Work-Family Balance: Experiences of Successful Professional Women in Academia in Pakistan

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The purpose of this study was to discover the characteristics and experiences of successful professional women, instrumental in their career success, in the context of a social system where the work-family segregation of the male and female roles is still very strong. Semi structured interviews were conducted with eight successful professional women from academia, selected through purposive sampling. Interpretative phenomenological analysis of the interviews revealed three levels of experiences of these women. First level is the external influence like academically encouraging childhood environment and at the same time explicit family role expectations. Second level reflects the internal experiences such as feelings and cognitions under various contradictory external influences, such as motivation for individual achievement, acquiescence to the traditionally held gender norms and the resulting role conflict. The third level is the outward manifestation of these internal experiences, such as stretching the effort levels to manage the responsibilities of home and profession equally well. As an important determinant of the achievement motivation in these women, fathers were found to have played a significant role. Besides, the combination of risk-taking and diplomatic approaches was found to be a typical way of dealing with the conformity pressures from family.

Keyword. Women, work-family balance, role conflict, male dominance

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The twentieth century witnessed women expanding the range of possibilities for their gender, by participating as professionals in different fields and by actively dissolving the boundaries of the traditionally held gender roles. However, the economic empowerment and autonomy that accompanies this professional participation does not seem to come without resistance posed by practices prevailing family and professional settings. Usually, such resistance tends to impede women's progress and results in under representation of women in upper organizational positions among which academia does not turn out to be an exception (Amery, Bates, Jenkins, & Savigny, 2015). In Pakistan as well, work-family conflict and organizational culture affect women's professional progress a lot more than they affect men in academia (Yasin & Naqvi, 2016). However, despite such barriers, there are certainly many women who successfully make it to the top in their respective organizations. The present study intended to explore the development of personal characteristics of such successful professional women from academia which contributed toward their professional success despite the social, professional, and family related challenges that they faced.

In Pakistan women are generally found underprivileged in most areas of social life, relevant here specially is education. This is evident from the fact that the gender parity index for literacy in 2014 was found to be .6, which means that for every 100 literate men, there were 60 literate women. Literacy rate for men was 70 percent and that for women was 49 percent in 2012-13. Moreover, as far as women's participation in university teaching is concerned, in 2012-13, out of 23542 university teachers, only 7686 were women (Government of Pakistan Statistics Division, 2016). Besides, in academia, according to a survey by International Labor Organization (ILO, 2015) women constitute only 3 percent of management positions in different organizations in Pakistan, which makes Pakistan ranked at the bottom among 108 countries in this regard. Therefore, in the current scenario, the experiences of the few women who successfully reach higher organizational positions can be of utmost importance for aspiring female academicians, in understanding the problems and devising the solutions.

The underrepresentation of women in higher organizational positions in academia is a common problem across different countries such as in Australia (Winchester & Browning, 2015), in Japan, China, Hong Kong, and India (Morley, 2014) as well as in Nigera (Eboiyehi, Fayomi, & Eboiyehi, 2016). Most of the time, the reasons for this underrepresentation of women in academia are not very different from those for underrepresentation of women in other professions and can

be traced back to gender related stereotypes and rigid organizational practices.

Discussing the factors related with women's career progress, Fagenson (1990) proposed that gender as an internal trait, structural opportunities, and institutional system and its practices and beliefs are the three interactive factors influencing managerial advancement of women. Similar results were found in a review of facts and figures related to the position of women in management in 21 countries by Davidson and Burke (2004). The positive aspects included supportive government and organizational policies, changing family roles and responsibilities, and more opportunities to work. The negative aspects that posed resistance to the change in women's professional status were found to be domination of men in senior executive positions, discrimination against women, and gender stereotyping. These career barriers seem to be similar across a wide range of cultures as it has been found in countries like Greece, U.S., and Turkey that there is a very small number of women reaching the higher organizational positions and the reason for this is the rigid gender stereotyping and the belief that women lack the ability to be in top management (Aycan, 2004; Brenner, Schein, & Tomkiewicz, 1989; Kottis, 1996). Similar pattern of stereotyping was found in Canada by Brown (as cited in Davidson & Burke, 2004) and in Malaysia by Ahmed (as cited in Davidson & Burke, 2004). Aycan (2004) explored the factors affecting women's career advancement in Turkey. The most important success factors were found to be self-confidence and determination. Second on the list was support from the family and the organization. The most restricting career barrier to be found was the cultural norms toward gender roles. These norms which are learnt as a part of socialization process play a very important role in eliciting the role conflict whenever women attempt to adopt unconventional social roles.

