

**Women Leadership and Performance in Gender Diverse Groups: Evidence
from Pakistan**



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ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study on women leaders in Pakistan and their lived experiences in the corporate world. It aims to examine the influence of different factors such as stereotypes, emotions and other socio-cultural factors that create an impact on women leader experiences, especially in the context of gender diverse groups. Qualitative methodology was adopted for this study. Therefore, data was collected by conducting interviews, which were semi-structured in nature. 16 participants were collected through criterion and snowball sampling techniques. Thematic analysis technique was used for the analysis of interview data. In the results of the study, the participants reported that gender stereotypes do have been a part of their lives since they were very young. Media and culture play a very strong role in creating a negative view of working women, so the participants reported that gender stereotypes effected their performance in their early years of their work. They are still aware of gender stereotypes around them, but, because of so much exposure to them, they have developed resilience against it. Participants reported that their productivity did not differ much based-on gender composition of their teams, but they were more efficient and confident Leaders when surrounded with more males compared to females. It was also found that they were fine with showing assertiveness in decision making situations, but they were careful to do so in a polite, non-aggressive way. Their willingness to lead also did not differ based on the gender composition of the group. The problem-solving techniques of the participants involved feedback and collaboration with team members, regardless of gender. Participants reported that they are more emotional than their male counterparts, in terms of decision making in organizations as well. Their decision making and leadership capabilities cannot be done without the involvement of emotions. Several participants highlighted the importance of emotional regulation for women to keep emotions at bay.

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Chapter 01

1 Introduction

This chapter gives the introduction to the study, while also giving a background on the concepts being explored. It introduces the research questions, objectives, and the format of the rest of the thesis.

Contemporary times have witnessed tremendous changes in the leadership and organization dynamics. One of the key changes is the burgeoning number of women in the workforce in recent years. Leadership and gender were not studied together up until the 1970s, when women started entering the workforce. It gave way to researches which studied women as leaders. Due recognition to this phenomenon demands considerable attention towards how this would impact the organizations (Lemoine, Aggarwal, & Steed, 2016). But stereotypes that still exist regarding women leadership, play a role in holding women back from their potential (Arvate, Galilea, & Todescat, 2018; Crites, Dickson, & Lorenz, 2015; Derks, Ellemers, Van Laar, & De Groot, 2011; Heilman, 2012; Hill, Miller, Benson, & Handley, 2016; Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011; Zheng, Kark, & Meister, 2018). As more and more women in the workforce increase, the nature of challenges that now organizations have to face also continue to change. More women than ever have been entering the workforce which allows them to have successful and fulfilling careers, particularly when it comes to leadership (Activities, 2015; Schock, Gruber, Scherndl, & Ortner, 2019). Women are the largest gender group that have received university degrees. This equal opportunity for education and qualifications has helped erase many of the challenges once women faced in pursuing their careers (Bongaarts, 2016). When it comes to the corporate world, the male gender has always been in the leading role in terms of power and authority (Heward-Belle, 2017). However, as the situation for working women becomes better, still they lag behind men in terms of leadership positions. When it comes to working women, they have different circumstances and complications than that of men. They have problems in career planning, in managing family responsibilities and work responsibilities and fulfilling more expectations expected from than their male counterparts, even with the same qualifications (Ussher, Roche, & Cable, 2016). These “social identity contingencies” are the stereotypes associated with the social identity in a certain setting that creates pressure on women and can give way to their underrepresentation (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016). The

female gender has always faced such barriers when she wants to hold positions that men have. These barriers are not always placed by men but also sometimes by other women themselves (Arvate et al., 2018). This gender bias is unconsciously also embedded in our Pakistani culture. Existing research sheds light on it by showing how traditionally, it was assumed that women would exhibit their innate roles of kindness and warmth, while men would engage in the leading roles and would show the masculine traits such as assertiveness (Eagly & Wood, 2013).

Therefore, this study aims to understand the barriers faced by women leaders. Specifically, how do these women leaders, keeping in mind the complexities regarding their gender, navigate being a leader in an organization. In this study, however, we take a skeptic approach since recently more women are taking up the leadership roles in organizations (Chyu et al., 2021). Therefore, the traditional gender associated roles and their function in women's organizational performance might not stand true in relation to performance of women, whilst working at leadership positions. Researching this complex reality is worthwhile at two levels. First, it would contribute in understanding the dynamics of how gender composition might affect the group's performance, when the gender of the leader is placed center staged; and second, how a leader's gender impacts his/her leadership ability. This study would fulfil this gap in the existing research on leadership in organizations as identified by (Lemoine et al., 2016).

The significance of this research therefore is that it explores challenges faced by leading women in an organizational environment, especially when they are leading gender diverse groups. By focusing on this, this research aims to create awareness about workplace culture and how it can impact working women.

1.1 Research Gap:

There are certain stereotypes attached to working women. Research has given less attention how these stereotypes effect the performance of women who are in leadership position, specifically taking into consideration the group gender composition. It is not very clear by the literature that how can group gender composition influence a women's leadership abilities (Chen & Houser, 2019).

When women work in gender diverse settings, the gender composition of the group can influence the productivity or efficiency of the Leader. But it is still not clear that how is this

the case. This aspect has not been measured in a natural field setting so it is unclear how this situation results (Schock et al., 2019).

Generally, it is believed that women are more emotional, and men are more rationale. Women are judged more harshly for displays of emotion, particularly when the emotion is masculine in nature (Brescoll, Okimoto, & Vial, 2018). But in the workplace and generally as well, women are expected to be more rational compared to men. But there is limited empirical evidence to validate such claims. Which is why this study aims to explore the extent to which women are emotionally different. The role of emotionality in the workplace has received little consideration in literature even though working women are targeted a lot based on emotions (Brescoll et al., 2018).

Research lacks in a way that it does not consider a lot of different socio-cultural set ups so not much is known about different settings (Bhatti & Ali, 2020).

1.2 Aim of the research:

Since women have started entering the workforce, it is increasingly important to understand what challenges they might be facing. It is also important to explore that what might be the effect on women leaders leading behavior when she in gender diverse groups. This research aims to understand women leaders' perspectives and how they navigate through the challenges that they are targeted with.

1.3 Objectives of the study:

- To explore how stereotypes related to gender affect women leadership abilities in mixed versus single gender groups
- To explore how group gender composition, influence the women leader's productivity, decision making skills and willingness to lead
- To explore the difference of emotions between the two genders regarding leadership

1.4 Research Questions:

- How (if at all) the stereotypes attached to women leadership abilities influence the performance of women leaders working in gender diverse groups?
- How (if at all) the women leader productivity, decision-making skills and willingness to lead vary across gender groups (same gender versus diverse)?
- How emotional are women leaders in their leadership and decision making compared to their man counterparts?

1.5 Thesis Structure

The structure of the thesis is such that chapter one discusses the introduction of the topic, along with the aim of the research, research questions, objectives. Chapter 2 covers literature review; chapter 3 discusses the methodology of the study. The results, discussion and analysis are covered in chapter 4 and 5. And finally chapter 6 highlights the conclusion, limitations, and future research directions.

This chapter explains why this research needs to be carried out by stating the research gap. The aim of the research is to understand women experiences in leadership positions, when present in gender diverse settings. Keeping this in mind, research questions and research objectives have been formulated to explore this aim.

Literature Review

This chapter gives a detailed thorough review of the past trends which are related to the research questions of this thesis. It covers women leadership, women leadership in gender diverse settings, women leader productivity, problem solving skills, willingness to led and women leader emotions in comparison to males. Gender stereotypes also explored in respect to women leadership. Conceptual framework is also shown which represents how different factors in this thesis can create an impact on other concepts being explored.

2.1 Leadership and Gender: Reviewing the relationships/interconnections

Leadership as a concept is quite contentious. Within a temporal framework, it has undergone a series of transitions (Eklund, Barry, & Grunberg, 2017). At first, the Leadership meant ability to impress the will of the leader on those led and [should] induce obedience, respect, loyalty, and cooperation (Moore, 1927). Today, however, it constitutes such traits in a leader that exhibit the ability to modify and change the behaviors, thoughts and aspirations of his/her followers to achieve objectives that are worthy of achieving (Callahan & Grunberg, 2019). Leaders are individuals who are known to have the ability to make a difference in the world. Literature on leadership and gender has emphasized that when women are excluded from leadership positions, they are denied the opportunity to make this difference (Zarif, Urooj, & Gorchani, 2019). Consequently, this also leads to gender inequality in the salaries and non-financial rewards that are narrowly intertwined with the middle and top-level management positions in the organizations (Blair, 2002; Doob, 2019; Zarif et al., 2019).

Scholarship on leadership provides evidence for delays in upward mobility of females in the career ladder in their organization. This is largely attributed to the *glass ceiling effect* which refers to the implicit and invisible barriers that women in the workforce confront. Some of the barrier's women face in organizations are personal factors such as their own perception and belief in themselves, their families support and work-life balance. Apart from that, organizational factors also play a role in a way that whether the organizations culture or policies supports advancement of women or not (Azeez & Priyadarshini, 2018) . Despite having laws and social movements to eradicate these barriers, women are still underrepresented in top leadership positions. This glass ceiling effect prevents women from

reaching their full potential. Consequently, this negatively impacts the organizations to benefit from a diverse workforce working in a gender diverse culture (Chisholm-Burns, Spivey, Hagemann, & Josephson, 2017). Research on gender diverse organizations has shown that women in top management positions are able to influence the policies and regulations of their organizations. This in turn helps in escaping what we call as “concrete ceiling.” This term refers to the environmental factors which become barriers to advancement in women careers. The environmental factors, which enable the concrete ceiling effect, are factors such as stereotypes and lack of appropriate women leader role models. Apart from this, women in organizations who have less diversity also face the concept of “Concrete Ceiling” (Reynolds-Dobbs, Thomas, & Harrison, 2008) .

Pakistan, like the rest of the world is also experiencing increased female labor participation. Women are reaching top management positions though in smaller percentage (N. Smith & Smith, 2015). For instance, in the higher educational institutes, women constitute one- third of senior administrators (Bhatti & Ali, 2020; Cook, 2012; Gallant, 2014). According to The Unit (2014) women occupy 0.04% senior positions in Pakistani universities. This low percentile, however, represents disparities in Pakistani culture that limits women from aspiring senior leadership positions.

