that the individual circumstances determine whether homeworking will be helpful or harmful. Similarly, Oakman et

al. (2024) state that the level of remote-work well-being and productivity was lower among females, particularly when family commitments were also involved, and they also note that the flexibility of the home office is a key to successful remote work. Stroom et al. (2024) further contribute that the difference in self-reported productivity is highly linked to the difference in the physical quality of the home office setting, such as ventilation and home-office satisfaction. Mura et al. (2024) also claim that the engagement in remote work can be explained through environmental comfort and attachment to the home workplace. These results are very applicable in domestic-space studies since the researchers demonstrate that a home workspace is not a place, but a state created by the presence of furniture, layout, privacy, environmental quality, and emotional attachment. Among home working women, particularly in families with a strong family focus, the absence of an environment that is dedicated to working and does not disrupt may have a direct effect on the productivity, stress and professional identity. In this way, the physical and psychological attributes of the working spaces in the home should be prioritized as the focus of any study of the women home-based work in Lahore (Hall et al., 2024; Oakman et al., 2024; Stroom et al., 2024; Mura et al., 2024).

4. Urban Housing, Gendered Domestic Practices, and the Lahore Context

The literature of Pakistan and Lahore, in particular, introduces a significant socio-spatial aspect to the discussion. Khan et al. (2024) demonstrate that telecommuting may be a viable approach to women being involved in the labor force in a traditional culture, yet their results also demonstrate that the social fixity of gender roles remains influential on the experience of paid work at home by women. In a Lahore-based study of women academics, Bashir and Khan (2022) also discovered that women experience difficulties at home and work, such as a lack of time to self-care and an adverse impact on physical and mental health. In addition to the work-life balance, studies on housing and domestic practice in

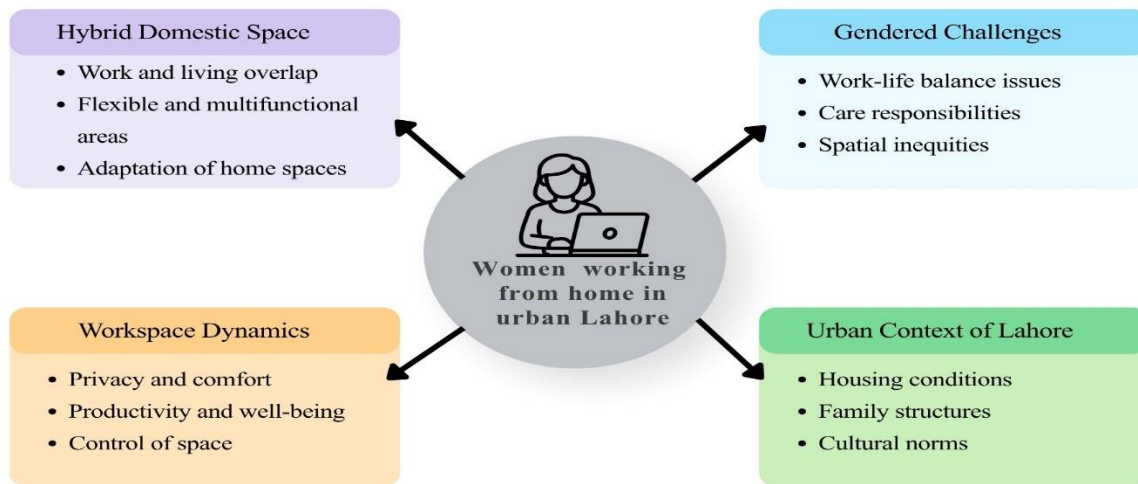
Pakistan show that even space is highly unequal and gendered. Munir et al. (2022) show that housing inequality in cities in Pakistan can be quantified by room-per-capita and utility access which implies that not all households are able to accommodate more work activities at home. Specifically to Lahore, Khalid and Razem (2022) posit that the domestic energy and space of women is related to housing affordances, extended-family power relations, privacy norms, and spatial layouts. More recently, Khalid et al. (2025) demonstrate that infrastructural variation and spatial justice elaborate the experiences of women in Lahore with material and social inequalities conditioning domestic and everyday practices. This literature is indispensable as it places the home-based work of women in the context of the urban housing of Lahore, families and culture. It implies that the problem of redefining domestic space in Lahore cannot be considered only as an interior-design problem; it is also necessary to consider it as a gendered urban and socio-cultural problem (Khan et al., 2024; Bashir and Khan, 2022; Munir et al., 2022; Khalid and Razem, 2022)

5. Research Gap and Direction of the Present Study

The literature reviewed offers robust evidence that domestic space has become more hybrid, the experiences of working-from-home by women are

unequally gendered, and the quality and availability of home workspace significantly impact well-being and performance. It further demonstrates that spatial inequality, family expectations and material constraints organize the domestic lives of women in Pakistan and Lahore. But these threads of research are mostly in disconnection. Gender and telework are frequently discussed in global studies without basing the discussion on the urban housing realities in Lahore, and Pakistani and Lahore-based studies tend to discuss women and labor, housing, or domestic practices without specifically discussing how the interior of a home is being redefined to suit women who work at home. Thus, a distinct gap can be seen in the field of integrated research, which is design-oriented, and that unites gender, work-from-home, and the redesign of domestic space in urban Lahore. The current research fills this gap by discussing the process of household space negotiation and adaptation by women to professional activities, the influence of domestic responsibilities on this process, and those spatial issues that arise throughout it. By doing so, it not only adds to the gender and work-from-home literature, but also to interior and housing research by considering the home as a tense, shifting, and multimodal space of women in modern Lahore (Hall et al., 2024; Khalid et al., 2025; Felstead et al., 2026).

Conceptual Framework:



3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study looked at how the domestic space for women working is redefined from home in urban Lahore based on a sequential mixed-methods research design. A quantitative survey was conducted in connection with this project by using a qualitative phase of the semi-structured interview. The mixed-methods approach was considered appropriate as the research problem includes both measurable characteristics of domestic working environments and subjective experiences of women on the use, negotiation and adaptation of domestic space for professional activities.