Exploring how these social norms toward gender roles affect women, Brenner et al. (1989) studied the relationship between sex role stereotypes and perceived requisite management traits among men and women middle managers in the United States. The results showed that men middle managers still had the same beliefs as those held fifteen years ago that masculine traits were necessary to be a successful manager. It has also been argued that it is these stereotypic beliefs such as 'think manager, think male', which have kept women from entering the top managerial roles in spite of the affirmative action plans and pressure from legislation.

The fact that women's career success is hampered by organizational cultures and norms is evident from another study by

Legault and Chasserio (2013) who explored the work and family life balance among highly qualified IT professionals in Canada. They found that women's slow rate of promotions to higher positions is caused by the fact that women have to manage both the professional and family responsibilities. Moreover, according to their findings, organizational cultures are mostly intolerant of such flexibility demands and interpret it as a lack of commitment. As a result women have to suffer the consequences in the form of their chances of promotions being cut down.

The literature regarding obstacles in women's career success makes it clear that in most professions, women, specifically those aspiring for higher positions have to overcome a lot of resistance from various directions. Academia is usually considered to be a women-friendly profession with its demands and tasks manageable along with the family obligations. However, a brief overview regarding experiences of professionally aspiring women in academia reflects a very different picture. For example, Gupta and Sharma (2002) explored experiences of women scientists working in some of the most prestigious technological institutes in India. The results showed their experiences relating to male dominance in work settings and the feelings of isolation and conflict. Women in their study reported expectations and attitude of their male colleagues related with stereotypic gender roles. They also saw '*grihashanti'* (peace in the house) as more important. The coping strategies they used against the role conflict included compromise with career, postponing research, and redefining 'success'. Similarly, in a study exploring the factors involved in women academics' fulfillment of their career roles in Arab Middle East, Afiouni (2014) found patriarchy and giving primary importance to family responsibility as the factors affecting women's career progress and career choice. Besides, lack of supportive policies and practices in the university also affected these women's academic careers.

Almost similar findings were discovered by Fritsch (2015), who studied the hurdles faced by successful women professionals in different universities in Austria and the various ways they employed to cope with these hurdles. One of the resistances they pointed to was to manage their family role and at the same time travelling for professional purposes. They managed this conflict by planning their family life around their professional goals or by separating their professional life from family life and dividing their week schedule by dedicating working days to professional activities and the weekends to family.

Nevertheless, accepting organizational policies and social norms as such, women tend to make adjustments in their own professional and personal expectations. Coping responses suggesting self-reliance and minimizing the value of discrimination also appeared in a study by Hite (1996) who explored the experiences of black women professionals, as being women and black, they belonged to two groups, which have always been subjected to discrimination. This study pointed out that these women became inwardly firm in the direction of their goals and appear very composed in the face of all the discriminatory practices. The importance of such individual/ personal characteristics in women's professional achievement is also evident from the findings of a study by Ion and Duran (2013) who found ability to manage stress, staying goal-oriented, and steadfast in the face of hurdles extremely important in paving their path to professional success. In another study, Etzkowitz, Kemelgor, Neuschatz, Uzzi, and Alonzo (1994) highlighted the importance of cultivation of personal characteristics in women to deal with work-family issues later in life. In their study, female teachers reported being more strict and critical with female students to prepare them for the higher and harder standards, they would be expected to meet later in life. This shows that women, from the beginning are socialized to work double as hard as men, due to the demands of the multiple roles they will have to fulfill if they choose to work professionally.

