

Barriers and Obstacles Faced by Working Females of Balochistan on the Part of Customs and Government: A Phenomenological Qualitative Approach

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Abstract: Female at the top of managerial hierarchy is less as compared to male throughout the world. in the same manner Balochistan cannot be ignored. Balochistan is severely dominated by male chauvinism and is a patriarchal society with that women face restrictions or hurdles while heading to top managerial positions or career. In addition, literacy is showing positive indicators, effective efforts from incumbent government, awareness, social media; main-media women at work places and top positions are being accepted. There is much activism and dynamism throughout the country. The sole aim of the study to discern women practices, experiences, obstacles, and relevant challenges. This study is qualitative in nature. With that, it is based on phenomenology approach. The sample for the paper collected from field of education, literate women and working women in different organizations. The paper finds out that recognition of women at the managerial level is recognized.

For the study three main themes emerged from the study, first, obstacle confronted by working females of Balochistan, second, with that their experiences at work places and third, what role played by the government and how the existing issues or conundrum can be resolved with the help of the government of Pakistan and the society at large.

Keywords: Managerial hierarchy, Patriarchal, Diversification, Pakistan, female, working women, barriers, government of Pakistan.

1. INTRODUCTION

When it comes to gender equality Pakistan Gender Index is very the lowest, it is 241 out 142. We cannot shun the fact the gender equality indicator of Pakistan is the lowest. Pakistan's population is 210 million (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2018). Being part of ultra-religious and male dominated society, it is not conducive for women to reach at a managerial level. Not only women are facing inequality, violence, subjugation and humiliation, but also, they are deliberately and knowingly ignored. Additionally, Pakistan is tagged as one of the worst countries for women in the world (Reuters, 2011). Recent findings show that man population outnumbered women. The population of women decreased by 1pc (UNWOMEN, 2018). With that Pakistan is

a signatory of many international key Conventions and charters focusing women and its equal rights. Domestically, it passed bills related to Gender Equality Policy Frameworks and Women's Empowerment, National Policy for Development and Empowerment of Women, a National Plan of Action on Human Rights, Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplaces. In the same way, Balochistan

cannot be ignore in the context of Pakistan in particular and world in general.

There are women in Balochistan despite of being on key positions are facing issues and challenges on their workplaces. With that, the male dominancy in their offices, institutions and organization could not minimize their strength and courage to adhere to their work. in the same manner, women in such positions are not accepted and tolerated by male subordinates and lower staff. (Nazir, 2018). When it comes to labor force of women in Balochitan it is lowest in the country as compared to other provinces and it is lowest in the world as well (Statistics, 2016). The world Bank presented a different and lamenting picture of the scenario of Balochistan the average value of Balochistan from 1999 to 2017 was 10 percent hitting a minimum of 9.5 percent in 1995 and a maximum of 11.93 percent in 2017 (bank, 2017).

1.1 Objectives of the Study:

1. To find out involvement and experiences of women working at a managerial position of Balochistan's women
2. Exploring obstacles or prejudicial attitude met by them. To probe behavior biasness towards high rank

female official. And to gain recommendation finding new ways for other women in Balochistan.

1.2 Research Questions:

1. What obstacles met by women Balochistan key position holders and rank file during course of work?
2. What are experience on reaching at top position?
3. Is there any prejudicial behavior on the part of Government?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

It has been noted that researches related to women leadership and management have seen a boost. A phenomenon of paucity of at managerial chairs is also depicted from these findings. In the same way women in institutions and organization are occupying middle hierarchy jobs and facing discrimination to reach at the top (Grave, 2003). There are many obstacles in front of women. There are tangible behavioral bottlenecks faced by women seconded by several findings such as Catalyst (2005) pointed finger that instead of occupying almost half of different management positions, women only constitute about 2% of Fortune 500 CEO positions. According to many other findings and research work it is perceived that behavior and temperament towards women managers is not positive. Similarly, a behavioral study conducted in America and founded that for the last two decades attitude towards female managers has been modified and improved (Moore, 1966). Coupled with, same sort of study conduct in China and Far-East replicated same results as it was carried out, revealed that men reflected elicit attitude towards women managers when it correlated with female responses (Comer, 2002). By the same token, Middle East is a region where females are facing stereotyping and male domination when compared to other countries of the world. To add, some progress and betterment to assent female role as manager (Abdullah, 1997). A comparative study is conducted by researchers of Pakistan and Turkey jointly in 1996 and tried to draw similarity and difference of attitudes toward female's manager. It was concluded at the end of the study that the behavior of Pakistani focusing female managers more positive than Turkish people (Guney, 1996). A recent study is conducted by Batool & Tahir (2016) on attitude towards female managers in Pakistan. furthermore, it finds by the study that there are various bottlenecks confronted by female at managerial positions but the attitude directed to female is acceptable and well endorsed. In the same token, there are several other findings that women confront behavioral impediment in advancement in career development. With that perspective to women, reaching at managerial position is adverse and gender biased.

