

Pakistani Perspective of Education and Abusive Supervision: A Road Less Travelled

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Abstract

Present study focuses on examining the nature of supervision often unreported by the career-oriented, educated and passionate individuals in banking profession. The objective of the present study is to empirically validate the differences (if any) between working and educated class, and to probe into the gender-sensitivity and nature of household (i.e. traditional career couples vs. dual career couples). Literature evidence is suggestive that added family responsibilities (in terms of being parents) reduce decisiveness about career-switching, often resulting in an unending exposure to abusive supervision. Population of the research study is Private, Public, Commercial and Islamic Banks in Twin cities. Stratified random sampling technique is used and sample comprises of 540 bankers. The data was collected through questionnaires. SPSS 22.0 was used for data analysis. The average education of the 51% sample is 16-18 years. Results are indicative that working mothers appear to be experiencing more of abusive supervision than working fathers, whereas, across TCC and DCC, results did not substantiate a statistically significant difference. Limitations are indicated. Future studies shall examine the antecedents and consequences of abusive supervision in other segments of society.

Keywords: abusive supervision, employed parents, dual career couples (TCC), traditional career couples (DCC), banking, Pakistan

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Introduction

Pakistan's labour force has experienced a radical increase in female paid labour participation in last two decades although still lower "in comparison with male labour participation". The credit to this fast-paced transition can be attributed to education in a traditional as well as distance learning mode. The availability of education to those who are keen to learn has enabled a dramatic and drastic shift from a simple landscape of male as primary breadwinner and female as primary homemaker to a richer, much involuted, economically struggling warfront in Pakistan.

While the benefits may seem to be enhanced quality of life due to dual earnings in dual career households, the costs associated with child nurturance and safety from abuse and harassments, marital quality, spousal conflicts, an increasing disharmony in gendered stereotypes and couple's ability (or inability) to recalibrate new roles, added responsibilities and enhanced economic independence cannot go unnoticed.

Raza, Azeem, Humayon and Ansari (2017) highlighted abusive supervision as one of the leading factors causing turnover intention in banking sector in a sample of 100 banks in Vehari, Pakistan. The findings are supported by relevant literature of various researchers like Abbas, Hussain and Ibrahim (2015), Ahmad and Afgan (2016), and Ahmad, Khattak and Ahmad (2016).

Abusive supervision has remained largely understudied in USA (Blasé & Blasé, 2003), gaining social researcher's attention only in the first decade of this century through studies examining victims of abusive supervision (Martinko et al., 2013). Furthermore, according to Tepper (2007) "abusive supervision is a significant social problem that warrants continued scholarly inquiry". In echo with these local findings, present study attempts to examine experiences of abusive supervision in educated class of society i.e. bankers.

Review of Literature

Abusive supervision is examined as a work domain stressor in present study. Tepper (2007, 2000) referred to abusive supervision as "subordinates' perceptions of the extent to which supervisors engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviours, excluding physical contact". Abusive supervision is referred as the "expressions of non-physical hostility which supervisors perpetrate against their direct reports" (Schat, Frone, & Kelloway, 2006).

Abusive supervision is assumed to be more frequent in countries with high power distance and few studies have examined “abusive supervision in non- U.S. samples” (Aryee, Chen, Sun & Debrah, 2007). Thus there is a dearth of studies in non-US sample as well as shall be examined in corollary with education. Aryee, Sun, Chen & Debrah (2008) obtained data about abusive supervision from multiple organizations in the manufacturing industry, thus limiting the generalizability of findings across non-manufacturing industries. Restubog, Scott and Zagenzyk (2011) cautioned about the cross-national generalizability of their findings as countries tend to differ across in-group-collectivism and individualism. In the work context, Hershcovis (2011) contended the differences across occupations in actually being a victim of abusive supervision (Aquino & Thau, 2009) and mere perception of abusive supervision (Tepper, 2007) still remains understudied. In the same vein, Restubog, Scott and Zagenzyk (2011) found relationship-oriented occupations “such as sales and marketing, customer service, and public relations reported higher levels of abusive supervision and psychological distress than those in other occupations” and is suggestive of precautionary measure to be taken by identifying groups more prone to experience abusive supervision and resulting negative outcomes. In the light of the given facts, as from the service sector, present study attempts to take banking sector as the focus of enquiry upon abusive supervision.

In an economically developing and culturally collectivist country like Bangladesh, working women are known to continue to shoulder household chores and labour more than male counterparts (Sadeque et al., 1997). Egypt is also regarded as a patriarchal culture (Burke & El-kot, 2011; El-Ghannam, 2001, 2002) and the society characterizes women to be primary care giver of family and home (Ali, 2005; Metcalfe, 2006, 2007, 2008). According to Al-Lamky (2007) and Jamali et al. (2006) the society is metamorphosing, and gendered attitudes are melting in Egypt now, by letting women work and educate themselves in numbers almost equivalent to men (Mostafa, 2003). However, it may still be a long way before the patriarchal ice melts in countries laden with gendered division of household labor.

The same findings are echoed from India and Italy, where according to Desai et al. (2011) and Riva (2013) respectively, moving from “ carer” to “provider” remains indifferent from women shouldering the prime child/elder care responsibility along with household work (Sahoo & Rath, 2003).

In the light of the aforementioned studies, the following research questions (RQs) are posed.

RQ1: Does experiences of abusive supervision differ for working fathers and working mothers?

RQ2: Does experiences of abusive supervision differ for traditional career couples vs. dual career couples?

Methodology

The research design is a descriptive quantitative study.