In order to deal with these dual demands and to maintain the balance in their multiple roles women adopt most of the time such coping strategies that involve taking responsibility for one's chosen roles and changing their cognitions regarding themselves and the world. For example, studying the coping strategies for role conflict in married professional women with children, Elman and Gilbert (1984) found that three most often used strategies were increased role behavior which involved working hard and making efforts to do it all, cognitive restructuring, and personal role redefinition. None of these strategies involved explicit demand for changes in external environmental system. This shows that women try to reduce the incompatibility between their professional and family roles by modifying their own perception and thinking, instead of working explicitly on external factors such as unfavorable organizational practices and social norms about gender roles.

In Pakistan, if the situation is closely observed, a combination of different factors such as religion, kinship, access to education, and patriarchal family structures emerge as the major factors that limit the autonomy and individual existence for women (Rouse, 1988). Kazi (1999) found that social norms about appropriateness of certain

professions for women in the views of family and employers defined professional choices for women. Moreover, limited job opportunities and low chances of returns make parents reluctant to invest in the education of their daughters resulting women getting into less ambitious and low earning professions. Analyzing various factors that have affected women's rights in Pakistan, Rouse (2002) inferred that the legislation in the name of religion has made women rights suffer in Pakistan and thus has held them from taking autonomous decisions regarding their personal and professional life. Haeri (2004) in her study on successful Pakistani professional women found participants had to work hard to balance their professional roles with the traditional demands of their culture, specifically their duties as wives and mothers. A significant factor in women's professional advancement was the support from the family, particularly from husband and in-law's. Zaman and Zulfiqar (2005) also found an encouraging attitude of husbands towards their wives' career facilitated women in managerial positions in banks and private organizations in Pakistan. However, partly contrary to this, another study showed that working women perceived their husbands not sharing in the household work because of a "psychological block", highlighting that the complete responsibility of household makes things more challenging for working women (Shaheed & Mumtaz 1981).

Despite the resistance to women's professional success, it seems that there is a gradual positive change in women's awareness regarding higher education and seeking professional career. This change, naturally cannot be without notable consequences for the society in general. Shaheed (1988) also pointed to this fact that when women adopt new roles, they are also acting upon the boundaries that define a particular a culture, thus altering the basic features of which the social system of a culture is made of like gender relations, organizational practices and family dynamics.

Keeping the available literature in mind, the present study focused on exploring the characteristics and experiences of successful professional women from academia in Pakistan as this may shed light on factors which kept them on moving toward a successful career, meanwhile surviving the mainstream societal norms that restrict independence and the development of an individual identity for women. The present study was led by the exploration of following major research questions:

1. What are the characteristics of successful professional women in academia instrumental in successful management of family and career?

2. What kind of support they had from the environment that is, family and organization?

3. How did they cope with the role conflict that possibly emerges as women try to pursue high career goals along with the family role?

Method

Research Design

The study adopted qualitative approach, as the purpose of the study was in-depth exploration of the characteristics and experiences of successful professional women regarding work-family balance.

Interpretative phenomenological analysis or IPA, based on the phenomenological philosophy, was used in this study as this method looks at the meanings that different experiences have for the participants, as they make sense of "their personal and social world" (Smith, 2004). Instead of trying to make objective explanations and description of the phenomenon, IPA encourages to understand the lived experience of the subject from the subject's perspective. This approach to study women's experiences was also chosen because of the fact that the dominance of male perspectives and ideologies has kept women's perspective and unique interpretations repressed and less articulated. Therefore, traditionally most of the feminist researchers have employed qualitative methods to explore the viewpoints of women, as described in their own words (Coolican, 2004). Besides, it has been argued that there is also a need to recognize and articulate women's double consciousness including their experience and the form of its social expression (Chodorow, 1989).