2.2 Sociocultural aspect of Pakistan

When it comes to the corporate world, it is always assumed that it belongs to men. It was always assumed that men are better leaders than women because they are more logical and objective while women are sentimental and subjective (Samo, Qazi, & Buriro, 2019) . It is important to look into the sociocultural aspect of Pakistan, due to the research taking place in this setting. Pakistan is culturally considered a male dominant area, so males possess more of the leadership roles in the corporate world. Due to this when women portray leadership characteristics in work settings they are perceived negatively and are considered deviant from typical gender roles. Traditionally women are perceived positively when they are performing roles such as care taking or nurturing. Ever since the entrance of women in the workforce, it has become a challenge for women to juggle between a leader and being a woman, because a leader is predominantly a males job. When women perform leadership duties in an organization, they are met with resistance. These incongruent gender roles lead women to have a hard time juggling between performing multiple roles because of the negative perception in society of working women. (Bhatti & Ali, 2020)

Over the years, we have seen that Pakistani cultural norms have become an obstacle for women who want to pursue the leadership role. Studies show that the internalization of gender role stereotypes further inhibit women to strive for leadership positions (Bhatti & Ali, 2020; Desai, Chugh, & Brief, 2014). Furthermore, the process of entering the workforce becomes complicated for females because it is not just a matter of skills and abilities but also of cast, family, honor, spiritual and cultural beliefs (Bhatti & Ali, 2020; Farooq et al., 2020; Roomi & Parrott, 2008). Additionally, obligations of working mothers also hinder growth in careers because the organizational policies are not devised in a gender sensitive manner to provide relevant support to employees who are mothers (Manzoor, 2015).

Substantial research provides evidence for the specific ways in which women carry out the leadership roles in organizations. Women depict varied shades of leadership styles. This ranges from adopting traditional masculine characteristics and aligning with men (Anyango, 2015; B. S. Smith & Squires, 2016) to a leadership style which is more relationship focused (Gobena, 2014; Kadyrkulova, 2008; Le, 2011; Mbepera, 2015). Women leaders are found to be inclined towards consensual decision making, which prove to be the foundations for strategies for organizational development (Jepson, 2010; Mauchi, Lekhanya, & Dorasamy, 2020). Furthermore, female leaders exhibit sensitive and empathetic leadership style (S. Smith, 2007).

2.3 Gender Diversity in organizations

As the globalization of the world is increasing, it is increasingly important to diversify the workforce. Diversity includes a wide range of facets such as ethnic diversity, religion, cultural, gender and race (Bucur, 2014). In this thesis, only gender diversity is being focused on. The main group we are focusing on is gender diverse groups, which are being led by the women leaders.

Single gender groups are those which are either consisting of only male or only female while gender diverse groups consist of a mixture of both men and women (Bucur, 2014).

Gender composition of a team is a type of specific diversity that tends to include individuals other than just males in the team. The link between gender diversity and organizational performance is not based on whether the team lead is male or female driven but rather whether both genders are being included in the team or not (Moreno-Gómez, Lafuente, & Vaillant, 2018). Research has shown that top level management teams, which

have the presence of both males and females have better team effectiveness. Heterogenous groups have higher level of creativity and innovation since different perspectives are offered and better plan of actions are formed (Bunderson & Sutcliffe, 2002; Moreno-Gómez et al., 2018). Thus, gender diversity is identified as a major factor which can positively contribute to the functioning of top-level management teams (Adams & Ferreira, 2009; Isidro & Sobral, 2015). Gender diverse organizations are also seen to have positive performance consequences. Reguera-Alvarado, De Fuentes, and Laffarga (2017) explain the reason for this positive impact of increasing gender diversity is that men and women are different beings with different perspectives. With women being present at decision making moments, more skills, knowledge, and abilities are also present. Heterogenous groups, produce higher quality decisions. Due to this, gender equality and the participation of women in top teams should be promoted not just as social arguments but also because of economic benefits to the organization (Hillman, 2015; Kılıç & Kuzey, 2016).

2.4 Leading a gender diverse team

Now that more women are entering the workforce, the nature of groups working together on different projects are more gender diverse. Due to this change, it is very important that the leader who is leading the team is able to effectively lead a gender diverse team. Kelemen, Matthews, Zhang, Bradley, and Liu (2020) discuss visionary leadership in their research which helps to lead specifically gender diverse team. These types of leaders are able to see past the differences and unite their teams to help them perform better. Leaders who are conscious in how they are leading tend to help their teams envision who they want to be and help them achieve their goal. This individuality to helping team members grow also helps improve team performance. This also helps team members to see past their gender differences (Kelemen et al., 2020) . Leaders who are able to effectively work past the teams' differences are able to make gender diversity less obvious by making the employees see the larger united cause. These practices will also help to lower the social categorization process and help both gender to eradicate the negative aspects derived from both genders.(Carton, Murphy, & Clark, 2014; Kelemen et al., 2020)

2.5 Performance of Leading women in gender diverse setting

With the ever-burgeoning number of women in the workforce, research is particularly interested in how women perform when leading a gender diverse team consisting of both the

genders. Women lead in a more relationship-oriented style by including everyone in the decision-making process (Gobena, 2014; Kadyrkulova, 2008; Le, 2011). Drake, Primeaux, and Thomas (2018) states that when women lead in organizations, they usually adopt a gentle approach in carrying out their functions. Through this ability women can ensure fairness in the decision-making process. Mauchi et al. (2020) conducted interviews of leading women and found that most of the working women prefer a collaborative style of leading regardless of the gender present. This allows them to have an environment of sharing and connectedness. They also felt that this style improves teamwork and helps in communication (Caniëls, Semeijn, & Renders, 2018). However, some female leaders are affected by the gender composition of the teams they lead which in turn effects their performance. Chen and Houser (2019) studied leadership in groups and evaluated how much does the leadership capabilities of both genders change based on the gender composition of the group. It was revealed in the study that both genders took on less leadership roles when their own gender composition was less. However, women still face gender discrimination even in the absence of men (Chen & Houser, 2019). In an interview with different women leaders, a lot of them stated that their performance as an effective leader is complicated because society holds different expectations from them and it is hard to avoid being labelled or judged (Schrock, 2020). Workplace practices and attitudes of colleagues influence women, along with the social biases, thus making it harder for women to carry out the leading role effectively (Karadag, 2018).

2.6 Stereotypes and women leadership

Gender stereotypes dictate how men and women should behave. Women who behave in accordance with the prescribed stereotypes are perceived and accepted positively by society (Ramos, Barreto, Ellemers, Moya, & Ferreira, 2018). In societies where women are expected to stay at home, the working women are seen as deviating from the norm (Jarman & Windsor, 2021). Normally when judging men and women, men are assessed against the norms of assertiveness and dominance as compared to women who are associated with empathy and caring attitude since in different cultures, regardless of whether they are working or not, women are expected to spend more time doing household activities and caring for their kids (Faniko, Ellemers, Derks, & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2017). Thus, a stark gender normative binary exists along the lines of agentic versus communal characteristics.

The rigid gender role stereotypes depict incompatibility of leadership characteristics with personality traits expected from women (Ellemers, 2018). Women as managers or supervisors are less likely to be perceived positively if they show too much ambition or authority as well as care and empathy (Netchaeva, Kouchaki, & Sheppard, 2015; Williams & Tiedens, 2016). When career and personal home life do not fit together, this can affect and restrict life choices. The stereotypical idea of a good mother does not leave room for a job, or her portraying typical male characteristics (Faniko et al., 2017). The feminine traits are considered incongruent with the competitive environment prevalent in organizations (Faniko, Ellemers, & Derks, 2016). However, when women flout their normatively expected roles and engage in conversations centered on the issues of unequal pay, being treated unfairly, and inequalities faced by them, they are labelled as having a complaining nature, or as someone displaying inappropriate behavior (Radke, Hornsey, & Barlow, 2016).

This concept is perfectly explained by the **Role Congruity Theory** (Schock et al., 2019) which explains that the key traits of warmth, empathy and related roles are associated with women. Whereas roles such as dominance, leadership, and assertiveness are attributed to men. The qualities prescribed to women are termed as 'communal', whereas the qualities of men are 'agentic'. Communal qualities are thought to be incompatible with leadership roles because leading is considered to be a man's job since he is considered 'agentic' in nature (Farooq et al., 2020). Therefore, if a woman leads, there will be an incongruency between the roles of men and women. Thus, the women leaders find themselves in a confusing role because when they show communal characteristics, they are negatively evaluated for being a deficient leader. In contrast, when they exhibit agentic characteristics, they are again criticized for not being womanly enough (Hoyt & Murphy, 2016; Purdie-Vaughns, Steele, Davies, Dittmann, & Crosby, 2008).

Therefore role congruity theory by Eagly and Karau (2002) is being used to explain the concepts in this study. This is because role congruity theory effectively encompasses the nature of the changing workforce and its acceptability with regards to working women. Role congruity theory specifically talks about women in a leadership aspect and how the position of women in leadership positions can be a gender incongruent characteristic in some organizations. This theory specifically takes into consideration the context of women leadership, which is being explored in this study. It also goes beyond to integrate gender with other concepts such as leadership and its association with prejudice. Similar theories regarding gender state that when women carry out traditional agentic characteristics they are

perceived positively while when they carry out communal characteristics, they are perceived negatively. Role congruity theory on the other hand sees this overall as a negative aspect because it shows that women are only seen positively when they are carrying out a feminine role (Eagly & Karau, 2002). While a lot of theories talk about how women roles are gender incongruent with workplaces, this theory gives more insight by turning it into a systematic theory by joining social-cognitive research on stereotyping and prejudice and industrial-organizational research on management and leadership.

The gender stereotypes roles and their relationship with leadership differences are supported by vast research (Faniko et al., 2016; Odenweller & Rittenour, 2017; Radke et al., 2016). The role congruity theory can be seen in organizations because bias and prejudice from others affects female leader performance, especially when she is working in a gender diverse environment (Hoyt, Johnson, Murphy, & Skinnell, 2010). This attitude is also shown in competitive environment, where employees already assume that women will be unable to handle the pressure. In addition, Pakistani culture equates success with specific set of skills such as analytical, critical thinking, professionalism etc. These skills are mainly required in organizations but since women are underrepresented over there, they are automatically thought to be unskilled (Leslie, Cimpian, Meyer, & Freeland, 2015).

