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Conflicting Role Demands: Work–family Balance and Daily Life Coping Strategies Employed by Pakistani Female Army Doctors Posted at Military Hospital, Rawalpindi

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Abstract: *The article focuses on the conflicting role demands of female army doctors and their coping strategies to manage the pressure. From this research, it should be clear that working women face challenges because in Pakistani society it is difficult for women to do a job but still majority of women present who work. These working women face difficulties in managing their work–life. Previous literature indicates that women face hurdles due to their multiple roles in society. The army job is more demanding as compared to others and due to higher demand of this job, women face many problems. To cope with conflicting roles they use different strategies to manage their work and family pressure. Some female doctors use gifts to reduce their problems, some arranged multiple gatherings in their free time to manage the pressure, and some facilitate their families with their wages to continue their job efficiently.*

Key Words: Working Women, Conflicting Role Demands, Coping Strategies, Female Army Doctors

Introduction

The role of women was linked with everyday household work. Few women get permission for getting an education but just for the primary level. With time this trend was changed and the importance of female education also increased. This change brings the role of women in the working place as well (Delina, 2013). There is also an anthropological perspective on working women. In hunter and gatherer societies, the

egalitarian system was more prevalent and there was no concept of a hierarchy based on status. Their tasks were divided between men and women based on the ability and responsibility of people (Reiter, 1978). Then the concept of capitalism came into existence and it changes the concept of work and it forces women to stay in their houses and take care of their children because if they go outside for work then they need a caretaker for their children. The wages of

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women are also very low then their all salary compensates for new expenses. Then feminism arose and it helps to revive the old concept of working women (Wijethunga, 2021).

At present time, the rate of education is increasing for men as well as for women. In 2006, the literacy rate of Pakistan was 54.15% (67.65% male, and 39.61% female) whereas, in 2019, the literacy rate was 58% (then 46.49% for women and 69.29% for men) (O'Neill, 2022). An increase in literacy rate is leading to an increase in the working role of females. In the present era, many women go into the working domain and earn money (Wijethunga, 2021). Women do jobs in the marketplace but still have to face patriarchal contrast. They are dissatisfied with their job due to their low income and the environment in the workplace. There are very few good opportunities for women in jobs and businesses. Women have a double burden when they step into the field of practical life because they have primary duties with their professional duties as well, which leads to dissatisfaction among women (Pervez, 2015).

From a worldwide perspective, women also play a vital role in the field of the army. In the past time, only men get their job in the army and there was no role or demand for females. This thing happened because at that time the role of the army was just linked with the war. The two major wars (World War I and World War II) became the reason for the entry of women into the field of the army. In these wars, many soldiers were injured and army hired the female nurses for their fulltime care. After this field, women get jobs in the many fields of the army (Nuciari, 2012). In 1947, when Pakistan came into its existence, women started to serve in the army. Women get the duties 2 in the military logistics, staff, and senior administrated officers as well in the regional and central headquarters (Zulfiqar, 2022).

This study focuses on female army doctors because there is a concept that women did their

medical degrees for the sake of a good marriage partner. Many women quit their carrier after their marriage. In previous research, there was a huge difference between female medical students and female medical practitioners. Many female students get admission to the MBBS but after completing the degree we can only find out a minority of female doctors in the practical field (Mohsin, 2020).

This research article is important because it comes up with a new dimension and has worth adding up to the literature. It focuses on the female army doctors, their struggles, and their coping strategies to manage the pressure that produces due to the conflicting role demands. It elaborates the requirements and demands for the job of female army doctors in the military hospital. It also gives the perspective of the family members of female army doctors regarding the military hospital. After reading the whole research you should be able to understand the conflicting role demands that are faced by female army doctors and their coping strategies to manage the pressure.

Literature Review

Role Conflict Theory

The role conflict theory is used in this research. This theory has a solid base in sociological theory. The role is a behavior of an individual in a particular setting. Conflict arises when a person occupies a variety of roles in their life (Saher, 2014). This study also focuses on the conflicting roles of female army doctors then this theory best suits this particular research.

