

Families of Women Entrepreneurs in Pakistan Their Paramount Support or Dreadful Obstacle

Farhan Sohail¹, Mehdi Abbas², Essa Khan³, Arsalan Siddiqui⁴, Sheikh Muhammad Ali⁵,
Syed Rizwan Ali⁶

¹Senior Lecturer, Bahria University, Karachi, farhansohail.bukc@bahria.edu.pk

²Senior Lecturer, Bahria University, Karachi, mehdiabbas.bukc@bahria.edu.pk

³Assistant Professor, Bahria University, Karachi, essakhan.bukc@bahria.edu.pk

⁴Lecturer, Bahria University, Karachi, arsalanahmedsiddiqui.bukc@bahria.edu.pk

⁵Assistant Professor, Bahria University, Karachi, smali.bukc@bahria.edu.pk

⁶Assistant Professor, Bahria University, Karachi, rizwanali.bukc@bahria.edu.pk

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ABSTRACT

Purpose:

This research aims to identify some female entrepreneurs and their relationship profiles with their families, which are categorized by families having a prominent part in influencing their decisions, activities, and behavior.

Methodology:

The qualitative technique was used as it is well suited to examining the experiences of different people. Open-ended Interviews with Pakistani female entrepreneurs using a semi-structured questionnaire were used to obtain data. The research allowed us to focus on one of the most pressing concerns affecting female entrepreneurs: integrating life with family, work, and their goals related to their profession.

Findings:

Evidently, knowing and understanding the importance of the household in the entrepreneurial experiences of women is critical to deciphering the reasons why enterprises that are owned by women thrive or crash, as family relations will invariably influence their performance.

Conclusion:

The research revealed that female entrepreneurs and their families have a significant linkage with their entrepreneurial experiences i.e., individual decisions of women to become entrepreneurs and the features of their businesses cannot be fully comprehended unless the family dimension is also considered.

1. Introduction

Research conducted in different parts of the world has investigated the impact of the family on women startups (Hughes, 2003). According to other research, families have an important role in are based on conversations with several female entrepreneurs in Pakistan. Pakistan has been chosen because it is shown in previous studies that women entrepreneurs stated numerous challenges in handling their projects (Elahi and Malik, 2021). The prevailing robust masculine concepts shelter females' empire-building related to business, not just as a basis of restriction, compulsions, and duties, but as a basis of assets and sustenance (Dyer & Handler, 1994; Ram & Holliday, 1993; Zamberi Ahmad, 2011). According to past research, it is critical to concentrate on the role of the family and to explore any methods in which the family might be a part of women's entrepreneurial endeavors. We provide a typology that describes a variety of family profiles to achieve this goal. These profiles social, economic, and political scopes and escort to the frailer social status of females in Pakistan. They are demoralized to launching their business (Nasir et al., 2019). Also, these writers note that in countries with strong family ties (such as Pakistan), family is frequently founded on a conventional distribution of responsibilities, with males defined as providers and women as domestic managers.

1.1. Female Business Owners and Their Families

According to Schroder et al. (2011), some authors have stated that families can have an impact on their family members' professional choices. Students from a background of family business are despairing of having control in a career as entrepreneurs, however; enthusiastic about their ability to follow one (Zellweger et al. 2011).

Numerous other researches illustrate that people coming from a family having business every so often take the identical path. Because family members internalize the business's concepts and attitudes (Scherer et al., 1990; Brockhaus & Horwitz, 1986), this result is much stronger in efficacious firms (Shapiro & Sokol, 1982; Duchesneau & Gartner, 1990). Information, expertise, and competencies are also passed down through the generations of business families. Interaction with folks who are engaged in business accomplishments regularly promotes a process of learning, which motivates other members of the family to pursue a career in entrepreneurship (Krueger, 1993). According to certain studies, the effect of family on the professional choices of its members is conditioned by sexual role, and female family members are influenced less frequently. Other social and cultural factors often reduce the family effect on women's career choices, urging them to hierarchize, other different paths, chiefly regarding the roles of mothers and wives (Matthews & Moser, 1996). In businesses run by the family, sons are yet frequently favored as beneficiaries (Haberman and Danes, 2007; Vera and Dean, 2005).