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique: The target population includes all banks (public and private) operational in Pakistan. The targeted population is banks operating in twin city Rawalpindi and Islamabad. "According to official website of State Bank of Pakistan (SBP, 2010), 38 banks are operating in Rawalpindi/Islamabad. From the official websites of these 38 banks, researcher found that a total number of 10,361 branches of these banks operating in the" geography of Federal Capital Islamabad and twin city of Rawalpindi (retrieved June, 2013).

Sample is drawn from all "Commercial banks including public, private, Islamic commercial banks and international commercial banks. To represent the population of commercial banking staff, suitable sampling technique is Stratified Random Sampling, keeping in view the specified inclusion/exclusion criteria.

After rejecting incomplete questionnaires, a sample of 540 is finally drawn from branches of these banks operating in Federal Capital Islamabad and twin city of Rawalpindi. Sekaran (2006) referred to "unit of analysis as the level of aggregation of the data collected during the subsequent data analysis stage" (p. 132). The "unit of analysis"/subject in this research is individuals in "Employed Two-Parent Intact Couple" in banking sector.

Inclusion Criteria: Population of the present study has three inclusion criteria. First, the respondents have to be married and shall be living together in a couple setup (thus leading to the exclusion of separated/divorced individuals). Second, the respondents should have been working somewhere (and may have a working/non-working spouse). Third, the respondents have to be parents (to enable the examination of Parental Stress), thus excluding the non-parents. Family type (i.e. two parent / single parent family) has been validated as a determinant of the balance and conflict in the family domain (Ojala et al., 2014). The inclusion criteria of present study aimed only at the two-parent intact family with either or both spouses employed.

Response Rate: A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed among respondents; 650 banking staff completed and returned the survey forms. Upon examination, 35 questionnaires were found incompletely filled and thus were rendered infeasible. The final total sample size was 540, which is approx. 67.5%.

Scale: Abusive Supervision is measured through Tepper (2000) 15-item scale. The scale is found to be valid and reliable and has been used in relevant researches (Tepper et al., 2008, 2009). For the purpose of integrated literature, Tepper (2007) urged researchers to use a common measurement instrument. The five-point Likert Scale is (1= Never, 5= All the time). Sample items are, "My boss invades my privacy and My boss ridicules me in front of others".

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis reveals Cronbach Alpha to be 0.800. Since $\alpha > 0.7$ indicates acceptable and satisfactory internal consistency reliability (Nunnally 1978).

Plan of Analysis

In an attempt to answer the research questions, independent sample t-test is chosen. The test helps determine the difference, if any, between the means of two independent groups on a dependent variable measured on continuous scale, as well as helps determine the statistical significance between the two groups. Since all the subjects are parents in present study, males vs. females can be replaced with fathers vs. mothers. Likewise, the household type is composed of two dichotomous independent groups of traditional career couples (spouse not working) and dual career couples (spouse working).

Findings and Discussion

An independent sample t-test was run to determine if there were differences in working fathers and working mothers with respect to abusive supervision. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was violated as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p=.000$). The results of t-test are given in table 01.

Table 1

Gender Wise Comparison of Abusive Supervision across

Participants	Mean	SD	N	T	R
Working Fathers	2.05	.64	352	-2.35	.019
Working Mothers	2.17	.48	188		

As shown in table 1, the results of t-test ($t=-2.35$; $p=.019$) was found to be statistically significant with women (working mothers) reporting more abusive treatment than men (employed men); the mean scores of respondents showed that working mothers experienced more stress ($M=2.17$; $SD=.48$) than working fathers ($M=2.05$; $SD=.64$).

Table 2

Comparison of Traditional and Dual Career Couples for Abusive Supervision

Participants	Mean	SD	N	T	R
Traditional Career Couples	2.07	.54	356	-1.504	.134
Dual Career Couples	2.15	.68	184		

In the quest of RQ2 to assess differences in experiences of abusive supervision between traditional career couples and dual career couples, an independent sample t-test was run as shown in table 2. The assumption of homogeneity of variances was violated as assessed by Levene's test for equality of variances ($p=.000$). The result of t-test ($t=304.246$; $p=.134$) was found to be statistically non-significant. The mean scores of respondents showed that dual career couples experienced more abuse ($M=2.15$; $SD=.681$) than traditional career couples ($M=2.0$; $SD=.539$). Thus, though a difference in means exists, the statistical significance is not validated. The results revealed that employed mothers reported more abusive supervision than employed fathers, thus eliciting the gender-bound differences in men and women. The same significance, however, could not be established through the comparison of the experiences and reports of household type variation. The difference between traditional and dual career households was minor as well as insignificant. Thus, it is established that both type of households, i.e. with and without an employed spouse, experience the same abusive supervision.

Dual Career couples reported higher levels of work stressors and work-family conflict than single-career couples, in an Australian study (Elloy & Smith, 2003). On similar grounds, it shall be noted that the economy generated by dual career couples may enable them to enjoy better quality of work and family life than traditional career couples.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Education has played a pivotal role in shaping attitudes as well as introducing flexibility in people's mind-sets across gender-sensitive cultures. It is noteworthy that no significant differences in abuse experienced by traditional career couples and dual career couples, reflects an acceptance of educated and career-oriented women (working mothers). However, an uncompromised gendered division of household labour with system of domesticity still primarily shouldered on women reflects a still existing gender stereotype. It is hoped that with more time and education, a visible effort in reducing gendered stereotypes can be made and career-orientedness may be facilitated. The study has two caveats. One of the limitations is the cross-sectional study design. Secondly, the data is taken from banking sector only and the findings shall be generalized with caution. Future studies may examine role of abusive supervision in continuation of the eclectic literature in other segments of society as well.

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