The quantitative phase was used to identify structures which were related to demographic characteristics, accommodation and household conditions, working environment from home, workspace availability, confidentiality, internal pressures, workspace adequacy, spatial problems and adaptation strategies. A structured questionnaire was used in urban Lahore for 60 women working from home. Quantitative analysis focused on frequencies, percentages, average values, standard deviations, composite scores and descriptive subgroup equations.

The qualitative step was divided into 15 different semi-structured interviews. This phase has been introduced to give a deeper explanation of

problems which were identified by quantitative data, notably lack of specific workspace, privacy, house interruptions, household responsibilities, family recognition of professional work, spatial adjustment and interior design requirements. Semi-structured interviews is appropriate since they provide the same broad topics for the participants and provide women with sufficient flexibility to describe their individual experiences in a detailed way (Demirci, 2024).

Both components had been integrated into the interpretation process. Quantitative results have determined general patterns in the study sample, while qualitative findings have been used to explain how and why these spatial and household conditions were experienced in daily life. Domestic-space transformation was therefore treated by the study as both a physical and social process.

3.2 Study Area

The study was carried out in urban Lahore, Pakistan. Lahore offers a suitable environment because it has different forms of dwellings, household structures, socio-economic conditions and working arrangements. Women who work from home can live in independent houses, flats or apartments, parts and common family houses. The different forms of housing differs in terms of space availability, privacy, circulation, density of

the household, furniture and capability to create special jobs.

Lahore's socio-cultural context is also relevant, given that the professional roles of women often overlap with household responsibilities, family expectations, caring tasks and shared use of domestic space. The effectiveness of home work may therefore depend not only on the type of work, but also on the accommodation arrangement, family structure, the availability of private space and the recognition of professional work hours by the household.

Therefore, the study focused on the urban Lahore context rather than trying to provide home-working experience in all cities or regions of Pakistan as a whole.

3.3 Target Population

The target population consisted of women which were engaged in home-based professional work within urban Lahore. Eligible participants were women that were involved in fulltime distance work, parttime distance work, freelance work, online activities and hybrid jobs where domestic space was frequently used for professional activities.

Women have been chosen as a focus, because the relationship between paid work and domestic space may be impacted by sex-specific household expectations, household responsibilities, caring, privacy and access to private and job spaces. The study focused on women who had direct experience to use rooms, furniture, household routines or spatial boundaries for professional work.

Participants are currently required to engage in WFH or regularly use their houses for professional activities. Women without direct experience work out of home were not included, since they could not provide relevant information on workspace adequacy, spatial adaptation, breaks in domestic work and the boundaries of household work.

3.4 Sampling Technique

As the participants had to have direct experience of the studied phenomenon, both phases of the study used a purposive sampling technique.

Purposive sampling enables researchers to deliberately recruit participants who can provide information relevant to a targeted research issue rather than select individuals without referring to their experience (Ahmad & Wilkins, 2025).

Women were selected for the quantitative phase, when women currently work from their homes and regularly use household interiors to work for professional activities. Efforts have been undertaken to integrate the respondents from different age groups, family categories, work arrangements, types of stay. Family structures, and the survey reflected the different conditions of working at home.

The maximum variation purposive sampling has been used to identify 15 women, representing a series of domestic space experiences, during the qualitative phase. Variation was considered in relation to age, marriage and care conditions, family structure, and availability of dedicated or shared workspace. Because it was not the intention to represent a typical home worker but to understand how the WFH changes into different circumstances with different geographical and familial backgrounds, this approach was useful.

3.5 Sample Size

This quantitative element included 60 women who worked at home in the urban Lahore. Because of the exclusively recruited participants, the aim of the sample was to provide a targeted description of women who had direct experience of working in the home, rather than the female-born Lahore representation which was based on probability.

The sample was therefore used to identify patterns in workspace availability, normal work place, privacy, home pressure, spatial conflicts, furniture and environmental conditions, household responsibility and adaptation strategies. The quantitative findings were interpreted within the boundaries of the purposively selected sample.

The quality component includes 15 semi-structured interview members. The interview sample was intended to provide rich information about differences in household rates and workspace conditions. Hennink and Kaiser (2022)

determined by a systematic review of empirical studies on quality saturation that relatively focused and homogeneous interview studies at relatively low sample sizes often had a meaningful thematic cover, though the number required depends on studies and a variety of participants. Hence, it has been considered that a sample of 15 interviews would be appropriate to investigate in depth a well-defined phenomenon which was considered in this study.

3.6 Research Instruments

Two primary research tools have been used: one structured questionnaire and the other semi-structured interview guide.

The questionnaire was developed in line with research objectives and key literature concepts. It includes sections with demographic characteristics, housing and home conditions, work-from-home profile, workspace arrangements, domestic space conditions, spatial challenges, adaptation measures and design preferences.

The statements about domestic space and the home working experience were measured in a five-point Likert scale, from:

1 = Strong Disagree to 5 = Strong Agree The items verified space adequacy, privacy, comfort while long-term work, furniture capability, lighting and ventilation, noise and interruptions, household responsibility, work-home boundaries, family support, spatial reorganization, home-layout fitness, psychological stress, dressing room functions, multifunctionality, professional recognition, and need for design improvement. It corrects the wording of the previous text of the paper on the six-point scale, despite the fact that the actual scale of responses was between 1 and 5. The second instrument was a specific semi-structured interview guide. Interview questions focused on workspace arrangement, the use and transformation of home spaces, privacy, noise and disruption, household and care responsibility, family recognition of work, comfort and productivity, work-home boundaries, adaptation strategies and preferential improvements to interior design.

Semi-structured interviews allowed consistency between key areas of research while participants were allowed to elaborate on experiences that were particularly relevant to their personal household and working conditions (Demirci, 2024).

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

In two phases, the collection of data was carried out.