The issue and challenges in the world for female work force are large enough and they are facing plethora of problems when it comes to working people in different sector. In the Middle East the social fabric is changing and policies are also in favor of working women but the

participation of female workers is very low. It cannot be denied that there is talent and intelligence but the share of women in labour force is very less as compared to women (Muhtaseb, 2017). Similarly, In Saudi Arabia females do not have much support and advantage as men have had due to ultra-conservative society and norms of the country and severely dominated by men. With that the trend in Saudi Arabia is on the verge of change and Government changing its perception regarding female workers (Hakem, 2017). In the very same fashion, a name of fames and dignity, Forbes has mentioned that the women in their work places are not treated equally. They are paid less as compared to men, with that their social status is less. Female are tagged as sisterhood in their workplaces which give them sense of sympathy and empathy. In the same way they are confronting the issue of generating less benefits and revenue for the organizations. to add women are less confident, speak less at their work places. Furthermore they are less involved in the process of decision making in organization in the modern world though (Council, 2018).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design and population

Research design is well defined it is procedure or strategy or modus operandi for finding and collecting data for answering the research questions raised during the course of research (Schumacher, 1993). The first very step before research method, it is required to get world prospective about the topic a researcher intended to talk about and want to draw conclusions. To add such bird view is called doctrine of paradigm ranging from post-positivism, positivism to constructivism. Prior to choosing a specific procedure it will be a leg up for researcher to figure out specific assumptions or suppositions. This study is based on positive and constructive philosophical which declare that truth and reality is a social construction by comprehensive analysis with the support of respondents. In addition, when die is cast about modus operandi or paradigm essence of the subject and study were fresh in mind. Consistent with the constructivism paradigm, the study utilized qualitative methodology and adopted the phenomenology method (Creswell, 1998). While conducting the study phenomenology concentrated on the nature of practices or experiences of distinct phenomena and study. For gaining data and insight of the respondents a questionnaire was developed which was the tool for getting study done. Hence, during the course of interviews questions were asked out of designed question for getting additional answers.

3.2 Inclusion Criteria

The unique purposive criteria for the selection of the ten participants will include: (a) the females or working women in Blochistan on key positions in Public and private sector (b) those women who are on managerial position in public administration in Balochistan (c) those who are willing to participate in the study on a voluntary basis.

3.3 Sampling Technique

The purposive sampling method based on the convenience was employed for this study.

3.4 Sampling size

The population for this study is all women key position holders at workplaces, managerial position holders and those working on executive positions. To add, it is hard to determine real number of the population and on researching real number of managerial position female workers could not be defined. For this study, sample was collected from educationist, social scientists, universities and banking sector of Balochistan and non-probability purposive method of sampling was adopted. Ten female workers on managerial and key positions from Balochistan, Pakistan

3.5 Data Collection tool & Technique

Semi-structured in-depth phenomenological interviews was conducted with research participants.

3.6 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis technique was used to analyse the data.