Working Women

In the previous time, society connects women with just household work. Few women had access to get an education. Being a married woman, the concept of working women was limited to mother duties, kitchen work, and some other responsibilities. There was no concept of

women that go outside the house for work and earn their own money. With time, the role of women has changed throughout the world due to the changing conditions of economic and social life. Due to these changing conditions, society demands education and work from women as well. Now, women have more burden as compared to the previous time. The majority of women get educated and go outside for the job but their primary duties are also connected to them. With a job they also take part in household work. Working women have responsibilities to manage and resolve multiple problems in the house as well as in the workplace. They perform their incompatible roles and those women who balance their working life and personal life are simultaneously considered in the category of perfection, but it is very hard for women to balance it (Delina, 2013). There is also an anthropological perspective on working women that gives another perception regarding the concept of women in the domain of work. According to them, women were in the domain of work previously. In the past, there was an egalitarian system that exist in the prevalent form and these societies were the hunting and gathering societies. In these hunting and gathering societies, men go for the hunt, and women gather their food. These roles were divided based on their ability to do work. The gathering role was given to women due to the responsibilities of motherhood or reproduction on women. There was no concept of higher and lower status in the past era (Reiter, 1978). Capitalism itself creates the concept of private authority and private ownership which leads to the hierarchy within the society between the same and opposite genders. This concept removes the women from the public domain and they were just able to stay in their houses. There was no more work for women in the public sector and they were exploited in labor. Women did not get any good jobs and if they get then their wages were very low as compared to men even though they were equally working with

men. According to feminist sociologists, women were not just the primary mothers in the future they take part in different kinds of public work sectors. Then the time which women were rejoining the public domain and found space in it (Wijethunga, 2021).

Field of Doctor

In the field of doctorate, we can see doctors of both genders. Their duties vary from situation to situation and satisfaction and dissatisfaction also vary among them. In some hospitals, both genders were satisfied with their job, and in another hospital, one gender was satisfied and the other dissatisfied with it. If doctors are dissatisfied and have a lot of stress, it affects the quality of care and their relationship with co-workers also depends on it. The debate on satisfaction and dissatisfaction is more complex because these things have different variables and maybe one person is satisfied with some variables but dissatisfied with others. In most cases, it is noted that female doctors were dissatisfied with their job due to their marriage and increasing responsibilities. They face different kinds of challenges while doing the job of a doctor and challenges force them to show no satisfaction. This dissatisfaction leads to stress and their action regarding their patients also vary (Ghazali, 2014). The demand for female doctors increased especially in those fields where the concept of the veil exists in the different religions. Most women demand female doctors in the field of gynecology as compared to men (Riaz, 2021).

Missing Doctors and Doctor Bride

In medical schools, we can find out that the percentage of female medical students is high but in the practical field the percentage of female doctors were low. There are different reasons but the main reason that comes in front of us is marriage and the term "doctor bride" means that after marriage female left their practical life and give their full time to their new family. Their in-

laws and husband force them to quit their professional life. It is known that the duty of every doctor was very tough and their duty timings also shuffle like some days in the morning, some days in the evening, and also for the whole night. They also have responsibilities to manage the whole family and in some cases, if women do not be able to manage their professional and personal life together then the leading authority gives the order to quit their job and manage the house properly (Mohsin, 2020). The issues of Pakistani female doctors are termed as the doctor bride and the main issue is that the parents prefer to make their daughters a doctor because they consider that it is a good investment for their daughter's future. Pakistani society considers the doctor as a status and due to this perception females do their medical degree for the betterment of their future because male families want a doctor bahu (daughter-in-law) to increase their status in their family. This perception leads to a higher variation between female medical students and female medical practitioners (Masood, 2018)

Conflicting Role Demands

The influence of modern organization on the local economy of Pakistan creates job opportunities for women. It creates an egalitarian system and this modification in the economic system has a major impact on the lifestyle of women who lived in urban areas. This transformation in society demands women's conflicting roles, then women split their roles into different personalities (Saher, 2014). Work and family demand separate roles and it is difficult for an individual to manage them. (Kossek, 1998) Married working women face more conflicting roles because they play the role of wives, mothers, homemakers, and employees as well. These multiple roles create conflicting roles among women. They need family support and a supportive organization to manage their roles (Ahmed, 1995). Women play multiple roles and

every role is demand different kinds of attention to do that in the good possible way. One role that is perfectly played by women leads to the imperfection of the other one. These conflicting roles create pressure on women (Gani, 2010). Family demands the accomplishment of social norms whereas the organization demands free interaction within the organization. Women fulfill the expectations of their families and the expectations of an organization by making fictive kin relations with their male colleagues. Then they manage their roles without breaking their local social norms (Saher, 2014).

Women in the Military

Women have officially served in the Armed forces and play a very vital role in it. Military service has a tough environment and the duty of every man and woman is also very strict. Due to these conditions, women face psychological and physical difficulties. If women adjust to the environment and cope with every situation, the intensity of the stress was low. Women need training to adjust to sudden conditions (Gabbay, 1997). In the previous, the armed forces were considered a male society. Only men have permission to join the army and all job vacancies are just opened for men. This happened because society was directly linked with war at that time and did its defense on its own. All army jobs are just related to warfare. So, there was no role for women in the army. The two main occasions were World War I and World War II in which women get the role of nurse in the army. This profession is created because of the urgent need and these nurses take care of soldiers that were under attack during the war. It is the beginning of entering women in the field of the army (Nuciari, 2012).