2.7 Productivity of Female Leaders in gender diverse groups

Every company expects its employees to achieve a set of goals and objectives, which is the workers productivity (Osabiya, 2015). The standard against which work productivity is assessed is quality, quantity and work efficiency (Jung, 2017)

Productivity of a leader largely depends on how much risk the leader is willing to take keeping in mind the time constraints, objective achievement and past experiences regarding the matter (Fang, Goh, Roberts, Xu, & Zeufack, 2020). Women leader productivity means how much an organization can achieve under a female's leadership. Female led organizations are associated with lower productivity than that of male led (Fang et al., 2020). However, literature suggests that women leaders tend to prefer more stable environments and performance than men and are also less passionate than men regarding leading (Levi, Li, & Zhang, 2014). Lower open-mindedness for risks puts women at a disadvantage as this lower's productivity, but also at the same time helps to maintain small and stable businesses (Fang et al., 2020). Women at the top level in an organizations, who are part of the decision-making process, are seen to positively influence and effect business performance (Kılıç & Kuzey,

2016; Liu, Wei, & Xie, 2014; Moreno-Gómez et al., 2018). Moreno-Gómez et al. (2018) find in their study regarding women leadership, that women in top positions take better decisions due to their leadership styles. Women in these high positions are not, to a very high degree, influenced by gender stereotypes, due to their prolonged exposure to the workplace. Therefore, women offer good decision-making skills which incorporate collaboration and communication.

Research conducted on female's vs male research publications in the academic sector showed that women productivity was less in terms of number of research published compared to male faculty (Corley & Sabharwal, 2010). The reason for low or difference in productivity levels can be due to marital status or if the women have children or not (Sabharwal, 2015). Thus, it can be assumed that the difference in productivity is not due to intellect or the women's inability but due to familial responsibilities. However female workers are still seen to be more hard working than male workers because they face the pressure of proving themselves as capable performers in order to avoid negative evaluations (Arfah & Putra, 2019).

2.7.1 Women Leaders and Willingness to Lead in Gender Diverse Groups

Women are considered generally less competitive and less dominating than men (Bordalo, Coffman, Gennaioli, & Shleifer, 2019; Coffman, 2014; Dreber, Von Essen, & Ranehill, 2014; Shurchkov & van Geen, 2019). As a result of these assumptions, women are observed to be less willing to take leads (Born, Ranehill, & Sandberg, 2020). (Burow, Beblo, Beninger, & Schröder, 2017; Bursztyn, Fujiwara, & Pallais, 2017) Studies indicate that generally when women are leading in the presence of men, they tend to take lesser risks and mostly do not become very competitive. They also tend to not talk too much about their ambitions (Burow et al., 2017; Bursztyn et al., 2017). According to Coffman (2014), in a gender diverse setting, when faced with a conflicting situation, women are less likely to offer solutions and contribute ideas, thereby not showing their willingness to lead (Bordalo et al., 2019; Chen & Houser, 2017). Due to gender stereotyping effects, women report lower satisfaction in male dominated or gender diverse setting which results in their reluctance to lead (Griffith & Dasgupta, 2018). Another reason why women's willingness to lead is not high in gender diverse groups is that the tasks performed by them are not just undervalued by men but also by women themselves (Boring, 2017; Grunspan et al., 2016; Mengel,

Sauermann, & Zölitz, 2019). Males also respond less favorably to female leaders thereby reducing the women leader's motivation to lead (Grossman, Eckel, Komai, & Zhan, 2019).

However, in a study by Hack and van der Wijst (2017), an analysis on the willingness to lead behavior of men versus women in different social contexts showed exceptional results. Surprising women's willingness to lead did not differ based on the gender composition of the group, nor did it differ based on the situation (crisis or normal). The results of this study contradict previous findings.

2.7.2 Decision making skills of women leaders in gender diverse groups

Decision making in organizations is characterized by a leader's ability to effectively take informed decisions on behalf of the entire team (Ertac & Gurdal, 2012). Taking risky decisions in organization means that the consequences of it will fall not only on the leader but also on the team members involved (Ertac & Gurdal, 2012). Decision making as a skill is pivotal in organizational contexts since it requires the leader to possess both the knowledge and an open mind to handle challenges (Mu'awanah & Hidayah, 2020).

The decision-making skills of managers of both genders were extensively studied by Exner (2015). Women were found to be more careful and informed decision makers than their male colleagues. Men preferred to think linear, whereas women exhibited considering interactive relations as well (Exner, 2015). When faced with the pressure to decide, women were more influenced by whose decision might affect and whom they were accountable for. Precisely speaking, the women leader's decision-making style is more collaborative and interactive. Also, when it comes to creativity in decision making, women are more creative with how they justify their decisions, whereas men justify their action in relation to the rules provided to them (Tipu, 2018). Moreover, when analyzing the psychological aspect of decisions making, women leaders scored lower in risk taking compared to their male counterparts (Lapuente & Suzuki, 2021).

The hierarchical gender relationships that exist in traditional societies assign power and authority to men. This is reflected in the corporate world also, where women are underrepresented at positions of power. Accordingly, to the findings of Mendelberg and Karpowitz (2016), even when women hold power positions, it is assumed, that women are comparatively less able than men to take decisions effectively, because they are in influence of their emotions. Moreover, the societal conventions of women having less ability to handle

power leaves women with negative consequences where their decision-making abilities might be affected, especially when they are present in gender diverse groups. In this same study of Mendelberg and Karpowitz (2016), the results showed that when women are present in women majority groups, only then, they are more willing to make faster, better and effective decisions.

Men are also skeptic about women taking decisions while holding key positions. For instance, Brescoll (2016) proved in their study that when working in gender diverse groups, men viewed the decisions taken by their female leader worse than her male counterpart. They assumed that her decisions would be faulty simply because of her gender, therefore, they negatively evaluated her (Brescoll, 2016). Decision making studies show that most participants perceive that woman will be biased in their decisions because of their emotions and would be therefore incompetent in their approach (J. S. Smith, Brescoll, & Thomas, 2016; Zammuner, 2000). Yang, Riepe, Moser, Pull, and Terjesen (2019) indicate in their study results that decision making in gender diverse groups is not influenced by the women's ability but rather other factors such as the organizational context. Organizations creating a supportive and positive context for leading women create better leaders thus improving decision making abilities. Seo and Barrett (2007) evaluate in their study how much emotions can alter or influence decisions making and to what degree. The study reveals that decision making is rather positively influenced by having emotions and is not affected by the gender.

2.8 Difference in emotions regarding women/men Leadership

Organizations are a mirror image of the society. Before even joining an organization, individuals have the tendency to view these through a gendered lens, already formed and handed over to them by the broader societal conventions (Ridgeway, 2011). The male-female binary exists while talking about emotions in organizational settings which are gender diverse. It is observed that male employees are expected to control and manage their emotions by ignoring them. The male workers who can do this are valued and considered masculine (Mobasserri, 2018). Men are expected to pay less attention to what they feel. Instead, they are supposed to be focus oriented. Furthermore, since the society ascribes them a higher status in the gender hierarchy, therefore, they have the privilege to exhibit behavior even an undesirable behavior at times. For instance, when men express anger in a gender diverse setting, they are looked at positively and are considered competent.

Contrarily to men, women is taught to be more cheerful, pleasant, and naturally caring towards others. Women are expected to show emotions of care, sympathy, and empathy. However, when women express anger or disappointment, then, unlike men they are not perceived positively (Chatman & O'Reilly, 2016). Moreover, the expressions of too much emotion by women are considered as signs of a weak leader (Reid, 2015).

Existing scholarship on leadership and gender is largely focused on how the emotions are perceived (Bono et al., 2017; Brescoll et al., 2018; Schrock, 2020; Zheng, Surgevil, & Kark, 2018). The current research lacks how women as leader, regulate their emotions in order to manage their emotions in a healthy way without causing a disruption in their surroundings.

According to a study conducted by Fischbach, Lichtenthaler, and Horstmann (2015), women do not have the capacity to become a leader because they are 'too emotional'. Brescoll et al. (2018) in a similar vein showed that women exhibiting agentic characteristics are not perceived positively. However, when a women leader behaves in a communal way (warmth, empathetic) she is comparatively more accepted (Brescoll, 2016). Thus, the women at leadership positions are to continuously juggle between the agentic and communal traits in order to seek others' approval. Consequently, this can lead to women having a problem with regulating their emotional expressions and leading effectively (Karazi-Presler, Sasson-Levy, & Lomsky-Feder, 2018; Schrock, 2020; Zheng, Surgevil, et al., 2018). In other words, these gender-based stereotypes to fulfil their role requirements, while functioning as a leader becomes a barrier in becoming an effective leader (Brescoll, 2016; Eagly, 2018).

Gentry, Clark, Young, Cullen, and Zimmerman (2015) found that when both genders expressed emotions about career derailment, women became more at risk. This is because women are judged and evaluated more harshly than men working at similar positions (Bono et al., 2017). Brescoll et al. (2018) conducted a study which tested how people reacted to women leaders displaying agentic roles. The results indicated that when men express anger in work setting, their status is heightened whereas for women it is lowered. Eagly and Wood (2013) conclude in their study that roles which are enforced in our society, as well as how the two genders regulate themselves, produce a difference in the ways of thinking. These stereotypes are transferred in our social gathering from the way we speak about it and impressions we set regarding it (Ellemers, 2018; Endendijk et al., 2017).

2.9 Conceptual Framework

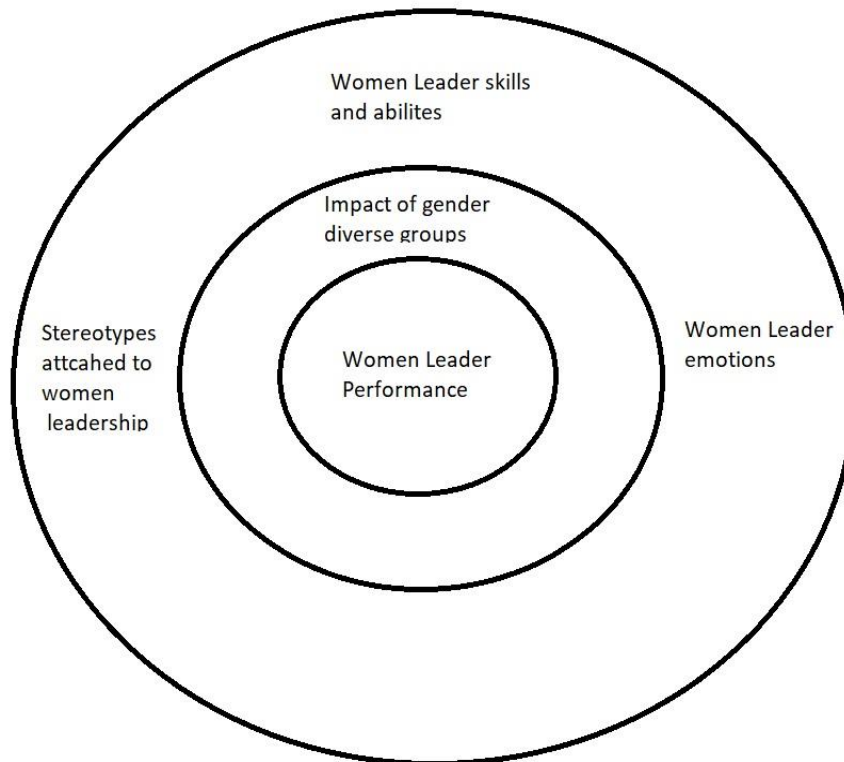


Figure 1-Conceptual Framework (Source: Based on Literature Review)

In short, this chapter gives a detailed review of women leadership and different factors associated with it, such as gender diversity, that can create an impact on the leader's performance. This is also represented by the conceptual framework shown in figure 1, which displays how these concepts in this study are related to each other.