4. FINDING OF THE STUDY

4.1.1 Theme 1: Obstacles and experiences female workers in Balochistan

The first theme came up from the data that women face barricade that are familial, cultural, and organizations. Familial barricade involves looking after family and no working permission after marriage. Many Pakistani families go after that custom that men should be involved in earning process and females work is that stay at home and take care of family. In the same, a lot of Pakistani gents do not in favor of going out home and doing job in somewhere else. Culture barrier involve gender segregation which brings hardship that females cannot travel alone and cannot stay late at work. The nikab also create problems such as; in training program seminars etc... The organizational barricade is root of gender of inequality held by male managers. The same organizations are also afraid of putting their money on women's career development because of female short career due to marriage and other issues. As a whole these barricades decrease female's opportunities and readiness to take managerial seats. Which is the cause of short number of women to go on higher positions. Many respondents told that barriers exist for women but they also accept barricade for women in the country slowly reducing. Some of general answers are given below,

“You are aware of the Pakistani culture. Everywhere women are facing hurdles such as; in family, public places, classroom, offices and many more. Female now should have to be powerful enough to avoid such hardship and such behavior. They have to show their full power.”

“I know numerous talented women colloque they were exceptional in education, but their marriages put an end or big break in their careers.”

“If a woman qualifies for managerial post, beside this the organization is afraid of handing over the managerial position. This is due to the less confidence on women and their commitment toward organization.”

“Nikab (parda) was considered a huge hurdle a decade ago, but now its concept reducing because many females with nikab now a days achieving a managerial position.”

A respondent included, *“My experience as being a women and holding such lucrative position are good and worth sharing. Female are respected and given weightage at their work places. Male dominancy exists it can't be ignored but for female environment is suitable. The experience with the colleagues, staff, lower staff are outstanding and quite retrospective, not for the time being those who left the department of education practices with them are still fresh and they give respect to women in general and head particular”*

There is diversity of opinion among women about their experience and barriers they met in the work places. Due to strong male dominated society they used to hide their bad experience and subjugation at work places. Their experiences are full of obstacles in a male dominated society. .. women are in chains everywhere Pakistan is not the only country, women are facing social, economic, cultural, academic segregation and gender discrimination. Yes, there are many realities on the ground. Women are facing barriers in some context in social, economic and educational context. This exists in our society. Over here in my department and university I did not met any barrier or obstacle. But when it comes to enrollment in the department girls are less enrolled than boys. I face some basic barriers these are based on human nature I cannot relate them to my gender.

According to the respondent, it seems everything good from external word and they are not facing any issue or barrier from the outside but it is not reality. Due to their less number and custom barriers, they met number of issues not admitted in public and research works.

4.1.2 Theme 2: Acceptance Female Workers

Second theme, which come up from data that shows in recent time female are accepted as workers in Pakistan in a great extent. In respondents views female workers and rank files are treated as managers by employees and they have behaviors toward women managers. In addition, there was a big barrier for women as managerial post few years ago, but now female managers and female worker acceptance increasing. There are also indications that junior workers

think that women managers are more superior, hardworking, and intelligent than male managers.

Furthermore, the organizations also harvest the profit of having women as managers because females create a better environment for working. Female workers are also better in coping up with difficult customers and selling ideas. There are still many barriers to accept women as managers from top managers or male managers. Some of the responses are below,

“The society has become liberal now. Females are working everywhere even in top managerial posts.”
“As a woman I have been working but I have never faced a problem. Females as managers are more respected.”

“However a female get a managerial post, definitely there will be no problem from the subordinates or customers. But top managers or same grade employees may show negativity toward organization. Women managers.”

Male managers considered female managers as a problem creator. This sometime creates disharmony and tension in public reaction is alluring and encouraging. Their self-respect further motivates me. Due to lack of tolerance and education people come from different backgrounds. So, they might lack to react according to norms and values but it does not mean they willingly or intentionally do this. Those who are familiar to such environment they give respect. When women come to me, they get inspired to me and want their offspring to be on such positions.

Women at working places in Balochistan are widely accepted and endorsed by their male coworkers at work places and a lot of homage is paid to them according to respondents but according to respondent Shadri Baloch male dominance cannot be ignored at this level. As a woman and having such a position my experiences are quite interesting to share. Females are respected in their work place. Male dominance as well cannot be neglected, but I can say the environment is quite well for female to work. I have good experiences working with subordinates and colleagues, even though I have good and fresh experience with those who left the department. They respected women in general as well as a head.

This is a natural phenomenon that women at their work also seek respect from public as well. This is evident from the responses of the workers of Balochistan that their cultural, custom domain force them to abide strict rules of the society and females are highly respected at their work places.