The structured questionnaire was submitted to 60 eligible women working at home in the municipal Lahore in the first phase. The participants were informed about the purpose of the study, its voluntary nature, confidentiality and its ability to withdraw from participation. In order to ensure that the information required for the large study variables were available, the complete questionnaire was checked before the analysis.

In the second phase 15 separate semi-structured interviews were in place. Participants were chosen to represent age, the domestic environment, the structure of the family, care and workspace arrangements.

The interviews looked at how participants used domestic spaces for work, experienced privacy and interruptions, provided professional responsibilities alongside household activities, negotiated working boundaries with family members and physically adapted their homes to find work. Special attention was given to furniture, shared spaces, changes in room function, temporary workstations, lighting, storage, privacy and preferable improvements of design.

Interviewees were identified by anonymous codes, such as I01, I02, I03...I15, instead of personal names, in order to protect confidentiality.

3.8 Validity, Reliability and Trustworthiness

The validity of the quantitative instrument has been supported by developing questionnaires on research objectives and concepts in literature. Among them are workspace adequacy, privacy, environmental comfort, time for household break, domestic pressure, local adaptation, professional requirements for recognition and design.

Reliability is ensured through standardized questionnaire wording and harmonized response

categories, and the same five-point Likert scale was used in questions 15–30. Corresponding statements were then combined into broader composite dimensions consisting of Workspace Adequacy, Privacy and Support, Domestic Pressure and Spatial Transformation.

Qualitative reliability was supported using a consistent semi-structured interview guide, maximum variation purposive sampling, anonymous participant coding, systematic coding procedures and transparent theme development. While in cases where a clarification of individual experience was required subsequent exploration was permitted, all participants discussed the same substantive areas.

The qualitative and quantitative conclusions of during interpretation were also compared. As well as describing their home and work experience, this method of integration made it possible to consider numerical patterns.

Because it is not documented in the data collection procedure, it shall not request the formal examination of Members.

3.9 Data Analysis Procedure

Prior to during interpretation, quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed separately.

Quantitative data have been analyzed through descriptive statistical techniques. The frequencies and percentages are calculated for demographic features, housing and household conditions, work-from-home profile, workspace arrangements, spatial challenges, adaptation strategies and design preferences. The Likert scale responses were summarized by means and by standard deviations. Composite scores were calculated for four broader dimensions:

- Workspace Adequacy
- Privacy and Support
- Domestic Pressure
- Spatial Transformation

Descriptive subgroup comparisons were also conducted according to dedicated versus non-dedicated workspace and family structure. Because the article reports descriptive comparisons rather than formal inferential hypothesis testing, differences between groups were interpreted as

descriptive patterns rather than statistically significant effects.

The qualitative data of interviews was analyzed using thematic analysis. The interview material has been read repeatedly to develop familiarity with the experiences of the participants for the first time. Important statements have subsequently been coded in accordance with repeated ideas. The codes were grouped by category, and more cross-cutting themes were developed, reviewed and defined thereafter. The Thematic analysis is appropriate to examine recurring meaning patterns of qualitative accounts while maintaining sensitivity to differences between participants (Byrne, 2022).

Qualitative analyses have been focused in particular on multifunctional domestic space, privacy, domestic life interruption and care, family negotiations, workspace quality, spatial adaptation and desirable design decisions.

Finally, qualitative and quantitative results have been integrated. Interview findings were used to explain more deeply about numerical patterns concerning low privacy and workspace adequacy, high internal pressure, comprehensive spatial transformation, and differences with regard to workspace and family conditions.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethics principles have been preserved throughout the study. The participants were voluntary and were informed prior to information on the purpose of the study. The participants had the right to reject or withdraw without penalties.

Confidentiality and anonymity were safeguarded during the interviews and questionnaire phases. Information non-personally identifiable were used in the analysis or reporting and the participants of the interview were represented by anonymous codes.

As the research involved domestic schemes, family responsibilities, professional pressure and personal experiences in the house, special attention was given to reporting findings respectfully and without publishing information that could identify individual participants or

households. Data have been used for research only.

Results

This chapter presents the findings of the study titled “Redefining Domestic Space for Women Working from Home in Urban Lahore.” The results are organized into respondent profile,

housing and household characteristics, work-from-home profile, workspace arrangement, Likert-scale responses, major challenges, adaptation strategies, composite scale scores, subgroup comparisons, and open-ended themes. The purpose of this chapter is to show how domestic space is being used, negotiated, and transformed by women working from home in urban Lahore.

4.1 Respondent Demographic Profile

Table 4.1 Respondent demographic profile (n = 60)

Variable	Category	f	%
Age group	20-25	13	21.7%
	26-30	12	20.0%
	31-35	12	20.0%
	36-40	9	15.0%
	41 and above	14	23.3%
Marital status	Single	24	40.0%
	Married	30	50.0%
	Divorced	5	8.3%
	Widowed	1	1.7%
Highest qualification	Intermediate	4	6.7%
	Bachelor's	25	41.7%
	Master's	17	28.3%
	MPhil/MS	7	11.7%
	PhD	5	8.3%
	Other	2	3.3%

As indicated in Table 4.1, the distribution of the respondents was quite even with the largest proportion of 41 and above (23.3%), 20-25 (21.7%). This implies that the work-from-home patterns in the sample did not apply only to younger women, but were applicable in various life stages. Married women were the biggest category in terms of marital status (50.0%), which is significant as married respondents might be more

susceptible to conflicting domestic and professional roles at home. In terms of education, most of the respondents were at least a Bachelor degree holder (41.7%), then Master degree holders (28.3%), which suggests that most of the respondents belong to the educated community who may be likely to be engaged in professional, freelance or knowledge based jobs.