Chapter 03

Methodology

This chapter gives an insight into the methodology of the study and the reasoning behind adopting that study method. It also explains other points such the sampling, demographics and data procedures followed in this study.

3.1 Types of research

Research can be separated into mainly descriptive, causal, and exploratory research. Descriptive research is used to describe concepts and are structural in nature. Survey questionnaires are mostly used to gather the data in this type of research. Likewise, explanatory, and causal research are preplanned, have structure and are quantitative in nature. Exploratory studies are formulated when the researcher wants to explore new ideas or give detailed insight to a concept. This study also makes use of exploratory research based on the research gap identified by the literature review.

3.1.1 Quantitative and Qualitative research

In a study by Creswell (2013), it is explained that different research methods and ways of coming up with the right strategy to carry out a research ,helps researchers to reach the research methodology of a study. Due to discussion and inquires, this process helps us decide whether the research will be qualitative, quantitative or a mixed-methods research in nature variables. Analysis can be done through different statistical techniques, whereas the data for analysis is collected through surveys or experiments commonly. Variables and their relationships form the basis of the hypothesis, which is used to play a role in establishing theory.

However, Qualitative studies cannot go through vigorous mathematical analysis, this is because in qualitative studies, the researchers are dealing with intangible elements such as feelings, life experiences etc. which cannot be quantified. This research also adopts a qualitative approach to methodology keeping in mind the research problems and research objectives, to gain better insight to the research problem (Creswell, 2013).

3.2 Research Design

Research on women Leadership is still lacking in multiple aspects, there is a requirement to fill those research gaps by adopting qualitative approaches. Thus, qualitative approach was considered best for this study. Qualitative research method also facilitates the

contextual sensitivity and ability to study symbolic dimensions and social meaning which hold specific benefits for leadership research (Parry, Mumford, Bower, & Watts, 2014) Given the focus of this research on developing an understanding of the lived experiences of women leaders, we took an interpretivist stance. The interpretivist approach assumes that the world is complex and multilayered and textured (Mason, 2002) where the people concerned perceive and understand their own experience and attach specific meaning to them (Patton, 2002). The reality in this case is understood to be subjective and it is function of interpretation of the individual social actors in a specific context (Burrell & Morgan, 2017). The current study aimed to understand how women leaders attached meaning to their social experience in a particular socio-cultural context. When a researcher aims to understand beliefs, normal values, and opinions, then qualitative approach is adopted. In this research, the researcher takes viewpoints from different experts in the sample-population. de Souza, Neri, and Costa (2016) explain in their research that questions like “how”, “why”, and “what” can be effectively answered in qualitative research. It also helps to understand the multiple aspects that surround an issue. As more data is needed to understand women leadership, exploratory research is considered more appropriate.

3.3 Research Approach: Semi-Structured Interview

The research methodology adopted for this study is the qualitative method. Semi - structured interview technique was used for data collection processes. The advantage of semi – structured interview is that the participant is freely able to answer to the question in context of the research as well as the organization they are working for (Ott & Longnecker, 2015). Rich and highly detailed data can be obtained through this method. It is also helping us gain an in-depth insight of women working in Pakistani organizations.

3.4 Data Collection

We sent each participant an invite to participate in the study. When inviting them for the study, we also provided them with the consent form and other information that they needed about the study they were about to participate in. Participants were assured of the anonymity and confidentiality of information shared by them in the interview. They were informed that their personal information such as name, organization in which they are working, and their number would remain anonymous.

On the day of the interview, the participants were given a link to the interview on which app the interview was to be taken. Some of the interviews were conducted on Zoom or MS teams Microsoft, while some were simply recorded. A thematic semi structured interview

guide was used to keep the interview focused as well as to ensure generation of relevant data. The interviews an average of forty minutes. The questions were invited in local language (Urdu), however, few participants used a blend of English and Urdu as per their comfort. The interviews were audio recorded with explicit permission of the respondents and translated (where needed) and transcribed. After the interview, the participants were again given assurance that their identity and personal data would be anonymized. After the interviews were conducted, all interviews were transcribed in the English language.

3.5 Population and Sampling

To fulfill the criteria of the research questions and research objectives, snowball sampling and criterion sampling was used. Snowball and criterion sampling techniques (Patton, 2002) formed the sampling frame of this study. We used our professional contacts to access the participants. Snowball sampling techniques were employed to contact the potential respondents since there are fewer women in leadership roles. For selecting the respondents, we developed following criterion:

1. The participant is a woman
2. She must be working in a lead position or leadership role for at least past one year or more.
3. They must be leading a department, or section, or a branch.
4. She must have authoritative powers
5. There should be a gender diverse team reporting to her.
6. She should have rich working experience

All the participants in this research study were highly qualified with rich work experience. All of them were working on mid to upper-level leadership position like Head of Department to Branch manager etc. in various sectors such as academia, hotel industry, electrical etc. Finally, theoretical sampling was employed to determine the sample size. We stopped at 16th interview after the saturation point was attained. Multiple researches exploring women leadership in qualitative forms keep their sample number at 16 or less (Malloy, 2020; Sweat, 2020; Wade, 2021). The sample size is mostly kept low in qualitative studies because of the extensive and time-consuming nature of these research. Keeping the sample size low will also help to ensure quality of data (Rallis & Rossman, 2017) .This sample size

also helps in making sure that the research questions are being answered in an effective way (Ravitch & Carl, 2019). The age of the participants ranged from 35 to 51 years old.

3.6 Demographics of the Participants

Critical demographic information such as age, qualification, marital status, number of children were included in this research (as shown in table 1) to understand how these different variables might influence the behavior of women leaders. Marital status was considered because for a working woman in Pakistan, it creates a major difference if a woman is married or single. After marriage the roles and responsibilities of a woman changes. She is expected to juggle work and home life simultaneously. The number of children further add to the responsibilities, whilst questioning their mothering roles as working women. All these factors also bring gender stereotypes into play as working women face different stereotypes in different stages of life. Family system was also considered that whether it was joint or neutral as that help us understand the level of family support received as working women having dual responsibilities. Income of the women is also asked because her income plays a role in grasping her living standards and quality of life. Table 1 shows demographic information of the participants

SR #	Position in org	Age	Degree	F S	No. Of Kid	marital status	Inc In Lacs	W E	WECO
IP1	Secretary and Head of Legal	40	LLM Business Law	N	1	married	3	10	1
IP2	Director Key accounts dpt	50	BS	N	2	married	1	27	9
IP3	Head of corpotaee communications and marketing	45	BS Business Management	J	2	married	2	12	4
IP4	Chief Medical Advisor	38	MCPS Family Medicine	J	none	unmarried	3	12	17
IP5	DeputyDirector Communications	35	MBA Marketing	J	3	married	2	16	4
IP6	Credit Control Manager	45	MBA Marketing	N	2	widowed	1,75	14	1

			ng						
IP7	Head of Relationship Management	40	BS	N	1	married	1,50	12	6
IP8	Owner	37	MBA	J	3	married	3	10	7
IP9	Hed of CWC, Lecturer	39	MS Clinical Psychology	N	2	married	2	9	9
IP10	Project Manager	35	MS Project Management	J	none	unmarried	1,36	7	6
IP11	Company Secretary	29	BS Molecular Biology	N	none	unmarried	1,15	8	3
IP12	Representative to World Bank	45	CSS	J	4	married	3	13	5
IP13	Vice President	35	MS Finance	J	1	married	1,92	18	5
IP14	Cluster Head	51	Electrical Engineering	J	3	married	3	16	16
IP15	L&D Manager	42	MBA	J	1	married	1,76	10	1
IP16	Professor	43	MBA	J	1	married	2,30	17	17

Table 1-Demographics of the participants

Key: FS: Family System

J: Joint

N: Nuclear

WE: Working experience in years

WECO: Working Experience in Current Organization

3.6 Data Analysis procedure

Thematic analysis technique was used to analyze the data in this research. Thematic analysis is the most widely used method to analyze and interpret qualitative data effectively. Thematic analysis help to figure out the recurring patterns and themes from the data. Themes are the representation of an overall data set which are very helpful and also important in answering particulars and aims of the study (Gelman & Carlin, 2014). The recurring themes in the data become major categories through which the results are explained, and objectives

of the study are achieved. A detailed literature review was done before the study to come up with themes, which also served as a baseline to develop the interview guideline. For analysis, the interviews were recorded and transcribed into the English language, this is because the interviews were in English-Urdu both. During data collection phase, the questions for the interviews were tweaked and modified according to the responses given by the participant. Probing questions were also asked to gain further insight regarding the matter. For the analysis, patterns were derived from the texts which were developed into themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest 6 steps which were followed for data analysis:

- First the researcher familiarizes themselves with the data.
- Initial codes are generated from the data
- Codes are refined to merge into sub-themes and made more specific.
- Themes are reviewed to make sure that they are in congruence with the research questions.
- Inter relations between themes is examined which helped them merge into major categories.

Write up for data analysis is completed.

3.7 Research validity and Reliability

Research validity and reliability are two very important aspects to consider in research. In a qualitative research, research validity means the level of relevance of the methods, the sample, processes have with outcome. By validity it is mean that whether the process used in the research, the research methodology, is suitable for answering the problem statement (Leung, 2015).

In qualitative research, reliability refers to the consistency of the results of the study. In qualitative researches, there is a margin of difference in results in similar dimensions of researches, but of course they can be different in richness and ambience (Leung, 2015).