Only a few daughters choose to stay out of the family company of their own volition (Cesaroni & Sentuti, 2015). Female Offspring are increasingly being forced to abandon their chance to join the business of the family as they believe that having families and obligations are impediments that become a hurdle in the business (Cesaroni & Sentuti, 2014). When it comes to women's entrepreneurial careers, the marriage family can be an impediment. In the previous research on women entrepreneurs, this effect is readily visible (Goffee and Scase, 1985). Family is a basis of accountability in the "domestic" setup, which refers to females whose individuality, is centered on the duties of mother and wife, according to their typology. Such roles impose a slew of responsibilities and obligations on females, causing them to place a lower priority on their careers. The

importance of a family is also clearly obvious in the "traditional" setup of female entrepreneurs, although it is less prominent in this profile. Traditional women are more committed to their jobs in the workplace, but they also have a robust loyalty to conventional gender norms and are unwilling to put their families first. They frequently choose to become entrepreneurs to take part in the family's revenue instead of pursuing individual goals. In several of Carter and Cannon's studies of female entrepreneurs, family plays an important role (1988). The typology illustrates how females get into and stay in business. The role of the family is especially crucial for "returners," people who get back to work after a leave of maternity. For many, a business embodies an occasion to earn money while balancing work and family obligations. For "high achievers" who are career-driven but don't want to spend time away from their families, entrepreneurship flexibility is critical. The family has a very different role in the traditionalists' profile. Their entrepreneurial careers are a product of the business environment in which they grew up.

2. Literature Review

In the case of women, the conditioning impact of the family of birth is frequently along with the new family formed through marriage. Analysis of why a woman decides to become an entrepreneur demonstrates the latter's importance (Hughes, 2003).

Several scholarly articles suggest that females are compelled to face a balance of work-life issues, particularly if they are mothers of small children. Self-employment is easier to manage than working as a dependent, which has more rigid timetables and less flexibility (Abraham, 2020; Wellington, 2006; Rnsen, 2012). Other research has shown the importance of family ties in women's business experience (Paoloni and Dumay, 2015; Paoloni and Demartini, 2012). Some studies also emphasize the importance of family in securing funding for women-owned enterprises. Numerous other studies demonstrate that female entrepreneurs begin their businesses with less capital than male partners; they cannot increase capital from exterior bases even later in the business life cycle (Coleman & Robb, 2009; Cannon 2009; Fairlie and Robb, 2009). A significant event such as having children distinguishes between distinct female profiles and influences the goals that women assign to their employment (Cromie & Hayes 1988). There are many entrepreneurial hurdles that women and transgender entrepreneurs confront in Pakistan (Farhan et al; 2022). These writers differentiate between pacesetters that are females without children who preview their experience of entrepreneurs as a source of self-fulfillment and other female entrepreneurs, such as the dualists, the ones who prioritize work-family balance. Returning to work means restoring autonomy for the "returners."

Research that emphasizes the details females offer for becoming businesspersons (Scott, 1986; Hughes, 2003; Caputo & Dolinsky, 1998) reveals the family's essential involvement in female entrepreneurial experiences.

There are two of them:

- 1. Need-driven motivations for women to create businesses:** initiating a business is a need as there are no additional career possibilities or since they have personal or family obligations.
- 2. Reasons that women are drawn to entrepreneurship because of opportunities:** initiating a business is a chance that allows females to attain their goals and fulfill their desires.

"Family is the intervening variable between gender and business," as claimed by Bruni et al. (2000: 159). This is why, in women's lives, family and employment are frequently intertwined (Caputo and Dolinsky, 1998). Women's business management is also influenced by their families. Women entrepreneurs can connect family, community, and company, according to the "integrated perspective" (Brush, 1992). Women see their business as an "interconnected system of relationships," rather than a separate element in their lives. This suggests that a woman's role as a mother, wife, or daughter does not change when she becomes an entrepreneur. These jobs will continue to have a significant impact on her entrepreneurial journey. They can help her work, but they can also get in the way. This is why it's critical to pay attention to the role of the family in female entrepreneurship, as well as to recognize and depict real-life scenarios involving female entrepreneurs.

For this reason, it's critical to emphasize the family's role in women's entrepreneurial experiences, as well as to characterize the different dimensions that the relationship between women entrepreneurs and their families might take. As a result, we want to look into the function of the birth or marriage family in women's entrepreneurial experiences to see how they influence them positively or negatively in Pakistan. The article aims is to define some typical female entrepreneurship-family relationship profiles, which are characterized by families playing a significant role in women entrepreneurs' lives.

3. Methodology

We have used a qualitative research approach based on case studies to address our research topic. This method is particularly well adapted to observing the meaning of people's experiences and in-depth examinations of real-life current events. Open-ended interviews (McKenzie, 2007) were conducted with 15 Pakistani female entrepreneurs after they were found through certain Pakistani entrepreneurial organizations. Then there are the women entrepreneurs interviewed, who are all from Pakistan just like the authors.