4.2 Housing and Household Profile

Table 4.2 Housing and household characteristics

Variable	Category	f	%
Residence type	Apartment/Flat	9	15.0%
	Independent house	20	33.3%
	Portion	11	18.3%
	Shared family house	20	33.3%
Family structure	Nuclear family	20	33.3%
	Joint family	29	48.3%

Household size	Living alone	3	5.0%
	Other	8	13.3%
	1-2	9	15.0%
	3-4	20	33.3%
	5-6	17	28.3%
	7 or above	14	23.3%

According to table 4.2, the respondents are mostly living in either independent houses (33.3% or shared family houses (33.3%), with minor percentages living in portions or flats. The most interesting observation is that joint family households constituted 48.3% of the sample, which is higher than the nuclear families. This is especially noteworthy to the research since cohabitation with families can aggravate the problem of privacy, disturbances, and sharing of

rooms. The household size also helps to verify this trend: the majority of the respondents lived in a household consisting of 3-4 people (33.3%), although big families with 5-6 people in it (28.3) and bigger-than-6 families with 7 or more people (23.3) were also quite frequent. This implies that a good number of respondents were employed in socially active and collective household settings and not in silent and individualized households.

4.3 Work-from-Home Profile

Table 4.3 Work-from-home profile

Variable	Category	f	%
Nature of work	Full-time remote	22	36.7%
	Part-time remote	5	8.3%
	Freelancing	16	26.7%
	Online business	5	8.3%
	Hybrid work	12	20.0%
Work-from-home duration	< 6 months	2	3.3%
	6 months-1 year	11	18.3%
	1-2 years	24	40.0%
	2-3 years	8	13.3%
	> 3 years	15	25.0%
Daily work-from-home hours	< 3 hours	10	16.7%
	3-5 hours	18	30.0%
	6-8 hours	25	41.7%
	> 8 hours	7	11.7%

Table 4.3 indicates that full-time remote work (36.7%), followed by freelancing (26.7%), had the highest employment modes as the work profile. This implies that the sample is made up of women whose home based work is normal and structurally significant as opposed to occasional. Regarding experience, 40.0% reported working at home 1-2 years, with another 25.0% working at home over

3 years indicating that work-from-home was a well-established practice among many respondents. The most frequent daytime workload was 68 hours (41.7%) and this may suggest that a significant proportion of participants were working in domestic space as a serious and sustained workplace, but not a temporary or casual one.

4.4 Workspace Arrangement and Domestic Use of Space

Table 4.4 Workspace arrangement and conflict areas

Variable	Category	f	%
Dedicated workspace	No	51	85.0%
	Yes	9	15.0%
Usual workspace	Bedroom	17	28.3%
	Living room	16	26.7%
	Dining area	6	10.0%
	Study room	5	8.3%
	Shared family area	12	20.0%
	Other	4	6.7%
Workspace used for other household activities	Yes	27	45.0%
	No	10	16.7%
	Sometimes	23	38.3%
Any spatial changes made	No	7	11.7%
	Yes	53	88.3%
Work setup type	Permanent workspace	4	6.7%
	Temporary daily setup	19	31.7%
	Flexible changing space	31	51.7%
	No fixed setup	6	10.0%
Most important feature of a good home workspace	Privacy	12	20.0%
	Comfort	12	20.0%
	Quiet environment	12	20.0%
	Proper furniture	10	16.7%
	Separate room	6	10.0%
	Lighting/ventilation	2	3.3%
	Flexibility	6	10.0%
	Bedroom	14	23.3%
Main conflict area	Living room	14	23.3%
	Kitchen/dining	9	15.0%
	Shared family area	15	25.0%
	No major conflict	8	13.3%

One of the most significant findings of the chapter is table 4.4. It reveals that 85.0 per cent of the respondents lacked a dedicated workspace, which means that the majority of women were working paid jobs in multi-use domestic environments. The most frequent work areas were bedrooms (28.3) and living rooms (26.7), and shared family areas (20.0). This is a clear indication that the working aspect was being incorporated into areas which were not meant as work places. In addition, 45.0 percent indicated that their workspace was certain to be used in other household activities whereas 38.3 percent stated that this occurred

occasionally. The majority of 88.3% had already changed their home to be work-friendly. A flexible changing space (51.7 percent) was the most prevalent design, which indicated that domestic space was being negotiated continuously, instead of redesigned permanently. The most important traits of a good home workspace were privacy, comfort, and quiet, as well as the key issues of home working environments. The shared family area (25.0) appeared to be the largest conflict zone, with the bedroom and the living room coming in second, indicating that the most popular areas were also the most disputed ones.

4.5 Analysis of Likert-Scale Statements

Table 4.5 Mean scores of questionnaire statements

Statement	Mean	SD
Home has enough space to support work needs	2.02	0.65
Privacy while working from home	1.78	0.74
Workspace comfortable for long working hours	2.62	0.64
Furniture suitable for professional work	2.47	0.54
Proper lighting and ventilation	2.95	0.29
Noise and interruptions affect work	3.50	0.68
Household responsibilities interrupt work	3.67	0.60
Difficulty separating work and home life	3.82	0.39
Family respects work time and workspace	2.72	0.56
Need to reorganize space for work	4.02	0.57
Home layout supports productivity	2.37	0.49
Mental stress due to working in domestic space	3.83	0.56
Working from home changed room use	3.98	0.39
Domestic space has become multifunctional	3.98	0.13
Professional role taken seriously within home	2.73	0.58
Home needs design improvements	4.30	0.62

The results of the Likert-scale are overwhelming in their support of the main thesis of the work. Privacy when working at home ($M = 1.78$) and sufficient space to accommodate work demands ($M = 2.02$) yielded the lowest means, and this shows that the work environment at home was weakly satisfied. On the same note, home layout is a factor that supports productivity ($M = 2.37$) and furniture fit to work ($M = 2.47$) were also low indicating that the majority of the respondents did not find their current domestic interiors to be entirely work-conducive. Conversely, they

reported high means in the design improvements of home needs ($M = 4.30$), need to reorganize space to work ($M = 4.02$), changed room use ($M = 3.98$), and the domestic space has become multi-purpose ($M = 3.98$). This directly suggests that domestic interiors are being transformed by work-from-home. The high scores on mental stress ($M = 3.83$), inability to separate work and home life ($M = 3.82$), and household interruptions ($M = 3.67$) also demonstrate that this redefinition is not a neutral one; it is accompanied by pressure, boundary issues, and emotional tension.