Transferability of a research means that how much is the research generalizable to other similar contexts. To increase transferability, the researchers have provided a detailed account of findings of the study so that they may be replicable in other contexts. Exact quotations from the participants have been incorporated to provide a better grasp of the concept. The findings of the study have also been shared and debated on multiple time with supervisors and GECs to come to common agreed on conclusions. These techniques have

made it possible to improve the validity and transferability of the study. To confirm the confirmability of the research, the researcher has come up with the findings only based on the participants response and not based on personal bias (Mertens, 2014). To further obtain truer findings, thematic analysis has been used to reach results. These strategies ensure reliability and validity of the research.

This chapter of the research deals with the methodology section. Qualitative research methodology is adopted in this study. While semi-structured interview technique is used as a data collection technique. To analyze data, transcription of interviews is done and then they are analyzed through thematic analysis technique. Reliability and validity of the research is also explained.

Chapter 04

Findings

This chapter discusses the finding of the study. These findings are explained with the help of themes and sub-themes generated from the interview data. Three key themes have emerged from the data which investigate different factors which influence women leadership and her performance.

The Themes and sub themes are shown in the table below. They are formulated by extensively analyzing the data and studying similar trends.

Themes	Sub-Themes
The influence of gender on women leader behavior and women leaders' effectiveness	Women Leaders skills and attributes
	Women Leadership Style
	Differences in leader behavior with respect to gender
Gender stereotyping of emotions in the workplace	Constraints of emotional expression in the workplace
Barriers to advancement in woman careers and women development	Working women's developing resilience against Cultures role
	Challenges faced by working women over the years and its effect on their performance

Table 2-Themese and Sub-Themes

The results section is explained in accordance with the order of the table. Sub themes are discussed as major part of the main themes.

4.1 The influence of gender on women leader behavior and women leader effectiveness

4.1.1 Women Leader's skills and attributes

Firstly, we investigated the participants skills and attributes as a leader. Several participants from the study talked about their productivity or efficiency as a leader. When examining productivity of a leader, we investigated how well the leader can achieve goals and lead a team, also keeping in mind the context (such as gender

composition of the group). We also investigated how much risk the leader is willing to take keeping in mind the time constraints, objective achievement, and past experiences regarding the matter (Fang et al., 2020). Many participants shared that they were very comfortable in their leadership roles, which is why the factors such as gender composition of the group did not affect their productivity levels.

As one participant states:

“Gender diverse team has never effected my performance. I don’t care. I am currently in a company where I am part of management team, and I am the only female in the management team .so if I start thinking about these things than I’ll never do justice to my work ,I’ll never be able to enjoy my work if I keep thinking that would are others thinking about me or how do they perceive me? (IP4 PG2)”

Participants also talked about the assertiveness that is required as you go up the ladder. Assertiveness, authority and typical women characteristics do not fit together in our culture because working women who show too much control or assertiveness behavior, are labelled as bossy. They are not perceived positively by society. It was inquired by the participants that whether they ever feel conscious when showing assertive behaviors. Most of the women leader reported that while they are aware that women assertiveness is not widely accepted, they still portray assertiveness when needed, as it is part of the job.

As one participant states:

“When I am in a gender diverse setting, there I have to be more assertive. I will not be quite because then the other person will naturally think that because she is female, she won’t be able to say much .in these settings I interrupt as well sometimes because men are present, so I have to make my point more valid (IP14 PG 1)”

Women leaders were also questioned on their authority as a leader, specifically in terms of their decision making. This question was asked because society assumes that the decisions a woman makes in organizational settings will not be logical enough simply because of her gender. Even when women hold higher positions than men, they are still expected to take decisions which might not be efficient enough. Regarding this aspect, the participants shared both perspectives as some of them had faced this gender stereotype while some had not, as one woman stated:

“No, I don’t feel like that at all. I have never felt like this that t because I am a female I am given less weightage in terms of my decisions or my work generally (IP16 PG3) ”

This woman, along with some other participants reported that they did not feel like their authority in terms of their decision-making power was being undermined. However, another perspective which was present was:

“There have been types of incidents/instances where somebody wants to take a decision on my behalf, whereas it was such a small thing that I could have managed. So this happened once, twice and thrice, after that when it was the fourth time, I very respectfully tell people that if such trivial decisions must be taken by you then tell me what I am supposed to do? You should trust me that she will analyze, and she will take a decision, a proper decision. Instead of being scared and jumping into a situation that what if she does wrong. (IP2PG6)”

The issue of undervaluing women's work was also brought up by several participants. It is assumed in our culture that the task the women perform will not be up to the level as that of a man simply because of them being a woman.

As one participant states:

“yes, I agree with you, this happens. If a guy does something, probably it will be said that “wow, you did really amazing” but when a woman does it, it would be less. Not less appreciative, perhaps her recognition would be less but that too has a very big reason. (IP5 PG7)”

Leadership roles require the leader to be willing to lead and show behavior that they want to lead their teams. The participants were interviewed in this regard by exploring their willingness to lead ability. Literature has found that in gender diverse settings women show less willingness to lead behaviors. Even in our culture women are expected not be at the forefront when it comes to leading in organizations, they are expected to follow. Participants in this study reported that their willingness to lead a group did not differ based on the gender composition of the team they were leading. Many of them explained that this is because of the vast experience they have in Their work life, so resilience has been developed in response to these cues.

As one participant states:

“Yes, I am willing to lead my team irrespective of the gender (IP12 PG 3) I usually tend to take lead where required .so you can at-least take the lead and start talking about it than things start flowing easily (IP4 PG 4)”

“I am confident and if I know that I will surely create an impact than I will surely take the lead. But if I feel someone else is better at me then leading then I will give them the lead. I am not overconfident, especially when I don't know the group .so this willingness to lead comes with experience. Where I think I am not the right person to lead, then i step back and let the

deserving person lead. but in situations where you are confident and you know that you know you work so you're deserving of being the team lead, then you should definitely lead. (IP1 PG 5)”

These statements exhibit the flexibility of the participants in terms of their willingness to lead. They are confident in their abilities to lead and are always ready to welcome a better leader.

The risk-taking ability of the leader was also explored. This is because women in our culture are taught to be risk averse. Participants reported that they have been taught from a young age not to take risks and to always be extra careful. But all of them over the years taught themselves to unlearn this behavior.

As one participant said

“No, I at first was not very risky. I am more of a risk averse person. This is because our culture has taught girls from a young age not to take risks. But i am evolving and I am teaching myself to take more risks, this is called the growth mindset. (IP5 PG8)”

And another:

“Yes I am absolutely willing to take risks. But if I talk about myself personally then I love risky situations in organizations. I was not like this at first, so it took a few years. but now I myself allot myself risky targets and I purposely take on tasks which are difficult to achieve because I enjoy the risk and the thrill. (IP6 PG4)”

This shows gender composition does rather effect women leader assertiveness because she is trying harder than needed to make her point heard. These instances highlight the presence of this awareness in women that that they know their decision-making ability as a leader is being questioned, simply because they're a woman.

However, all the women participants reported that even though these factors are present in their contexts, they don't let such stereotypes effect their leading or performance.

These sub-theme highlights the role culture plays in the upbringings of children. Gender socialization is done from a young age, so it is hard for women leaders to unlearn certain characteristics to be an efficient leader. For example, several participants reported that they had to unlearn not to take risks to be an effective leader.

This contributes theoretically to literature, such as role congruity theory, by expanding on the skills and abilities of women leaders and the specific way in which women carry out their leadership roles.

4.1.2 Women Leadership Style

Several participants talked about their leadership abilities in terms of how they usually solve a conflict or what is their response in solving an issue. This aspect was investigated because it is assumed in society that working women are confused and are not able enough to solve organizational problems. The participants of the study reported that they took a very participative approach to solving problems. Feedback is always open and appreciated by them. They did not shy away from offering their opinions and had full confidence in themselves to do the right thing. Moreover, the gender composition of the group did not phase their problem-solving abilities.

As one woman state:

“When my group is facing a conflict than I am always willing to lead and solve conflicts with them, regardless of the gender composition of the group (IP5 PG11)”

“ The responsibility to solve the problem lies on me. If the work is going on with a good flow than I don't need to be much on the forefront. but if there is a major problem than you need to be there. There's no leadership without taking that responsibility. S everyone should contribute in a conflict, including the person leading the team(IP 16 PG 2)”

These statements exhibit not only the problem-solving skills of the leader but also their attitude and willingness to lead their groups.

When generally talking about how they were as a leader, they described themselves as confident leaders who had developed themselves over time. They reported that as a leader they feel very responsible for their team members and value their opinions. They talked a lot about creating and maintaining good relationships with their colleagues, so they valued their feedback and made sure they are included. As one woman said

“What differentiates me in being confident or in being a leader is the self-awareness of where I stand. And how I need to improve .and also at the same time being open and humble enough to understand that there may be others who will have better ways of doing the Same thing or there will be my juniors who will have maybe fresher ideas and newer perspectives on things I don't have and appreciating them and not being challenged by them and accepting them with open arms. That is what I'm like and that defines me and my leadership style (IP17 PG 3)”

“I personally feel very responsible for my team members and not just for the work. I feel responsible for ensuring that their workload is balanced, that they get back home to their families. I feel responsible for ensuring that their health and wellness is ensured at

work. So, I think this part of empathy, it does make a difference between how woman approaches work and how a man approaches work. (IP5 PG 4)”

Several women talked about how their leadership style involved a participative and collaborative approach. They welcome new perspectives when solving problems or during decision making process. They themselves also took part fully and lead the discussions in teams, regardless of the gender composition of the group. The participants put emphasis on how they worked with teams to produce a better output all together. As one participant said:

“since I’m a senior person I don’t participate much myself but rather encourage my junior employees to try and solve .If I see that anyone else other than me is willing to solve the problem then I give them the chance. Because I am experienced, I have confidence in myself so I encourage others to learn. (ip1 pg 4)”

“Everyone including myself give suggestions and also advices during team discussions. I have not felt in my organization as if I am not being heard. Rather in my situation it is encourage that the employees speak up and collaborate more. It is encouraged that the woman in the organization speak up and show their results. (IP14 PG 6)”

“I am confident and if I know that I will surely create an impact than I will surely take the lead. But if I feel someone else is better at me then leading then I will give them the lead. I am not over confident, especially when I don’t know the group (IP1 PG 6)” .

Overall, the participants seemed to have a collaborative and participative leadership style. Their leadership style did not differ significantly based on gender composition of the group. They were also very confident in their problem-solving abilities and welcomes feedback.