Sample

The study included eight participants using purposive sampling. All the participants were married women with ages ranging from 50-65 years. All of them had the degree of doctorate in philosophy of their respective fields and were holding prominent positions at their respective institutes. Five participants were chairpersons of their departments at their respective universities. Two were serving as deans of their faculties in their respective universities. One participant was holding the position of principal at a post graduate women's college. All the participants belonged to Lahore.

Tool

Semi-structured interview schedule was used as the tool. It included questions broadly on early family environment, decision to pursue a career, role conflict, the adjustments made and the experience related with male dominance. The questions asked were adapted according to the participants' responses. However, due to similarity of experiences of the participants, it was not difficult to keep the main structure of the interview protocol intact across participants. Some of the questions in the interview protocol included: How did you set your priorities regarding family and work?; How did you manage to get help from your husband?; and In what way were you able to convince your family of why your professional commitment was important?

Procedure

Participants were approached in their offices and were briefed about the nature of the study. After informing them about voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, right to quit at any time, formal consent was taken. Each interview took almost one hour to complete. In the end, they were thanked for their participation in the study. All the interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed for data analysis.

Data Analysis

The analysis of the interview transcripts was done through interpretative phenomenological analysis in following steps:

1. Developing emergent themes by reading the interview transcript of each participant.

2. Developing sub ordinate themes by looking for similarities among responses of eight participants.

3. Developing super ordinate/ major themes by merging sub ordinate themes on the basis of similarity in meaning.

4. The analysis of the interaction between major themes which lead to the development of an underlying process that tentatively explains how these different themes stage wise emerge in these women's experience.

Results and Discussion

Interpretative phenomenological analysis of the interviews revealed three levels of experiences of these women. The findings are

also illustrated in a composite form in the summarized model of the experiences of successful professional women (see Figure 1 Summarized model of experiences of successful professional from women in academia in Pakistan).
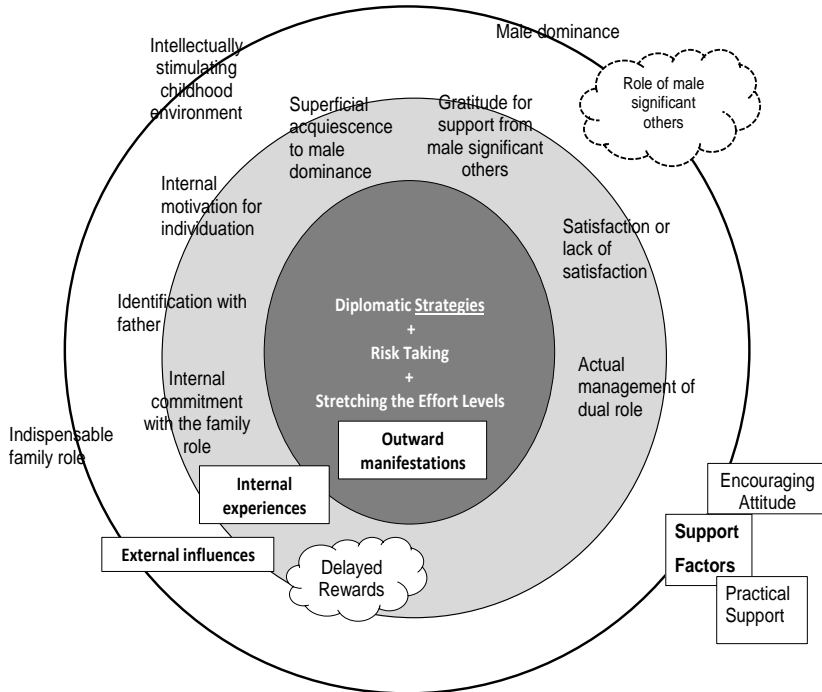

Figure 1. Summarized model of experiences of successful professional from women in academia in Pakistan.

The results revealed that environmental factors include intellectually stimulating childhood environment, general societal attitudes and beliefs such as rigid specification of family role for women, deep-rooted male dominance and inflexible organizational structures and policies.