4.6 Major Reported Challenges

Table 4.6 Prevalence of work-from-home challenges

Challenge	f	%
Lack of privacy	54	90.0%
Lack of dedicated workspace	51	85.0%
Mental stress	51	85.0%
Household chores	43	71.7%
Noise/disturbance	40	66.7%
Poor furniture/ergonomics	40	66.7%
Storage problems	28	46.7%
Shared work area	27	45.0%
Internet/electricity issues	9	15.0%
Childcare/family care responsibilities	5	8.3%

According to Table 4.6, lack of privacy was the most frequently reported problem (90.0%), and then lack of dedicated workspace (85.0%), and mental stress (85.0%). These three results alone show that there was no sufficient structure of domestic space to do professional work in the sample. Household chores (71.7 percent) were also reported by a large majority of the individuals, which suggests that the unpaid household duties still caused disturbances to work schedules. Both

social and physical barriers were present with noise/disturbance and poor furniture/ergonomics being reported by 66.7% of the respondents. In comparison, the number of times in which internet/electricity problems (15.0) and childcare/family care (8.3) were chosen was lower in this dataset. In general, the findings demonstrate that the most egregious issues were spatial, environmental and role-related and not necessarily technological.

4.7 Spatial Adaptation Strategies

Table 4.7 Adaptation measures used by respondents

Adaptation measure	f	%
Rearranged furniture	31	51.7%
Created separate corner/workstation	20	33.3%
Added desk/chair	24	40.0%
Used partitions/curtains	7	11.7%
Changed room function	11	18.3%
Improved lighting	21	35.0%
Added storage	16	26.7%

Table 4.7 reveals that women did not remain passive in the face of domestic spatial constraints. Instead, they actively modified their homes. The most common strategy was rearranging furniture (51.7%), followed by adding a desk/chair (40.0%), improving lighting (35.0%), and creating a separate work corner (33.3%). These results suggest that respondents were attempting incremental and practical adjustments rather than

full-scale renovations. The lower use of partitions/curtains (11.7%) may indicate either limited space or limited financial and design flexibility. Together, these findings show that the redefinition of domestic space often occurs through small, adaptive interventions that respond to daily need rather than formal interior redesign.

4.8 Composite Scale Scores

Table 4.8 Composite scale results

Composite scale	Mean	SD
Workspace adequacy	2.48	0.39
Privacy and support	2.41	0.50
Domestic pressure	3.70	0.38
Spatial transformation	4.07	0.31
Overall mean	3.17	0.12

The composite scale scores are used to generalize the larger trends of the data. The adequacy of the workspace ($M = 2.48$) and privacy and support ($M = 2.41$) were also low, which proves that respondents did not think that their home environments were appropriate enough to engage

in professional activities. Conversely, the domestic pressure ($M = 3.70$) was high which implies that there was a great deal of interruption, conflict, and strain in the management of work and home. The largest mean was observed in spatial transformation ($M = 4.07$), which is a massive

indication of the title and theme of the study: domestic space was, in fact, redefined, reorganized, and made multifunctional due to work needs. An average score of 3.17 indicates a

pressure-filled but ambivalent experience of working at home, with adaptation being usual but less than full.

4.9 Comparison by Dedicated Workspace

Table 4.9 Composite scores by availability of dedicated workspace

Composite scale	No dedicated workspace (n=51)	Dedicated workspace (n=9)
Workspace adequacy	2.36	3.16
Privacy and support	2.25	3.30
Domestic pressure	3.78	3.28
Spatial transformation	4.17	3.50

A definite trend is evident in table 4.9: those respondents who had a dedicated workspace achieved higher results on almost all dimensions. Their average rating of workspace adequacy was significantly better (3.16) compared to women who did not have their own workspace (2.36). This was also the case with privacy and support, with those who had their own work areas scoring 3.30 as opposed to 2.25 of those who did not. Simultaneously, female participants who did not

have separate work areas registered greater domestic pressure (3.78) and spatial transformation (4.17), indicating that in cases where the home does not have an established professional space; women are more likely to negotiate, restructure, and reuse the space. This is among the best findings in the chapter as it directly relates spatial arrangement to work experience.

4.10 Comparison by Family Structure

Table 4.10 Composite scores by family structure

Family structure	n	Workspace adequacy	Domestic pressure	Spatial transformation
Nuclear family	20	2.75	3.45	3.92
Joint family	29	2.28	3.94	4.11
Living alone	3	2.47	3.33	4.17
Other	8	2.55	3.62	4.25

It seems that family structure is relevant (Table 4.10). The female population in joint families had the least workspace adequacy (2.28) and the highest domestic pressure (3.94) of the significant household types. They also exhibited great spatial transformation (4.11), implying that they needed to work more intensely to adjust domestic space. However, women living in nuclear families indicated a slightly higher adequacy of the workspace (2.75) and lower domestic pressure (3.45). These findings are congruent with the notion that shared family environments can heighten disruptions, shared-room activities, and space allocation negotiation. In the case of the Lahore context, this is a very pertinent outcome

since it links work-from-home experience to spatial arrangements that are based on families.

4.11 Qualitative Findings from Semi-Structured Interviews

The qualitative phase was conducted to provide deeper understanding of the spatial, domestic, and social conditions identified in the quantitative findings. A total of 15 women working from home in urban Lahore participated in individual semi-structured interviews. The participants represented variation in age, marital and caregiving circumstances, family structure, and workspace availability.