This gives to rise to contribution in theories concerning women leadership styles. This contributes to literature which is mostly of the view that women tend to lead in a more relationship-oriented way. It would also contribute in understanding the dynamics of how gender composition might affect the leaders performance

4.1.3 Differences in Leader Behavior with respect to gender

When discussing gender diversity, several participants described how they themselves made sure that they are gender neutral in their leading behaviors. They exhibited characteristics which are inclusive for both genders. This is because they are aware that workplaces are not just a hindrance for women, but sometime for men too. This did not

mean that they were oblivious to the gender composition of the group, but rather they took decisions in a more culturally appropriate way if both gender were present.

As one woman stated:

“Even though they are the make gender I still have to behave with them in an appropriate normal way. I never make them feel like they shouldn’t feel comfortable. I make sure they feel okay so that they don’t think that working with a female is hard .I try to make sure that they don’t feel like that just because I am a female I won’t be with them during the hard parts .so in the field I am leading them .I help with them practically and give them solutions .I help them and collaborate with them and through this way these it’s easier for the opposite gender to work with each other .and a good relationship is developed .(IP14 PG3)”

And another one:

“I am a very gender-neutral person. obviously, a person has to keep in mind the cultural norms. For example, in the company of females I might be more relaxed, but this has nothing to do with emotions. I’m a very gender-neutral person. I have never felt odd sitting with the opposite gender (IP16 PG1)”

Several women leaders reported that they are aware, and they have been the target of gender stereotypes all their lives, especially when starting their careers. However, they have come a long way now and so gender diversity does not affect them to a very high degree. Some of them reported that they still sometimes get conscious when the opposite gender is present or they do feel like they need to try harder, but overall, this effect has lessened over the years because they let it affect them less.

As one participant states:

“when I am in a different setting where people don’t know me than I have to be careful about how I express myself .But I don’t think it’s a man and a women thing .if I am in a setting of all women, even than I will be conscious of what i am saying .I will make sure I am sensitive to where everyone is coming from .So irrespective of whether there are men or women ,if you don’t know them and it’s a new setting , than you have to be a little careful .that happens in all kinds of settings. gender diversity does not really influence me as such in my everyday life .I say what I want .But in a new setting I will still say what I want but I will frame it in better way . (IP17 PG 2)”

“When I do meetings with my colleagues as well, I don’t care that I am sitting with male or female. for example, when jokes are being cracked in meetings I equally participate and take part, regardless women or men are present .so if you continuously exercise this than that label will not affect you (IP6 PG 3)”

However, an interesting recurring theme which originates was female behavior with other females. Several participants reported that in their career life there have been very less instances where they have been able to depend on women. They expressed some discomfort when dealing with females. They reported that women are not always the best supporter of females but rather they make the situation more complex. Their productivity even sometime lowers when they are leading a team with women or an only women team.

As one participant states:

“Females don’t understand there can be a difference of opinion and it’s not personal. So, I prefer not to share much with females. (IP1 PG 7)”

“Females are not the best supporters of females, that’s what I’ve seen in the world. anywhere in the world (IP4 Pg 2)”

“I mean in a group if there are more opposite gender than the female then honestly, I would be more comfortable. It's easier to work with men than to work with women (IP2 PG 5)”

“Actually to be really honest it is easier for me to work with compare to females' males. In my experience when I come to the level of males and control my emotions and share respectively and then I feel more comfortable sharing and collaborating my work with males compare to females (IP6 PG PG2)”

“Group gender diversity does affect how comfortable I am. I am generally more comfortable when I’m surrounded by male colleagues. Less comfortable when it’s male and female both and very uncomfortable when it’s only females. I think this is because women show passive aggressiveness and remarks which can make others feel uncomfortable. Men know they can't talk like this to women (IP1 PG3)”

“In a mixed gathering I think my performance is higher. It’s more constructive and it’s more result oriented, because with men, there is less drama. (IP1PG3)”

This may be because in our culture it is not considered appropriate for men to talk harshly with women. Which is why males are accommodating with women but women leaders may not be as accommodating with women followers. So, women can enjoy women privilege with males only.

Through this investigation, this research contributes to literature by making us understand that in what ways group gender composition might effect women leader

performance. It also explains whether attributes such as willingness to lead, productivity and problem solving can differ based on group gender composition. In conclusion, it can be said that women leader of in this study regarded themselves as able leaders. They are not fazed by gender composition of the groups they lead which is why their ability to lead or carry out tasks is not affected. These finding contribute to existing theories as well regarding gender and leadership, such as “gender socialization theory” and other similar theories which explain gender norms and behavior.

4.2 Gender stereotyping of emotions in the workplace

4.2.1 Constraints of emotional expression in the workplace

Emotions are a very integral part of being a human being. However, when it comes to organizational settings there are some unwritten rules to be followed regarding displays of emotion. In the interviews we conducted, the participants discussed what they think of women and emotional expression in organizational settings. Several participants seemed to believe that women are more emotional than men, especially when it comes to being sensitive about their surroundings.

Emotional regulation according to the participants was very important because, females tend to get emotionally reactive to situations which do not require such a response. Which is why several women mentioning the importance of learning emotional regulation.

As one participant states:

“If employees commit a mistake, they get upset about it but I have noticed that when women commit a mistake, they not only react but have some kind of further reactions on it. This is why I woman become the target of stereotypes in which we are told to control our emotions (IP6 PG1)”

“I have observed female colleagues to react more to situations then males. Obviously, there is going to be a gender difference in how both the genders react. (IP1 PG1)”

They were of the view that women's emotion can be used as a positive trait as well. Emotions help women in multi-tasking and aid in creating relationships.

As one participant states:

“Emotions are our strength. When we sit in board room meetings, we use our emotions and turn it into productive for the company (IP1 PG 2)”

“Those emotions are our strength as well. If women weren’t so emotionally driven, they wouldn’t be able to manage house, children, in laws, job, siblings, relative, parents. We can’t manage this all but we do being a woman (IP1 PG2) “

However, when talking about the positive use of emotions, several women stated that emotions play a very important role in decision making in organizations. Most of them were of the view that decisions cannot just be based on a logic basis, so emotions must be involved. When used correctly, emotions can be a productive use for the company and provide new perspectives of dealing with things.

As one participant states:

“yes, definitely my emotions do play a part in my decisions. if you look at in an emotionally intelligent way, than decisions are taken more better (IP14 PG1) “

“Yes, emotions do play a role in decision making. So it takes a lot of years and experience to reach to that level Where you are able to do use your emotions and channelize them in a productive manner for your company. (IP1 PG2)”

However, when it comes to expressing emotions in gender diverse settings, participants have mixed views about it. Participants reported that they are aware of gender stereotyping in terms of emotions. Some of the participants reported that they do change the way the express emotions if males are present in their group, while others did not let it affect their performance.

As one participant states:

“As a leader I have to make sure that neither am I being too assertive nor too emotional by studying my surroundings. I have to think about in what ways can I express my emotions in a professional way. (IP14 PG 1)”

“No, I am never conscious about emotions. It’s a bit odd question because I don’t really think in terms of this. let me just say that I don’t express emotions very strongly and I’m always in control of my emotions. That’s a part of my nature it’s not something which has developed over time. It’s just the way I am. (IP16 PG1)”

“Yes, throughout my career I have always thought carefully about when should I express and when not to. But men should also be asked if whether they think before expressing or not. (IP6 PG 2)”

“My emotions don’t differ according to gender or other different settings. Where i have to express myself, I do it properly (IP12PG1)”

These statements exhibit that the participants did experience this stereotype where they had to be careful in expressing themselves.

However, several participants reported that even though they don't let these instances affect their performance anymore, they still have had to face backlash for expressing emotion. Many participants said that multiple times in their career they have been the target of such stereotypes where they've had to reconsider how to appropriately express how they are feeling

"These stereotypes are present because our society has still not accepted working woman. It is harder for a woman especially in leading positions to express in which is why do you they find it difficult to express emotions. These women are targeted so they have a more difficult time. What a man does, for example express anger, is accepted but what a woman does might not be. (IP6 PG 1)"

"We believe in first impressions so when it comes to woman people automatically assume that woman is emotional. That is the first impression. So, in my personal life I have seen woman being targeted for being too emotional in meetings as well. (IP1 PG 2)"

"When a woman shows her emotions than it is perceived more as an individual characteristic and on the contrary if a guy does it then it is more environmental because you know, the things are not going right, the targets are not going fine, that's why he got angry (IP2PG2)"

An interesting finding in this research was that when the participants talked about their own emotions, they did not consider anger as an emotion. They did not associate themselves with anger, rather they mostly talked about their emotions in terms of being too sensitive or caring. So, they had to be asked separately about how they express anger or disappointment at work. Several women said that when their team commits a mistake, they don't shout at them or show aggressive behavior, but rather they explain to them in a very balanced and firm way. When asked that do they feel conscious when expressing anger, several women said that they don't feel conscious of the gender present. They express disappointment in an appropriate way that is considered acceptable in organizational settings. While all of them were okay with showing anger, when asked how they portrayed it, all of the portrayed it a in a very nonaggressive way. They made sure they weren't being aggressive about it.

As one participant states:

“For more than a decade I have been working and not even a single time have I raised my voice .I manage them in a way that I don’t disrespect them .Like sometimes there is a need to take a difficult decision about a staff for example when I have to tell a staff member that we are letting them go .But I never raise my volume on them.”

“When I want to communicate disappointed or I am not okay with something than I make sure I don’t communicate it with that intensity .off course you have to communicate in a very balanced way. (IP16 PG 1)”

“in meetings I just say what I want but after that I apologize to the other person later by saying that I may have been a bit out of line. But I also started doing the apology bit when I realized that men simply cannot taken women in an aggressive tone (IP4 PG 1)”

The participants also talked about emotional expression of males in organizational settings. The participants reported that men have difficulty in expressing emotions generally. They are shamed for expressing emotions such as sympathy and care. But some women were of the view that now times are changing and acceptability of men expressing emotions is increasing.

As one participant states:

“I have seen that some men simply quit when they aren’t able to express themselves. This is because they can’t manage and simply quit. Women manage by sharing or talking about it. but I’ve seen men simply quit or start taking medicines for depressions etc. So these things are visible physically as well (IP14 PG 2)”

To sum up, all women accepted that they might be more emotional than men, so importance of emotional regulation is high. Several women reported that it is easier for them to work with men because of the involvement of less emotions. Therefore, emotionally reactivity was also mentioned because it is a skill to know how to use our emotions correctly. The research explains from a women’s perspective that how much emotions do women feel in organizational settings and to what extent are they able to express it. Women are targeted for being too emotional at times and sometimes for not being emotional. The participants also reported that emotions do play a part in their decision-making’s well. This makes their leadership style a bit relationship oriented. This contributes to literature as our research aimed to understand that how are women emotionally different from men in terms of leadership.