Public reaction is good and encouraging. Their reaction and respect encourage me. There are also people with lack of education and training they may react according

to their norms and ethics, but I do not say they do this knowingly. People who are familiar with such environment they respect me. Actually, females mostly inspire me and want their kin to get such position.

How experiences of women can be improved, this is a big deal and different respondents responded according to their perception and level of knowledge. When inquired how experience of female workers in Balochistan can be improved if they confront or face unfavorable conditions. When there is equality, peace and acceptance for female workers in Balochistan. According to a respondent.

These practices can be improved when they are provided equal level playing field to compete, work, develop and grow. Their experience can be better when they are encouraged. When there is a suitable environment for female workers and managerial positions.

A place where male is dominant, people are jealous there. I also feel some sort of discrimination. Yes they are being discriminated on gender and position. This is happening due to the social education. The females' strength in male dominance society are not accepted. Women need some space..

“These blockades can be erased by education people and by promoting self-respect for women when it is inculcated to them through formal and informal education. Modern world has eliminated its barriers we can replicate policies by giving women independence. The government has to take many initiatives. Women are outnumbered by men in work places especially of key positions. So, when jobs are equally distributed among them then the chances of women in departments will halt. The media and intellectuals can also play their role”.

“Top rank official women are not accepted by external environment yet we are new to them. In addition, we can not blink the fact that governments lack policies, and implementation for motivating and inspiring women for attaining key positions. It will not be wrong if I say government is serious with this segment of society for improving. It can not be ignoring that government is dominated by males. Ye mana hoga government mardon ki hay.

4.1.3 Theme 3: Government Role and Eradication of Issues

The role of the government in development and curbing male dominance in the work places has been minimum at work places. There are several factors that women those who are working in government sector do not point finger at Government policies directly and they show a bright picture of the policies and laws from their side. However, there are loopholes existing. One of the respondents Nazia Baloch admitted that

“ Government should prove in advertising the post not preferring more for male while an area where female can work more effectively. It should initiate a rule of equal opportunity equal justice and this way government can play a crucial role whether its health sector education, and other.”

There are other factors that government has to cope with not only the issue of gender personation at work places, but also the opportunities for the women are minimum with equality and dignity. It was included by are respondent in a vague and unclear why but it meaning can easily be deciphered.

“When every organization give equal opportunity to male and female, I guess government schools in my district should shuffle the work of employees to work together, while those organization where discrimination is occurring should be checked and monitored and find out the reasons and work to eradicate it.

On asking the respondents how the issue can be resolved and eradicated if the conundrum exists. Sole solution of eradication of these hurdles or barriers through education, development of respecting working females at home, promoting social values, including these rules part of service structure as well. The media has a giant role to play in the eradication of eradication of issues. One of the respondent admitted

“These problems can be eliminated through education. Women should be taught about self-respect through formal and informal education. New world eradicated their problems. We can copy their plan and implement them. Government needs to do a lot. The quota for selection should be same in this context department would be lame if females are denied. Educated people and media can also play role.

The part of government in resolving issues related to female at work place is immense and paramount. And the role of government according to different respondents varies from person to person interviewed in this study. Some says government is growing women workforce and some replied government is avoiding women workforce and their needs at work places. There are number of initiatives, which can erase this e.g. education, allocation for resources for women and an equal ground for all. By educating male dominancy, by creating awareness through media and social media. When kids are brought up without discriminating among them then definitely the menace of discrimination with women.

Government can play a huge role by implementing is drafted policies and creating new policies. This period is nurturing period for women workforce. They must be inducted in each field. There are some areas where women

gain no entrance. Government must provide them help for getting into such fields.

Due to lack of resources, women feel there is inequality. Yes, government is not providing equal playing field to women and quota for women is very less. I would like to add the government is also compelled by various forces and these forces are need to me considered. I want to add that we are on the lowest on the list rank of gender equality index. So, it means government is practicing inequality and biasness. So, government is adding fuel to the fire by ignoring the issue. They should be given opportunity to get proper training and given reward in terms of appreciation and should be given subjects to teach to get more practice as they think they have a qualified background which is difficult for students and management to experience.