The proximity to the women entrepreneurs interviewed allowed for a more detailed investigation of the case studies of women. The women in the study were purposefully chosen to represent a range of personal and family statuses (single or married; with offspring or without offspring). The attached table gives a quick overview of the entrepreneurs who were questioned.

Table.1. Details of the Interviewees

S.No	Name	Industry	Age	Marital Status	Children
1	Shaheen	Restaurant	36	Married	Yes
2	Ramsha	Clothes	26	Unmarried	No
3	Madiha	Food Supply	38	Unmarried	No
4	Saniya	Textile	30	Married	No
5	Nosheen	Fitness	27	Unmarried	No
6	Mehwish	Beauty	30	Unmarried	No
7	Zareen	House Owner	28	Unmarried	No
8	Imama	Farm Owner	30	Married	Yes
9	Zoha	Construction	37	Married	Yes
10	Ayesha	Firm Owner	29	Unmarried	No
11	Emaan	Clothes	32	Married	Yes
12	Zubab	Beauty	28	Unmarried	No

13	Sualeha	Food	33	Married	Yes
14	Rahmeen	Food	23	Unmarried	No
15	Areesha	Plastic	25	Married	Yes

Source: Author's own elaboration

To determine the number of women to interview, the data saturation approach was used (Yin, 2009). Throughout the interviews, a semi-structured questionnaire (Qu and Dumay, 2011) was used to collect personal and business information, which was led by a checklist. The importance of their families' contributions to their business experience was highlighted. The interviewer tried to emphasize the relevance of the household in the females' experience of entrepreneurship by focusing on both verbal and nonverbal communication.

Data were gathered through semi-structured interviews, which were chiefly effective for elucidating the behavior of the analyses' primary players, as well as understanding their perspectives and the significance they place on experiences and events in which they participated (Qu and Dumay, 2011; Stake, 2000). Following the literal transcription of the conducted interviews, they were analyzed in the following ways (Hall et al., 2012).

1. Thematic analysis of the conducted interviews along with all accessible substantial were used to analyze each case (Stake, 2000). In the first step, an interpretative analysis was carried out with the help of several pre-defined topics based on current literature (Byrne and Fattoum, 2015).
2. A combined study and analysis of all examples to sense distinctions and similarities, as well as to classify kinds that may be used to account for the wide range of scenarios observed in the entrepreneurial activity of females. The thorough investigation of each instance, as well as the cross-reading of all available information, has revealed additional concerns, allowing us to develop a more thorough and comprehensive informational framework, which provides probable meanings related to the part of the family of female entrepreneurs.

Using interviews, five different themes were identified, each characterized by different sorts of family involvement on women's lives. Each theme is explained in length in the following parts, along with some excerpts from interviews. Interviews are beneficial for focusing on the part of the family in females' entrepreneurship practices and for allowing us to listen to what women have to say.

4. Analysis

Themes emerging from the analyses that were conducted, as well as brief summaries of a few of the utmost illustrative instances, investigated and extracts from the taken interviews, are given and discussed in the following part. The latter is especially valuable for determining the part that female entrepreneurs attribute to their relations in their entrepreneurial endeavors. For purposes of anonymity, the instances studied are provided under fictitious identities. Following are the findings of the study:

4.1. Family, The Utmost Duty

When family impacts women's job choices and pushes them toward entrepreneurship, even if it contradicts their goals and ambitions, it may be considered an obligation. Furthermore, how women run their own enterprises may be influenced by their families. When it comes to daughters from business households, there are certain specific

examples of this predicament. Daughters' participation in family companies as successors is rarely the consequence of women's free will. More often than not, it is the result of a difficult decision that either excludes them (for example, if there are brothers who want to run the family firm) or pushes them to take the helm. In the latter situation, women's desire to commit themselves to the family business is not always the driving force behind their decision to join the family firm.

It often stems from a sense of obligation, or the perception of an obligation, to assist their families or to fill a role that no one else in the family wants to do. Shaheen had a similar experience. Her mother, who operated a family 'Dhabba' (restaurant), died while she was very young and was studying oriental languages intending to become an interpreter. Her younger brother had already enlisted in the military and was unable to review his life plans. As a result, Shaheen felt obligated to assume control of the company and abandon her professional objectives.

"This is not the job I wanted. When my mother died, I took her position. It was not my plan for my life... but I was a part of it. I returned home temporarily when my mother became ill, but I wanted to finish my studies. Our projects, however, were then disrupted... and now it's my turn."

Women may feel obligated to their families since they must care for their homes, children, and other relatives. In reality, the need to have adequate time for their family obligations often motivates women to pick a flexible career that allows them to combine work and family obligations, even if it does not meet their expectations or objectives.