All this contributes to existing theories regarding gender and emotional expression, especially in the workplace as it creates a better understanding of the dynamics of emotions being expressed by both genders, and the constraints that come with it. This also contributed to

theories regarding gender, as emotions expression in workplaces are seen through a gendered lens.

4.3 Barriers to advancement in woman careers and women development

4.3.1 Working women developing resilience against stereotypes

Throughout the interviews, the participants talked about their leadership journeys and how they had achieved what they had today. A most recurring theme which was present was the participants kept highlighting how they were brought up, specifically in a country like Pakistan, which is considered a male dominant society. The participants remembered that from very young years they were taught to please others, look beautiful and be submissive to what the society wants. Self-confidence and reliability on one's own self was not taught. They also reported that the media such as tv and other social media sites also portray scenarios in which there is always a gender role division, and males were always on the superior position. They said that they were taught to accept conditions as they were and to not complain a lot.

As one participant states:

“We are taught from the start that because she's a girl, she won't be able to go forward etc. So these things are in our minds because they are fed to us in our younger years. (IP14 PG 2)

in the Pakistani society that in the upbringing of girls they don't give them the power to teach them about decision making. So, if we don't teach girls how to take risks and take decisions than they will take more time to adjust (IP16 PG3)

“Women are generally, culturally taught to be quiet, to speak less, stay slow, don't move yourself forward, you know. So, we are culturally taught other things and then it's the demand of the workplace that we should be confident so this very..i have noticed that it is very difficult to transition this. In the workplace too, women think that they should stay slow, we should not talk loudly, if we have a viewpoint and other 10 people are saying something else then we should just silently accept it. We have to change this. Women have to speak up (IP5PG6)”

In the next stage of their career life, the participants talked about their early working experience as young women, and what challenges they had to in their early years as a working woman, just because of their gender. The participants reported that in early working years they had to face a lot of backlashes, some of them had to convince their families to let them work as it was

not considered appropriate at that for a woman to work. Most of them also faced comments like you won't be able to do this or that you'll fail. Apart from that, the participants reported that even after they had joined a job, they were still given tasks which were administrative, that did not involve field work, or these that were not considered hard. They were constantly made to feel like they were not able enough for the job.

As one participant states:

"I remember I was not accepted as they couldn't grasp that I would go in the field. They were of the view that a woman simply cannot go outside. Then I convinced them that I am able for the job. But they gave me very administrative work in the start. I went into the field by showing them the results of my works. Then they realized that I can do the work. So they were already of the assumption that women do not work in the field. I had my first promotion in 2010. The right I should have gotten in my first or second year was given to me in the sixth year. So even in this situation there is biasness that I am a girl so how can I be put in the management position. So I've had to face all this in my career (IP14 PG 3)"

"In my early working days I used to face backlash when I expressed too much leading behavior. But this does not happen anymore (IP2PG6)"

Due to these problems being faced in their early working days, several women stated that they felt like they had to put extra time or effort to reach the same level men had or to gain the same importance that men had. A lot of them said that it is unfair that just due to their gender they have to put extra work effort. Working women are easily misjudged and therefore they have to tackle everything very carefully.

As one participant states:

"Being a female, I have always felt that I have to put extra effort or do something extra. The reason is because there is less acceptance for females in the workforce. So, when females are not accepted, they have to go out of the way to be accepted (IP 14PG 1)"

"Workload on a woman is harder. It is because women show to work while society didn't completely adapt. So, there are expectations from everywhere that a woman, readers quote and it makes sense every single time "you have to work like you have no children and raise your children like you have no work". (IP5PG4)

When discussing gender stereotypes, the participants recalled that they've had to face different stereotypes in different stages of life. Several participants reported that they've had to face stereotypes not just from their organizations but also sometimes from their own homes, there in laws or other significant people. They explained how society brainwashes

girls from when they are young to live a certain way, so when the women is deviant to prescribed gender roles, backlash is faced from different people.

As one participant states:

“I got married during my studies, after that what happened was that my son was born in the second year of my marriage. But my mother-in-law said to me that because I do a job, I won't want kids .so these types of things that usually hear, I got to hear them too for example she's too proud or she won't know how to run a home because she's a working woman. (IP14 PG 3)”

“When women do something, it's considered an issue but when men do it there's no reaction.in the beginning I used to sit after office hours as well so that I don't get to hear that woman don't sit around. I also used to take less holidays so that people don't say that I have taken more holidays. but I always used to question this that why our society like this is and why can't women just have flexibility. I won't get extra benefit if other people are flexible with me. (IP14 PG4)”

As a result of these stereotypes had to show everyone that they can also work and that being a woman does not create a difference in abilities. Participants reported that in early working days they used to believe these stereotypes that maybe they are not able enough for the job, but eventually they developed self-confidence and resilience.

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We explored whether the participants still felt conscious of these gender stereotypes or does it not affect them. Several participants reported that they are aware that these stereotypes exist but since they have such a long way in their journey, they don't let such

factors affect their performance anymore. They have developed resilience against all this now.

As one participant states:

“ I never feel conscious of these gender stereotypes. I don't care. If I start thinking about these things than I'll never do justice to my work, I'll never be able to enjoy my work if I keep thinking that would are others thinking about me or how do they perceive me. (IP4 PG2)”

“If you let the stereotypes get to you then they will become the reason, they will become a roadblock/cross. We have to overlook stereotypes and we have to change people around us to overlook them as well. (IP5 PG6)”

These statements represent the influence of culture on individuals over the years. Even if we disagree with gender stereotypical values, still we are faced by these ideologies, and they affect our thinking styles internally. AS portrayed above, the participants had to face a lot challenges and hurdles the achieve the positions they have today. They've come a long way so they are not bothered by these influence's to a large extent.

This contributes to developing theories regarding working women and the challenges they've faced over the years. Specifically, this contributes to socialization aspect theories regarding gender equality and the whole dynamics of working women.

4.3.2 Challenged faced by working women over the years and its effect on their performance

Several participants explained that these stereotypes do not affect their performance anymore, regardless of the gender composition of the group. This is because the participants are used to such stereotypes, so they have learned how to not let it affect them.

As one participant states:

“No, I overcome it because even if I do feel these stereotypes, I don't let them effect my job .so these types of waves are there to affect us mentally but you have to let them not affect you. You have to deal it with patience and pressure .so I try not to let this effect my performance. (IP14 PG4).”

“No now it is not effected. Maybe I used to get effected 10/15 years back but not Anymore. (IP6 PG 4)”

Several women talked about the male dominant culture prevalent in Pakistan and how its existence has led to women not reaching to their full potentials. This culture is deeply rooted in our society since a very long time which is why it is difficult to bring about a revolutionary change in how this society works. Several women also pointed out that though

they don't let these things affect them, they are still unconsciously present in us due to our culture, so we question ourselves on every decision which is gender incongruent.

As one participant states:

"These external stereotypes don't really affect me but the internal struggle is there .and what internal struggle we face is also due to the stereotypes because we are conditioned to believe that this what women should do and should not do. Nobody ever said anything like that to me but this is how our society works. this is how our culture works." (IP17.PG4)

"I feel that maybe people are aware that there is presence of this culture of this dominating type so people want to preserve this culture because they may feel that if women become equal than this culture of male being superior will lessen. (IP14 PG 3)"

Due to all these factors that exist in our society, there is a pressure on working women to set positive example to the world. This is so that these stereotypes and myths regarding working women can change and there is greater acceptance for women's career. This will also pave way for people's belief changing about working women abilities.

As one participant states:

"We open ways for other women to join the workforce. But if we don't set good examples than there will be less chance of other women entering the workforce. And those myths against will always continue (IP14 PG3)"

The demographic factors also played a key role in the lives of the participants and their experiences. Participants who lived in joint families and who were married, recurrently talked about the importance of family support and families consent to their work. They were of the view that without their family support they couldn't have pursued a career. Apart from that participant who had kids kept on mentioning the impotence of work life balance and how crucial it was for them to be a present mother as well apart bring a working woman. Interestingly, participants who had kids faced the greatest number of stereotypes. This can be because they are not fulfilling the typical female stereotype of care and nurture.

As a result, it can be understood that these gender stereotypes present in our culture certainly creates an impact on young minds, which grow up to become what they have. Our research contributes to literature by explaining how gender stereotypes effect women leader performance, and how they serve as barriers to their advancement. Since these stereotypes are present everywhere (media, gender socialization) they create a gendered lens through which we view society. So, it becomes difficult in such a society for a woman to aspire in her

career. So, these stereotypes affect her performance because she is doing something not according to prescribed gender role.

This contributes theoretically to literature as it explores the dynamic working women and challenges associated with it. Theories such as “role congruity theory” or “feminist theories” also explore similar dynamics. This also gives an understanding as to how a leader’s gender can impact the way they behave.

Overall, this chapter explains in detail the findings of the study which are gathered from analyzing the interviews. It explains in detail the different challenges faced by women in their work life and the factors associated with it.

Chapter 05

Discussion and Analysis

This chapter discusses the results of the study and explains it by giving reasoning as to why certain results have been revealed. It also gives evidence of past research supporting the present findings.