The interview sample included three participants from each of the five age categories. Seven participants were married, five were single, two were divorced, and one was widowed. Six participants lived in joint-family households, five belonged to nuclear-family households, and four represented other household arrangements. An

important source of variation was workspace availability: 10 of the 15 participants did not have a dedicated workspace, whereas five had a relatively dedicated or stable working area. Living rooms and bedrooms were each used by four participants, shared family spaces by three, study rooms by two, and other locations by two.

Table 4.11: Themes and Subthemes Identified from Semi-Structured Interviews

Major Theme	Subthemes
Domestic Space Has Become Hybrid and Multifunctional	Temporary work setups; room reconfiguration; overlapping domestic and professional functions
Privacy Is Negotiated Rather Than Guaranteed	Acoustic and visual interruptions; shared-space boundaries; privacy negotiation
Domestic and Care Responsibilities Fragment Professional Work	Household-task interruptions; childcare and elder-care; work organized around family requirements
Professional Work Requires Family Negotiation and Recognition	Conditional family support; negotiation of room use; professional recognition within the home
Workspace Quality Shapes Comfort, Productivity and Mental Stress	Inadequate furniture; interrupted concentration; benefits of stable workspace
Women Adapt and Improvise Domestic Space	Furniture rearrangement; temporary zoning; room switching; time-based coping
Preferred Design Is Flexible but Clearly Defined	Privacy and acoustic control; ergonomic furniture; storage; zoning; lighting; multifunctionality

4.11.1 Domestic Space Has Become Hybrid and Multifunctional

The first theme was about the transformation of conventional living rooms into hybrid work-lived environments. Participants without specially designed workspaces frequently used bedrooms, living rooms and shared family areas for professional work. These spaces became non-permanent offices; their functions changed depending on the time of day and the needs of the household.

Participants spoke of the development of working materials at the beginning of professional activity and their removal or removal when housing is necessary for domestic purposes. Consequently, the workplace was often temporarily in a pre-established living environment. This finding shows that WFH has not only changed where professional activity is present but the functional identity of living spaces.

The interview evidence supports the quantitative finding that 85.0% of respondents did not have a

specific workspace, while bedrooms, living rooms and shared family areas included the most common working locations.

4.11.2 Privacy Is Negotiated Rather Than Guaranteed

Privacy turned out to be one of the strongest qualitative themes, and the participants said that privacy was more than just a physical enclosure. It comprised control of the noise of the household, room movement, conversations, professional calls, visual exposure, and breaks of other relatives.

Women who had used shared areas experienced more difficulties in protecting uninterrupted working periods since the same rooms continued to operate different household functions. Consequently, a woman may have enough space for sitting and working, while the environmental control which is required for concentration is still lacking.

This qualitative finding closely matches the quantitative results. Privacy registered the lowest

Likert mean ($M = 1.78$) while the lack of privacy of 90.0% of respondents was reported as a significant challenge.

4.11.3 Domestic and Care Responsibilities Fragment Professional Work

The third theme demonstrated that professional work was often organized around household routines instead of acting as a fully independent activity. Domestic tasks, cooking, childcare, elder-care and other immediate household needs may interrupt the planned working periods.

Interviews showed that, therefore, flexibility is sometimes understood to be fragmented. Women could work at home but professional activity often took place in separate blocks of around household requirements instead of during uninterrupted working periods.

It is important that the pressure for care was not confined to mothers with young children. Some single and older participants also described elder-care and the wider responsibilities to take care of their family members. The main feature, therefore, was the expectation that physical presence in the home could also indicate that there is availability for domestic needs.

This theme is in accordance with the results of the survey, where the household responsibility was relatively high on average and the Domestic Pressure composited score was 3.70.

4.11.4 Professional Work Requires Family Negotiation and Recognition

The interviews did not demonstrate that the families generally were unsupported. Instead, a more complex pattern has been established where widespread support for women's employment can go hand in hand with continuous negotiations on space management, time and budgetary responsibility. Participants sometimes have to communicate that they worked, that they protected meeting times or that access to certain rooms was negotiated. Therefore, the recognition of the profession within the home was not just an issue of employment but also a spatial dimension. A clearly identifiable workspace could communicate that occupational activity took

place, whereas working from a dining table, bedroom or family room could lower the frontier between paid work and domestic availability. The theme was particularly relevant among participants from joint-family households, where several people could require access to the same or adjacent rooms.

4.11.5 Workspace Quality Shapes Comfort, Productivity and Mental Stress

The fifth theme dealt with the physical quality of the workspace. Participants benefiting from the conditions for a household were usually able to describe the obstacles that were connected with furniture, prolonged stays, repeated displacements of the equipment, noise and lack of environmental control. Interview experiences showed that a relatively stable workspace reduced the time and effort needed to set up and delete a workstation multiple times. Stable space may also help to increase concentration. However, having a separate area does not fully eliminate noise within the household, family expectations, or responsibility of home.

It is important to distinguish this point from the figures, as in addition to comparatively high Domestic Pressure ($M = 3.70$), the quantitative results also revealed low Workspace Adequacy ($M = 2.48$) and Privacy and Support ($M = 2.41$). Women without dedicated workspaces recorded lower workspace adequacy and privacy than women of dedicated workspaces while domestic pressure was higher.

4.11.6 Women Adapt and Improvise Domestic Space

Despite spatial restrictions, participants actively adapted their interior to allow professional work. Adaptation included rearrangement of furniture, setting up work corners, adding desks or chairs, using lightweight partitions or curtains, improving lighting, changing room features, adding storage, and moving between rooms according to household activities. When physical adaptation was difficult, participants also adjusted the time. Working in quieter periods, organizing

professional calls on household routines, or changing the working time worked as non-physical methods for management of spatial restrictions. Quantitative results show the same pattern. 88.3% of respondents said that they are making some sort of spatial change, whilst flexible spaces are more common than fixed workstations. Spatial Transformation has also registered the highest compound score on $M = 4.07$.