Intellectually Stimulating Environment

The findings of the present study indicates that intellectually stimulating environment, in the early years of these women seems to have provided the necessary direction to the potential in these women.

Four of the participants had parents, either father or mother who were in academia by profession. So, the academic environment

available at home might have spurred in them the desire for knowledge and thus might have polished their aptitude. For the rest of the four participants, although, the immediate family environment was apparently not very intellectually fostering, they had however academically competent friends and peers who inspired them for this.

In some cases, the predispositions for becoming high achievers also appear to have played a very important role. It is evident for example in one of the cases, whose overall family environment was not very conducive for women's education. However, provided the fact that her father was equally supportive for all his daughters, but it was only her who seriously pursue higher education and a professional career showing that it was her personal bent toward academics and personal achievement that made her succeed professionally.

However, in one of the cases it seems that reverse gender role socialization might also be one of the reasons to have developed the need for individual achievement and independence that have traditionally been known as masculine traits. It is apparent in the case where the mother was herself a very non-traditional, successful business woman though very cold and aloof as a mother, whereas the father was very nurturing. So, apparently her father and mother were in non traditional gender roles. The participant might have internalized the aspiration for high achievement by observing her mother and had the necessary support and nurturance from her father.

Father's Role

Father's role here in the early years of life of these women seems to have been very significant and most of these women reported having very nurturing and supportive fathers. There are two ways we can understand the importance of father's role.

This makes sense as Pakistan also, is a male dominant culture, so support from the male family member is fundamental to the realization of women's career aspirations. Besides, it is very important that they get the favor of the primary authority figure at home who is usually father. This not only helps them get the financial support and encouragement, but also makes them grow self-confident. Another explanation appears to lie in identification with father in these women in the early years of life. Because father in most of the cases was very nurturing and friendly, there is strong possibility that emotional closeness with father, and having spent more intimate time with him, than with mother, these women adopted most of their fathers' behavior pattern, which essentially included a desire for individual success and contact with the world outside the domestic sphere.

Stockard and Johnson (1979) highlighted that a nurturing father can make masculinity less alien to their daughters. So, it seems that nurturing fathers can induce in women certain androgynous characteristics which would help them excel in their profession. Haeri (2004) also found similar results regarding strong relationship with father in successful Pakistani professional women. However, contrary to our findings, Heilbrun (1984) contends that father identification can have feminizing effect on daughter and the masculine behavior in women is marked by a father - daughter relationship where the father is emotionally distant.

Father's role can be even more significant in male dominating cultures such as in Asian cultures. For example Soh (1993) exploring the personal backgrounds of women legislators in Korean national politics discovered that many of them were either brought up in father-absent environments or had very nurturing fathers. In any case, their socialization environment was marked by the absence of a strict, distant and disciplinarian father. Those who had been brought up with their fathers reported that they had very close bonding with their fathers and that had inculcated in them self-confidence and a desire for individual achievement. So, a father seems to play a major role in women's career success, first, by inculcating individualistic ideals and then, by being supportive for their goals.

The results are in accordance with Li and Kerpelman (2007) who also found that support from mothers and fathers casts a great influence on young women's career related thinking, therefore, parents must be emotionally close to their daughters and should also be permissive and encouraging for them in the direction of pursuing their own choices in career.

Male Dominance

Among other environmental factors influencing career success was male dominance as highlighted by study participants. Most of the time it is very blatant like authority of fathers and husbands. This is more visible in instances when women's personal decisions are not allowed to be executed without her father's or after marriage her husband's approval. Other times, this male dominance is very subtle. For example the organizational policies and work rules that are most of the time unfavorable for women and are primarily suitable for males only.