In this research we aimed to understand the lived experiences of women in leadership positions in Pakistan. Study results reveal that women in Pakistan, especially working women, they face a de-powering status in society due to the already prescribed gender roles. She faces unwelcoming treatment, especially in work settings because society makes women feel like they only belong at home (Bhatti & Ali, 2020). Women face different stereotypes in different phases of their life, but as they age, they learn to navigate through these hurdles and not let it affect them. Women leaders are expected to carry out dual roles as they must maintain home and work life together. The further challenge women leader face is of maintaining a balance between display of genetic and communal characteristics when present in organizational settings (Williams & Tiedens, 2016). The result of the study reveal that gender stereotypes are very much prevalent in our society and many working women go through them. But an interesting finding regarding this was that working women who are married and have children seemed to face more gender stereotypes regarding them leaving their home /kids for their jobs. These stereotypes did effect women at first, in the early years of their career but as they grew older it did not faze them, rather they have developed thick skin against it. So, while working women are aware and become a target of these stereotypes, it did not necessarily affect their performance anymore (Mauchi et al., 2020). When analyzing women leader productivity, willingness to lead and problem-solving ability, it was found that women tend to work better and have higher productivity with males rather than females. Apart from that group gender diversity did not affect their performance or productivity (Moreno-Gómez et al., 2018). The leader's willingness to lead also did not vary across different gender groups, rather it changed due to other contextual factors such as type of conflict (Hack & van der Wijst, 2017). The leadership style most of the leaders followed was collaborative and participative (Tipu, 2018). They were fully engaged with their teams and valued their feedback. When talking about women leader emotions, several participants were of the view that women do rather have more intense emotions than men. They admitted that women seem to be more involved with their emotions than men are. According to

participants, emotions also play a part in their decisions making and serves as a multipurpose role. But being too emotional has its negative consequences as well, such as emotional reactivity, so emotional regulation is very important (Karazi-Presler et al., 2018; Schrock, 2020; Zheng, Surgevil, et al., 2018). Overall women leaders agreed that the difference between men and women leadership may be the involvement of emotions as they not only cared about the work being done, but also to maintain relationships with their colleagues (Mbepera, 2015). The success of women leaders is largely dependent on her own will power but also on family and peer support. As women go forward in their careers, they keep on learning better leadership skills which enhance their ability to collaborate and lead effectively, whether it be a gender diverse setting or not. However, women in senior positions set an example for women who want to work and help build the gender gap in leadership. These study results can be explained with the help of role congruity theory. Traditional gender role requirements and leadership role requirements are incongruent so participants in this study also reported that they've had to face challenges and stereotypes because of these incongruencies. This also explains the evaluation of a leader in terms of her performance. Participants in this study reported that they used to be judged and are still judged more harshly in terms of leadership competencies because it is assumed that being a leader does not come naturally to a woman (Mukarram, Saeed, Hammoudeh, & Raziq, 2018).

5.1 Research contributions

This research contributes to the growing understanding of women leadership, particularly in settings where women are leading and are in gender diverse settings. This exploratory research brings to light the concept of working women resilience and its association with workplace culture. This research contributes to literature by explaining exactly how these stereotypes affect the working women over time and how do women leaders regulate their emotions in a gender diverse setting by evaluating their experiences.

Chapter 06.

Conclusion

This chapter comprises of concluding the findings of the study in accordance with the research questions. Apart from that theoretical and practical implications are also discussed but along with it limitations also explained.

This research study focuses on women leader performance in gender diverse groups and how she navigates challenges she is faced with. Research as been conducted to get answer to the following questions:

- How (if at all) the stereotypes attached to women leadership abilities influence the performance of women leaders working in gender diverse groups?
- How (if at all) the women leader productivity, decision-making skills and willingness to lead vary across gender groups (same gender versus diverse)?
- How emotional are women leaders in their leadership and decision making compared to their man counterparts?

To conduct the study, qualitative e research method is adopted, following a semi-structured interview technique for data collection. Thematic analysis technique has been used for data analysis.

The results of the study reveal that there are very strong gender stereotypes present in our society regarding working women, these stereotypes are taught from a very young age through different sources such as media, culture, or observation. Due to these stereotypes, a lot of families don't accept women working outside the home, so they have to strive harder to achieve their wants. Moreover, different stereotypes are faced in different stages of life. However, as a conclusion, several participants reported that they are aware that these stereotypes exist but since they have such a long way in their journey, and since they've been facing it from the start, they try and not let such factors affect their performance anymore. They develop resilience against all this. Few years back they used to get conscious of gender composition but over the years they have learnt to navigate through it. Women leaders are comfortable in their leadership roles and do not become very conscious of the gender they are surrounded with. But when it comes to expressing anger or showing aggressive behavior,

they do in a polite and civil way. This highlights that women leader may be unconsciously aware of how they portray themselves to their colleagues, so they try not to show too much aggressive behavior. Women leaders willingness to lead, productivity and problem-solving skills were also not affected by the gender composition of their teams. They thought themselves to be very collaborative and participative leaders, as they cared about whether other people participated or not. However, several women reported that they are not comfortable working with other females as females are not always the best supporter of other females. When it comes to emotional difference between men and women in terms of leadership, it was concluded that women are rather more emotional than men so emotional regulation is important for them. Emotions are also involved in their decision making.

6.1 Theoretical and Practical Implications

Taking on a gender roles perspective i.e., role congruity theory and also recognizing the role of social institutions in maintaining or eradication gender stereotypes, this study represents the very significant role the institutional environment plays in understanding gender diversity in organizations. It explains in the perspective of role congruity theory, the prevailing gender norms and the impact these norms create. This study also contributes to women leadership literature and incorporates theoretical perspectives from social psychology as well. This study gives an insight into areas of improvement for organization to work on. This study provides a better understanding of how organizations can facilitate or become an obstacle for women in terms of women leader performance. This knowledge can assist policy makers in organizations to initiate programs that promote gender equality and create more welcoming behavior for women leaders. All these initiatives will also encourage and motivate female employees to work.

6.2 Limitations of the study

The participants of this study only consisted of women so only a certain type of perspective is being considered.

Different factors such as age of the participants, income type, other contextual factors can have an impact on participant experience. But these other factors could not be considered because of time constraints and because in this research we are focusing on women leaders lives from an organizational perspective.

Due to the heavy work schedules and hectic routines of women leaders in managerial positions, it was difficult to access them and collaborate a time with them.

Another limitation was that most of the participants were from similar geographic regions (Islamabad or Karachi) which also gives way to similar cultures they are brought up in. The culture of these areas are mostly patriarchal which influences in how the participants are brought up and how they view themselves. By interviewing women from different geographical regions, different perspectives can be attained as they would view themselves differently.

In short, this study concluded that different factors such as genders stereotypes do effect women performance, but the effect is lowered as they age because of buildup of resilience

6.3 Future Recommendations

As future recommendations it is proposed that future research can try to increase sample size in a context where generalizability is desirable and use of quantitative research design in that context. Future research can also work with homogenous groups consisting of all males/females led by women leaders for comparison purposes. These findings of this study can also be tested quantitatively.

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08 Appendices

Informed Consent Form

Women Leadership and Group Performance in gender diverse groups

This study explores women leadership and how it can be impacted by being in different gender groups. When a women is at a leading position, it creates a great impact on the entire women workforce by personifying the idea that this position is something that can be achieved and thus serves as a role model for other women. Gender composition of teams in organizations has become a very important aspect of consideration. This is because it greatly affects team performance, goal achievement and organizational productivity

I have voluntarily agreed to take part in this research

I have been given the option of withdrawal from the study at anytime

I have been explained the purpose and aim of the study

I agree to my interview being audio recorded

I have been explained that my identity and my organization's identity will remain anonymous

I was briefed those extracts from my interview can be quoted in the research

Signature of research participant -----

Date

Signature of researcher -----

Date

Interview Guideline

Hello, my name is Mahnoor Zia. I am currently enrolled in NUST business school, and I am completing my master's degree in Human Resource Management.

Thank you for taking the time out of your busy schedule for me. I will only need an hour of your time.

Let me explain the purpose of this interview. This study explores women leadership and how it can be impacted by being in different gender groups. When a women is at a leading position, it creates a great impact on the entire women workforce by personifying the idea that this position is something that can be achieved and thus serves as a role model for other women. Gender composition of teams in organizations has become a very important aspect of consideration. This is because it greatly affects team performance, goal achievement and organizational productivity Research is lacking regarding how women are impacted by factors in our environment which hinder their growth in the corporate world. Which is why this research is being conducted, to fulfill this gap.

Please understand that your responses will be recorded, if you are comfortable, but will be kept private. The only people with who will have access to your data will be me and my supervisor. Your company will not be informed about any of the information you have shared. Therefore, I would greatly appreciate if you can be candid with me.

Thankyou

Questions for interview

Difference of emotions between the two genders regarding leadership

- As a leader, how do you determine how much emotion to express. Does this vary by the gender you are with?
- Do you feel your emotions play a part in your decision-making skill?
- How do your emotions differ according to different work groups?
- Do you think there is a difference in how much emotions are expressed by women and men leaders?
- Do you think that some emotions women can't express, especially when you are present in a gender diverse setting?
- Do you think that some emotions men can't express, especially when you are present in a gender diverse setting?

stereotypes related to gender

- What are some of the stereotypes you have faced as a leader? Why do you think women are judged for being a leader?

- When leading a gender diverse team, do you ever feel conscious because of gender stereotypes attached to leading women?
- When you are working in a gender diverse group, to what extent do you feel these gender stereotyping effects?
- As a leader, do you feel you have to behave in a certain prescribed way or exhibit certain characteristics to be accepted in your organization .
- In our society, there are certain gender roles which must be followed by both genders. Women are thought to be better suited as a caregiving figure while leading is up to the men. As a leader, Do you face backlash when you do not behave according to your gender role?
- Do these stereotypes hinder your performance in any way or cause you to achieve less than you would want to?
- How have these stereotypes effected your leadership performance?
- Do these stereotypes effect your ability to take decisions?
- Are you confident about the decisions you take when working with and leading a gender diverse group?
- It is mostly seen that most tasks women perform in organization, no matter how important, are undervalued. As a leader, how do you feel about that.
- Do these stereotypes cause you to perform different than what your originally capable of?
- Do you ever fear of the criticism you might face if you portray stereotypical male characteristics in your leading role?

Women leader productivity

- In this society, women are usually judged more harshly when they take up leading roles in organizations This also effects their productivity, especially when they work in gender diverse groups. Do you think you are facing the same situation or is it better?
- As a team lead are you usually willing to take risks to achieve results?
- Do you feel your productivity is effected when working in gender diverse groups?
- When women lead teams or departments in organizations, employees already assume that that team's performance will not be up to the mark. Do you think you have ever faced this type of situation ?

Willingness to lead.

- If a group comprises of more men than women, would you still be willing to lead and actively participate in problem solving.
- When facing problems are you usually willing to cooperate with groups members and solve problems
- Though you are a leader, but when facing work problems in a gender diverse groups, do you tend to take the lead or let others lead.
- Do you shy away from offering solutions to problems your department might be facing, especially when you are in a gender diverse group?
- How much do you contribute ideas in groups when in the presence of male and females?
- What drawbacks have you encountered when expressing your willingness to lead?

Decision making

- As a leader do you think you are able to take informed decisions on the behalf of your team when you are faced with a problem ?
- What is the reaction or attitude of your team/department to you, if you take a wrong decision or commit a mistake?
- How do you think your decision-making ability changes when in the presence of a gender diverse group?
- When working with gender diverse groups, do you feel that your decisions have the same authority and power as that of that other male leader?