Female Army Doctors

Women take part in different fields of the military and doctor is one of them. The satisfaction of doctors is more important in their

job because it is directly linked with the treatment and care of patients. Women need flexible working hours, commitments, and structured holidays to work with a peaceful mind. The Pak Army job is very challenging because it demands to be ready for any critical or sudden condition. They have tough tasks to perform and for this, their self-esteem should be high to perform tasks and duties in a very responsible way. Some factors that affect the efficiency of female doctors include age, gender, un-defined working hours, marital status, nature of responsibilities, sudden transfers, and attachment. Women understand their responsibilities and perform their duty honestly due to their satisfaction as army doctors (Maqbool, 2020).

Research Methodology

The qualitative research methodology was used in this research. This methodology is based on first-hand data collection. It is open-ended or unfolding research and the collected data are in the form of words and the results rely on the ongoing reality. The current research is issue-based, that is why the phenomenological approach is used in this particular research. It can contribute to policy-making by highlighting the issue that females face in the workplace in the military setups and how then the policy-making becomes inclusive of gender differences. The methods that used in this article is in-depth interviews and participant observation to collect the primary data. The purposive sampling technique was used in this study because this research focuses on only female army doctors. The locale of this research is MH Hospital, Rawalpindi. It is a military hospital and this research focuses on female army doctors then this is the best locale to find the military female doctors.

Discussion

The role conflict theory that I used in this particular research and the whole analysis is

related to this theory. Role conflict theory contains the concept that the individual has more than one role or a variety of roles. The multiple roles of an individual create conflict between each role. This research is according to the female army doctors and after the analysis of fieldwork, it should be clear that these doctors also face conflicting roles due to their household work and job. Both married and unmarried female army doctors face conflicting roles because every doctor is a daughter, sister, friend, mother, wife, daughter-in-law, and working woman as well. The unmarried female army doctors face challenges from their parents, siblings, and friends. They all want their time but due to their job, they will not be able to give proper time to their relations. The married female army doctors also face challenges from their husbands, in-laws, and their children side more as compared to their parents, siblings, and friends. Due to their married status, they have more roles in their lives. These female army doctors are satisfied and also dissatisfied with their jobs. Their satisfaction shows due to the facilities they get from the army and their dissatisfaction shows their constant duties in the hospital. Both married and unmarried FADs face challenges related to their night duties and relocation of their jobs. In Pakistani society, the thinking's of people not good related to the night shifts of females. This thing creates challenges between their life and their job. The multiple roles create conflicting role demands among female army doctors and it creates pressure on them. These female army doctors also use coping strategies to manage their pressure. According to the role conflict theory, female army doctors have multiple roles and due to these multiple roles, they face conflict among fulfilling the demands of each role which creates pressure on them. Therefore, this theory perfectly ensembles to this particular domain of research and according to the analysis of the fieldwork as well.

Conclusion

In the end, it concludes that working women are satisfied with their job due to some reasons but they are also dissatisfied for other reasons. This thing happened with the female army doctors as well. These FADs are satisfied with the privileges and facilities that the army gives them which include free army residential houses, plots, free medical, and good wages as well. They are also dissatisfied with the tough working routine. Female army doctors also face different kinds of challenges during their job. To handle the emergency, night duties, and relocation of their jobs are the main challenges they face. Women have multiple roles in their life and when they start a job then it is an addition of one more role in their life. Multiple roles create a conflict between every role. Both personal and professional roles are demanding and women need to fulfill the requirements of every role. The conflicting role demands faced by Female Army Doctors create pressure among them and they use different strategies to manage them. These

army doctors use the method of giving gifts to their in-laws and husband to make them happy. They also hire maids with their pay to resolve the problems of the household. Some army doctors spend their weekends just with their families to make them happy. They also arrange gatherings on weekends to fulfill the demands of their families, relatives, and friends. Therefore, it should be clear that every woman faces challenges when they go outside for work. As same, the army doctors also face challenges due to their higher job requirements and multiple roles. It also creates a conflict in the work-life balance but by using different coping strategies they will manage their job and their life as well.

The limitation of this research is that it just focuses on female army doctors. A further study was conducted by considering the conflicting roles of male army doctors as well. The other recommendation for further research is to add up the other female army members (Air Force, Navy) in research and find their lived experiences in maintaining the work-life conflicts.

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