Support from Husband

Again it seems that because of the male dominance, just like father who in the early years of life of these women plays an important role, husbands also have a very significant supporting role. This support can be described as two intersecting axes. One axis constitutes the settings of availability of support with domestic support at one end and organizational support (structural support systems, for example organizational policies) at the other end. The other axis constitutes behavioral support with visible supportive acts on one end and supportive attitude on the other end. Supportive acts are the observable acts of support or help whereas supportive attitude is the encouragement and appreciation for these women's career involvement. If it is lacking, it may result in lack of satisfaction with the support system, despite all the apparent acts of support. The acts of support from the family then may be seen as based in their own needs, rather than as being the result of accepting women's professional aspirations. For example, a husband may be quietly taking care of children in his wife's absence, but the fact that he inwardly does not approve of her professional commitment, may make his wife insecure in her relationship with him. Encouraging attitude gives women more self-confidence and can also reduce the guilt associated with not being able to fulfill the family role according to standards.

Acts of support reduce the burden of family obligation practically but may not be enough to reduce the stress related with this. For example, one of the participants commented "When you start your journey, there is no real support with you. Although you might have some very basic support but the fact is that no one really appreciates what you are doing." Participants, whose fathers or husbands were highly encouraging and were not merely 'tolerant' of their daughters' or wives' career aspirations, appeared more satisfied with their family and professional lives. They were also more vocal regarding their egalitarian beliefs and gender equality. This finding attests the findings by Vadnjal and Vadnjal (2013) who explored the role and kinds of support system that women entrepreneurs who were just in the beginning of their careers, had at universities in the Middle Eastern region. The results showed that support from spouse, both emotional and financial was very important for these women. Moreover, help in carrying out domestic responsibilities was also of great importance.

In the similar way, Heikkinen, Lämsä, and Hiillos (2014) studied the role of support from spouse in women managers career in Finland.

One of the most important inferences that they extracted was that spouse's support cannot be understood without keeping in mind the nature of gender relations. They also emphasized the finding that men who are capable of challenging traditionally held gender role norms are perceived to have a positive effect on their spouse's career.

As women are aware of the fact that their career involvement is not seen with approval generally, they also do not expect a lot of support from their families. If, however their father, brother, or husband is supportive, they tend to take it as a favor and feel gratitude, as if their fathers and husbands are doing something highly worthwhile and out of proportion for them. Habib (2004) found similar results that women are not empowered enough to be aware of their own rights. That is why they perceive some basic rights they happen to get such as education and health, as favors.

Although, given the unequal power distribution in our culture, men should be appreciated for being supportive toward their daughters and wives, however, these feelings of appreciation and gratitude by women should not overshadow the right of self-fulfillment, which happens to be the real purpose of this encouraging attitude. If the socialization process also involves instilling in women the awareness of rights, they would take the environmental support and opportunities without any kind of doubt or guilt.

Internal Commitment with the Family Role

One important theme, pertinent to women's nature as relationship-oriented, is internal commitment with the family role. All participants believed that women are more suitable for childcare, both physically and psychologically. This fact has been articulated in earlier studies such as those by Gilligan (1982) and by Chodorow (1989). Chodorow for example, studying the experiences of women psychoanalysts discovered these women's belief that gender equality can be sought in the professional sphere but for the domestic part, women are more suitable than men. Like the participants in the present study, women in Chodorow's study also asserted that home and children require nurturance, and women can provide it more readily as compared with men.

Similarly the concern for family and relationships in women's voices was what Gilligan (1982) found in her study on moral development in women. This indicates that care for relationships and family is to a large extent in-built in women and this factor makes the career path of women different from that of men.

Diplomatic Problem Solving Strategies

Overall, pulled by the opposing forces of their internal motivation for individual success, the concern for family, and conformity pressure from the external environmental posed by male dominating power structures, these women have to play carefully and carve out some clever middle ground solutions. The first obvious thing they do in response to these conflicting forces is to superficially acquiesce to social norms.

It appears that these women take male dominance as a reality that is not going to change easily. So, they accept it as the dominant social norm and try to 'appear' in compliance. For example, one of the participants said, "A woman must keep in mind that she has to take care of children, has to cook. Her husband will take rest and watch television while she has to do all the work, (because that is how things are)." They have to keep an appearance of being in compliance with the dominant social standards because openly deviating from them can be disastrous.