4.11.7 Preferred Design Is Flexible but Clearly Defined

The final subject concerned the preferred improvements to the interior design of participants. Women do not always believe that the only appropriate solution is the establishment of a large and entirely separate household office. Instead, the preferences emphasized improved privacy, clearer zoning, ergonomic furniture,

adequate storage, improved lighting, acoustic control, and flexible arrangements, suitable for both household and professional functions. This implies that the WFH design response in Lahore should take into consideration the reality of shared use and multifunctional housing. The work corners pack, flexible furniture, integrated storage, lightweight partitions, acoustic solutions, task lighting. Clearly defined work areas may prove to be more practical than requiring each household to provide a separate office.

4.12 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated to determine how statistical patterns were experienced in everyday domestic life. The two components showed substantial convergence.

Table 4.12: Integration of Major Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Quantitative finding (n = 60)	Qualitative explanation (n = 15)
85.0% lacked a dedicated workspace	Interview participants described temporary setups, room switching, shared work areas, and the need to return workspaces to domestic use.
Privacy $M = 1.78$ 90.0% reported lack of privacy	Privacy involved noise, movement, conversations, visual exposure, interruptions, and difficulty protecting professional calls.
Domestic Pressure $M = 3.70$	Professional work was organized around chores, meals, care responsibilities, family needs, and interruptions.
Joint-family respondents: Workspace Adequacy $M = 2.28$ Domestic Pressure $M = 3.94$	Joint-family participants described greater negotiation over room use, privacy, household movement, and professional boundaries.
Spatial Transformation $M = 4.07$	Participants described furniture rearrangement, work corners, temporary zoning, changed room functions, and schedule adaptation.
88.3% had made spatial changes	Interviews showed practical adaptation through desks, chairs, storage, lighting, partitions, furniture movement, and temporary workspace creation.
Need for design improvement $M = 4.30$	Participants preferred privacy-supportive zoning, ergonomic furniture, storage, lighting, acoustic control, and flexible multifunctional design.

The integrated analysis demonstrates that quantitative evidence of workspace inadequacy, poor privacy, domestic pressure, and spatial transformation reflected specific everyday experiences. Low privacy was associated with movement through shared rooms, household noise, and difficulty protecting work calls and concentration. Domestic pressure reflected not

simply the presence of household responsibilities but the continuous organization of professional work around family routines. The high level of spatial transformation represented active and repeated modification of the home rather than formal architectural redesign. Women rearranged furniture, established temporary work zones, altered room functions, moved equipment, and

changed working schedules to accommodate household activity.

Differences according to family structure and workspace availability were also qualitatively meaningful. The quantitative results showed that women in joint-family households had lower Workspace Adequacy ($M = 2.28$) and higher Domestic Pressure ($M = 3.94$) than women living in nuclear families, whose corresponding means were 2.75 and 3.45. Interviews indicated that shared household environments required more negotiation over room ownership, movement, privacy, and working time. The combined findings demonstrate that the redefinition of domestic space is both physical and social. Physical limitations influence where and how women work, while family structure, domestic responsibilities, privacy, and recognition of professional activity influence whether those spatial arrangements can function effectively. The findings therefore show that adaptation of domestic interiors for WFH requires not only furniture or physical modifications but also clearer spatial and social boundaries within the household.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that working from home has substantially altered the functional meaning of domestic space for women in urban Lahore. In the quantitative results, it appeared that 85.0% of respondents did not have a dedicated workspace, with bedrooms, living rooms, and shared family rooms frequently used for professional activities. Whereas flexible changing rooms have been much more common than permanent workstations, 88.3% of respondents reported have made spatial changes to perform work. The qualitative interviews showed that women often created temporary workstations, rearranged furniture, moved between rooms and restored workspaces to household functions after completing professional tasks. These findings add to the argument that today's house is becoming more and more a hybrid work-living environment. Hall et al. (2024) also identified workspace design, environmental

conditions, individual circumstances and flexibility as recurring determinants of homework experiences, while Mura et al. (2024) showed that remote work creates an overlap between living and working environments and requires spatial adjustments.

The results also suggest that workspace availability alone does not collect sufficient workspace quality. Survey respondents reported low Workspace Adequacy ($M = 2.48$) and Privacy and Support ($M = 2.41$), whereas Domestic Pressure was comparatively high ($M = 3.70$). These conclusions coincide with those of Tleuken et al. (2022), in which the major international survey found that a comfortable separate work area and ergonomic furniture are especially important components of living environments to meet the needs and improve productivity in remote work. Stroom et al. (2024), based on more than 1,000 domestic employees in the Netherlands, also noted that greater satisfaction was related to the physical home office environment, with better perceived productivity and lower burnout bias. With the now available findings, this extends an established international pattern in the specific socio-spatial context of urban Lahore.

Privacy proved to be one of the major issues in current study. While 90.0% of respondents found a lack of privacy to be a great challenge, the Privacy item recorded the lowest average score ($M = 1.78$). Findings of the interview helped explain the lack of privacy which is represented in practice: domestic movements, conversations, noise, shared room use, visual exposure, and interruptions in professional conversations or time periods requiring concentration. This is in accordance with Waismel-Manor et al. (2021) that indicated that workspace in the house could be a place for gender negotiation rather than a resource that will automatically or equitably be shared. Their studies indicate that spatial access is associated with relationships between households and the relative recognition of different family members' professional work.

An associated finding relates to gender interaction between specialists and domestic responsibilities. There were frequent household interruptions; the

separation of labor and household life was characterized by a high average. Domestic Pressure was developed as one of the strongest composite dimensions. During the interviews it was suggested that women often structure professional work around food, household responsibilities, childcare, and care for elderly and family needs in order to meet urgent needs. Physical presence could also be interpreted as availability for domestic responsibilities through family members in the home. These findings are closely consistent with the findings of Castro-Trancón et al. (2024), whose systematic review has demonstrated that teleworking works are mixed for women: flexibility can be useful, but inequality in domestic responsibilities may aggravate conflicts between work and family and undermine well-being. The flexibility of WFH should not be viewed as an automatic enhancement of professional autonomy.