4.2 Ethical consideration:

This is matter of fact that Baluchistan is Male dominant. While conducting this study there are several things to be considered. One of the fact is women in Balochistan is highly respected and while conducting this study there are several factors, norms, values and protocols to be considered and noted for the conducting this study. In a society where education condition is good. And only a minimum number of women is working in closed or blocked society. Gaining access to them was an issue while conducting this study. They problem of unfamiliarity also exist and those who were not familiar are not part of the study. Due to harsh social values further probing and social taboos remained untouched due to social values and respect. All participants will be informed that their participation in the study is voluntary. All data will collect in this study will be kept confidential to protect the identity of participant. Risk and benefits factor will also be told. Participant will also assure that they can withdraw at any point of research.

4.3 Recommendations

Recommendation are given bellow drew from this study.

- Institutions should create conducive and suitable surrounding for the females working on managerial positions or high rank.
- The government should draft and implement policies for women working on such positions.
- A level playing field should be provided to females in every field.
- Women those who are working on the such position should kick start such initiatives for guidance and development of other females willing to make career.
- Those who are working on such position their positive image should be further represented through mass media and social media.
- In the same way, uniqueness and diversification of such managerial women should be transferred to deprived segments of society for their motivation.

- Resources human as well as financial can be allocated for making laws.
- The incumbent government should also play its part by implementing policies and better milieu for women.
- Civil societies, charismatic figures, NGOs and universities should play their role for improving concise of the society.

4.4 Discussion

The study presents a mild picture of female workers condition in Balochistan and addressed the question of “ what obstacles and barriers confronted by them on the part of custom and government of Balochistan Pakistan? The further extension of this related question or topic is “What Female workers experienced at their work place and how sense of discrimination and biasness exists on the part of Society, male co-workers and Government.?”

It is crucial to add the study was conducted in a far-flung area of Balochistan, a Province of Pakistan which is severely marginalized and impoverished as compared with other provinces of the country. This study revealed shocking and some extent neutral finding. In the same fashion during the course of study, the world presented a bright picture in this context of female workers. The modern world has made remarkable progress and employed state-of-art policies to give liberty and independence to females. On comparison Balochistan with worldview it become evident that the norms, values and custom has took a paradigm shift. But while conducting this study it became crystal clear that there are many countries in Middle East, Africa, and Asia scuffled with the very same issue. There are several study conducted in this regard for elaboration of the phenomenon in the world theories e.g. organizational constraint theory, number theory, theory of congruity and theory of gate-keeper elaborate the involvement of female at managerial level and obstacles confronted by female workers. For instance, the theory of congruity, it is perceived that quality of leadership is rest in the hand of men and female are given a minor role to play in this domain. The second focused theory is number focusing the numerical value of women is subdued by male hegemony (Kanter, 1977). This further elaborated that female are face inequality to due being less in numbers with that their capacity of work is wrongly interpreted by male outnumbering at workplaces (Swim,2001).

5. CONCLUSION

The study was carried out to gain a bright picture or insight into the issue or conundrum of female workers in Balochistan., what obstacles and barriers they are facing at their workplace, how they are experiencing the work environment around them and what is the role of Government in eradication of the issue if existing in reality. The conclusion for the study is based on the data, keeping text in the mind. In conclusion, working women in Balochistan confront social-cum-family, custom and work

place impediments which curb opportunities which minimizing the chances to chair the highest position. It is also important that not only women of Balochistan are facing severe challenges but also securing success and working at key positions and playing their role in development of the country. The rate of acceptance female at key positions, colleagues and subordinates is high now-a-day in Balochistan. in a nutshell, these findings reveal improvement in Balochistani job market in general and social sector in particular. To add, there is a giant bunch of issues that women workers are coming across not only in workplaces but also in daily life routine as well.

During the study it became clear that barriers of women for working and being source of family income and support in Balochistan is increasing day by day and the society, customs, values and male dominancy paving way for deprived females to gain entry and obstacles are reducing by and large. During the course of study, it was founded that the image of the province Balochistan is deliberately eclipsed due to lack of sources they are not getting into services, and workplaces. In contrast, the society is diverse and some challenges still exist in the state. The glaring obstacles are poverty, less opportunities, lack of education, cultural barriers, and early marriages are impeding the progress. In the same way, the geography or terrain of Balohcistan is hard it also add in difficulties to female workers in travelling and gaining access to other opportunities. The same organizations are also afraid of putting their money on women’s career development.

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