Adopting this method of problem solving, they not only succeed in maintaining the family harmony but manage to advance in their career as well. They also try to create a win-win situation by stretching out their effort levels and demanding support from their families as the reciprocation for the compromises and concessions they make over various issues.

Risk Taking

In contrast with the diplomatic approach, women have to be explicitly decisive and proactive as well, when it comes to take some step in the direction of their professional goals.

This decisive risk taking is important in two ways. One: they have to take some real step if they want professional advancement. Two: this behavior makes their family members realize how committed they are with their goals and that they are not going to be turned down easily. This observation is also highlighted by Williams and Dempsey (2018) that risk taking behavior makes women prove not only to themselves but to the people around that they are committed and capable. However, this risk taking is moderated by the various compromises and concessions that these women make in their family life.

Stretching the Effort Levels

Another most common way of dealing with the double role demands is stretching the effort levels. One of them talked about her daily routine as follows:

"My routine used to be to get up at six in the morning, getting the children ready for school. Dropping them to school and husband to his office, coming back, getting ready myself and going to my job. Then coming back at noon and picking up children from the school. Then in the afternoon taking children to sport along with husband and then coming back finally in the evening. So, the whole day my foot used to be on the accelerator."

Elman and Gilbert (1984) discovered similar pattern of coping strategies in professional women in America. They found that a coping strategy named 'increased role behavior' was the most common in these women. Increased role behavior involved individual efforts to work out everything single handedly and making no demands for structural changes. In Pakistan's socio cultural context this strategy is fairly suitable and most of the time works well for career oriented women because its positive outcomes are more important to them than the physical stress involved in it.

The same explanation can be given for this stretching of efforts strategy, for professional women in Pakistan, where, provided the specific social context, it seems even more justified.

All these behavior manifestations; diplomatic strategies, proactive working on environment and stretching the effort levels, although are very practical in managing the dual role, do have some negative effects.

Diplomatic strategies, for example involve making compromises and maintaining a negotiating attitude. It also involves hiding one's true feelings and thoughts from the fear of explicit disapproval and such a situation may involve a lot of stress.

Another important point is related to stretching the effort levels, which according to Elmen and Gilbert (1984) is an individual based solution to problems created actually by the societal factors. Such personal solutions may work out things for individuals but may not bring about any change in the status of women as a whole, as long as no structural changes are made in society.

However, practically speaking, the diplomatic and middle ground solutions as well as attempts to reconcile home and work, made by successful professional women have set in motion a gradual process of

change. Women now are growing more conscious of what they are capable of beyond home and family. Slowly but steadily, the society is also accepting women in their new social roles. That is the reason now more women are pursuing higher education and professional careers in Pakistan than ever. Also, a gradual change is perhaps something more congruent with women's nature that another finding, in this study points to, which is delayed rewarding of efforts

Delayed Rewarding of Efforts

There is this one very important point: The delayed rewarding of efforts. This theme refers to the positive outcomes of successful career accomplishments of these women. A very pragmatic aspect of their earning has been that it allowed their families to enjoy better living standards for example they were able spend more on their children's health, education etc. Because of a sound professional status and significant contribution toward family, they also enjoy more authority than any non-working housewife would. However, these rewards and outcomes are not instantly attained. They involve a long and laborious process, but to these women they prove that in spite of all the difficulties, their efforts have been fruitful.

One important question that emerges here is why do most of the professional women resort to such laborious middle ground problem solving strategies rather than becoming confrontational with the social norms they find unjust? Why must they try so hard to maintain a balance in home and work by choosing a slower pace of career progress? There are two ways this question can be dealt with: either it is social pressure that does not allow women to explicitly revolt against the injustices as there are negative social repercussions involved, or the reason may be women's inherent nature that does not allow them do this despite their capabilities.