The findings on family structure show further context-specific evidence. Women living in joint-family households reported lower Workspace Adequacy ($M = 2.28$) and higher Domestic Pressure ($M = 3.94$) than those residing in nuclear-family households (2.75 and 3.45, respectively). Qualitative accounts also pointed out that privacy, space ownership, household movement and working hours were more often negotiated in common households. This pattern is especially important in Lahore. Khalid and Razem (2022) have demonstrated in their comparative qualitative research with Lahore and Amman that the domestic space of women is characterized by housing affordances, family relationships, gender-specific practices and the multiple roles of women as caregivers, household managers and incomes earners. This socio-spatial concept is in application of current research into women's professional activity within the house.

These findings need to also be interpreted in order to include inequalities in the housing sector. Munir et al. (2022) revealed considerable inequalities in housing usage and space for use in urban Pakistan. Therefore, recommending a conventional separate home office would ignore differences in the size of the living space and

household equipment for every working woman. Current interviews, instead, highlighted the demand for feasible interventions such as clearer zoning, compact areas of work, ergonomic furniture, storage, enhanced illumination, acoustic privacy, curtains or movable separations, and multifunctional furniture.

Another important finding is that women were not passive recipients of inappropriate household environments. Spatial Transformation recorded the highest composite mean ($M = 4.07$) while needed improvements to home design $M = 4.30$. Reached the participants presented furniture rearrangement, creating work corners, improving lighting, temporary zoning, spatial conversion, storage solutions, and even adapting working times for quieter household periods. This adaptive behavior reflects ability to act but adaptation must not be automatically construed as spatial adequacy. Repeated configuration, movement and dismantling of professional space can themselves indicate that the home interior is not sufficiently supportive of work in an acceptable way.

Comprehensive data reveal that the rethinking of domestic space for women working from the Lahore Home is also an issue of interior-design, a housing issue, a gender issue and a question of household boundary. An efficient environment for WFH requires more than the existing surface area of a laptop computer. They require ergonomic and environmental support, substantive privacy, an adaptable spatial organization and social recognition of women's working hours. The results thus contribute to a Lahore-specific perspective for international WFH research, showing how physical spatial conditions and gender-specific household relations interact in the same home environment.

Conclusion

This study investigated how domestic space is redefined from home within the urban Lahore for women working by combining quantitative data by 60 people with qualitative findings from 15 semi-structured interviews. The findings show that the movement of professional work in the house has not just introduced another activity into

residential interiors; it has changed how rooms are used, negotiated, adjusted and understood. Quantitative results have revealed that the majority of the respondents did not have their own professional space, resorting instead to bedrooms, living rooms, common family spaces and other multifunctional spaces. Privacy and workspace adequacy were relatively weak, while domestic pressure, work-home overlap, mental stress, spatial restructuring and the need for interior design improvement were comparatively strong. While the joint family had also had more severe spatial and domestic difficulties, the poorer workspace adequacy and larger domestic pressure were at the expense of women who were not specially targeted.

The qualitative findings explained the numerical patterns further. The experiences of women have been characterized by hybrid and multifunctional rooms, negotiated privacy, fragmented professional routines, household and care tasks, ongoing negotiations with family members, inadequate workspace conditions and repetitive spatial adaptation. At the same time participants demonstrated a substantial agency by reorganizing furniture, creating working corners, changing room functions, adopting temporary zones, improving lighting and storage and reorganizing work schedules. Consequently, the combined findings indicate that the domestic space redefinition is both physical and social. When privacy, furniture, environment or household identification is not enough, any technically available space does not necessarily function as an effective place to work. Likewise, improvements in physical design alone will not be able to address the issue entirely, once the professional time is interrupted by domestic expectations.

The study concludes that home designs for women who work at home in Lahore must go beyond assuming housing serves only household functions. Future interiors have to take into account changing patterns of paid work through flexible, ergonomic, privacy-supportive and multifunctional design strategies. With same time it is important that women's professional boundaries be more clearly recognized in

households. Instead of creating a conventional separate office as a universal solution, context-sensitive design should allow existing housing areas to move effectively between professional and household functions while maintaining comfort, dignity, privacy and utility.

Recommendations

1. Introduce flexible and clearly defined work zones. Residential interiors should incorporate adaptable work areas that can function professionally during working periods without permanently displacing domestic activities. Foldable desks, movable workstations and clearly identified work corners may be particularly suitable for space-constrained homes.
2. Improve visual and acoustic privacy. Movable partitions, curtains, screens, strategic furniture placement, acoustic panels and other lightweight solutions should be considered where construction of a separate room is impractical.
3. Prioritize ergonomic furniture. Women working for extended periods at home should have access to appropriately sized desks, supportive chairs, monitor positioning and work surfaces. Ergonomic inadequacy in makeshift home offices has also been documented in recent research (Gerding et al., 2021).
4. Provide integrated storage within home-work areas. Compact shelving, drawers and built-in storage can reduce the need to repeatedly pack and relocate professional equipment and can help maintain clearer boundaries between domestic and professional materials.
5. Improve environmental quality. Adequate task lighting, ventilation, thermal comfort and noise control should be considered integral components of home-workspace design rather than optional features. Evidence from remote-work research indicates that physical environmental quality contributes to home-office satisfaction and work experience (Stroom et al., 2024).
6. Design specifically for multifunctionality. Architects and interior designers working in Lahore should recognize that bedrooms, living rooms and dining areas may increasingly perform

professional functions. Furniture and layouts should therefore support easy transitions between domestic and work activities.

7. Strengthen household recognition of professional boundaries. Families should establish clearer expectations regarding working hours, privacy, professional calls and use of shared rooms. This is particularly relevant in joint-family households where multiple people use the same domestic spaces.

8. Encourage gender-responsive residential design. Future housing and interior-design practice should explicitly consider women's paid work, caregiving responsibilities, privacy requirements and unequal access to domestic space. Design responses should be context-sensitive rather than assuming that every household can provide a conventional enclosed home office.

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