The later argument might well be supported by Stockard and Johnson (1979), who adopting a psychoanalytic approach suggest that women as such do not have any kind of need for dominance. This stems from the fact that because the primary caregiver is mother, daughters have a more secure sense of identity as compared with boys who have to detach from mother to identify with an already distant and aloof father for normal gender identity development. This makes boy's sense of identity insecure and unstable. Commenting on male dominance prevailing in the society they suggest that it happens to be an attempt to compensate for this insecurity and unstable gender identity and the 'glorification of masculinity' is in fact a strategy to

induce in males the process of developing their gender identity as men. Moreover, Horney (as cited in Stockard & Johnson, 1979) contends that men are afraid of women's procreative abilities and male dominance happens to be a reaction to this innate fear. Women on the other hand have no such innate insecurity and that is why they "do not have any need for greater glory as an inducement to be feminine" (Stockard & Johnson, 1979). They support this argument by referring to the fact that feminists' ideal societies do not envision women as dominant over men, instead what they idealize are egalitarian relations between the two genders.

So this argument may explain the fact that women do not adopt an explicitly confrontational approach as an immediate remedy to their problems and superficially acquiesce with male dominance not to threaten the 'male ego' directly.

However, a constant attempt to devalue women even if it is the result of a male strategy to overcome their own insecurity apparently does seem to have an effect. It may act as a self-fulfilling prophecy. The continuous effort to undermine feminine capacities can actually result in dissatisfaction and doubts in women regarding their sense of self and identity. So, they eventually may turn in to aggressive, achievement oriented 'masculine females', thus becoming actually controlled by male norms by following the ideals of independence and autonomy instead of concern and cooperation. This must be noted that they might just be following the standards projected by males, directed to serving the male ego, thus diminishing femininity.

We must, however, should not make a rigid split between qualities of men and women, women do have a need for an individual identity as much as men have relatedness in their nature. The modes of fulfilling these needs however, can be different and it is required that we develop an understanding and appreciation of these differences.

Limitations and Suggestions

In the present research, only the women from academia have been interviewed and studied. For many reasons, academia is perhaps a much more practical field of work for married professional women with families due to relatively flexible work hours and creative nature of work. Had the professional women from other fields been included, the degree and extent of the work-family conflict might have turned out differently.

Future research must explore how women conceptualize success and satisfaction incorporating both the professional and family life. The effect of increasing professional opportunities, increased financial needs and an overall pressure of improving living standards must also be incorporated into the studies on work-family balance among women. Comparative studies of women in professions other than academia must also be conducted. Lastly, Objective personality measures can also be used to discover successful professional women's personality characteristics.

Implications

On the basis of present study's findings, awareness can be increased about women's right of self-realization, and this can be made possible by promoting education about changing the stereotypic attitudes.

Organizational support policies for women with families such as flextime, lactation rooms and day care should given serious consideration. Increasing the remuneration for day care services would also be helpful in this regard.

Men should be educated regarding not only the rights of their daughters' and wives' to financial and social empowerment but also regarding the benefits that the financial and social empowerment of their female counterparts would bring to them. Moreover, as also emphasized by Rottenberg (2017) once the procedure of maintaining work-family balance by women in higher organizational positions is revealed, it may work as a motivating force for aspiring young women professionals that this balance is not impossible to achieve.

Conclusion

The goal of the present study was to trace the track followed by successful professional women in academia. The findings can prove insightful for the aspiring and struggling professional women who want success not only in their career but in terms of family life as well. The findings can be concluded in the form of a process that professionally successful women seem to have followed: it appears that internal motivation for individuation and personal achievement, when confronted with the male dominating and stereotypic social beliefs and attitudes, makes the professional women wear a mask of

being in compliance with the dominant social norm. They make use of various peaceful middle ground solutions then, that would not only ensure their survival in the current social system but would also allow them enough space to move in the direction of their professional goals, though at a slower pace.

Having worked hard, making compromises, taking risks and undergoing a lot of stress in relationships, successful professional women end up having an empowered position both in family and profession. One very important aspect discovered about women's natural tendency is their seemingly inherent concern for their families and children that makes women resort to a compromising approach to problems and delayed rewarding of efforts.

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