"My grandma had grown unwell, so I decided to create a shop," Ramsha, a boutique owner, explains. "I suggested that I create a shop so that we may all work together as a family."

For unmarried and childless women entrepreneurs, the family might be a limitation, leading them to determine whether or not to invest or expand their business. In fact, they are aware that if they marry, family obligations may prevent them from fully dedicating themselves to their business.

Madiha is concerned about this: "I had even considered buying some new shops... but in the end, I gave up... Taking up another mortgage would be a tremendous problem for me because I'm thinking about establishing a family and need some free time, but I couldn't do it if I had a massive mortgage."

When a family shares and welcomes a woman's decision to become an entrepreneur, it can provide moral and psychological support. Husbands frequently play a critical role in supporting their spouses to start a business and overcome their early fears. Saniya's experience as the owner of a small textile company is as follows:

"I started working for myself in 2016... To be honest, my husband was a huge assistance in getting our business off the ground."

Husbands may share the problems of the initial phase with their wives and assist them in managing their businesses. Women frequently remark that they could not have started their business without their husband's help. This is especially true for mothers with small children and home duties. Unmarried women's decision to establish a business is frequently influenced by their parent's approval and support.

"In my experience, family represents psychological, emotional, financial, and economic

support with its ongoing presence," Nosheen, the proprietor of a wellness center, adds. "Perhaps I chose to perform this foolish thing because I knew I could rely on their assistance."

Mehwish, the one who runs a beauty salon, understands how important her biological family's assistance was in starting her business:

"My family is a big support, not only financially, but also psychologically." I would never have become an entrepreneur if it hadn't been for my parents... This was the occupation I desired, yet I was filled with anxieties and misgivings. My parents instilled in me the fortitude to face my fears."

The relatives of a woman can provide essential assistance. Indeed, in some women's experiences, the birth household performed a critical part, not just in facilitating funding but also in providing essential information and skills to compensate for their daughters' lack of experience, thereby bolstering their contractual bargaining power with banks. Fathers, especially, may believe that a young woman finds it "difficult to be taken seriously," as Zareen's father put it. "My father tends after the financial concerns, while I run the business," Zareen, a young country house owner, revealed. "When there's a problem with the bank, he deals with it."

Family members frequently play an important part in assisting female businesspersons in balancing family and business commitments, like child care. Several times, family support has been cited as a necessary factor for launching a business, particularly for women with young children. The majority of the time, this form of assistance originates from a woman's family fellow usually a sister or a mother while spouses are involved less. Women frequently say that, while their husbands provide psychological support, they are less helpful in domestic matters. Imama, a farm owner, describes the parents' responsibility as follows: "My baby is still very little, so I devote all of my free time to him." I honestly wish to say that if I had not done this for the sake of my family, I would have neglected my profession and it would suffer."

4.2. Family, The Opportunity Ticket

Being a member of a family that runs a business can open doors for females. A business family can push their daughters to follow a profession as an entrepreneur and start their own company. Women who do not come from this family would struggle to obtain this outcome. Families with businesses can help to foster the development of a business's individuality by passing on entrepreneurial ideas and attitudes.

Zoha's story is based on her mother's experience as the founder of a small construction company. Zoha opted to join the family business because she admires her father and the qualities he instilled in her: devotion, goal-oriented thinking, customer care, and product, along with innovation and a lasting outlook. "Above all, commitment," she said when we asked her what qualities her father had instilled in her. Never surrender... Never... Even back when I was a kid... 'If there's a problem you can't solve, try adjusting your point of view,' my father used to advise. It is somewhat I continually say as well."

Zoha is slowly taking over as the family's business leader from her father. However, it is not always simple for daughters to be selected as descendants. If this needs to occur, the older members of the family must be free of gender bias and opposition to having a female as the head of the company. It's also crucial that there are no siblings who want to play the same part. In Ayesha's situation, as the daughter of a machine-driven firm's

owner that is medium in size, succession is extra difficult because her only brother wants to have an equal position. Ayesha is well mindful of this: "When my father has to choose a successor, he will choose my brother." But this mindfulness does not upset Ayesha's tranquility, as in her system, the survival of the family company, as well as the comfort of Ayesha's family, takes precedence. As a result, she is eager to continue her occupational experience along with her brother. The fact that they can share the company's vision and ambitions is the most essential thing to her, because *"despite certain fights, sometimes pretty heavy, our family is always very close,"* she says. As a result, Ayesha's family plays a crucial part in her entrepreneurial journey, not only because it has provided her with a business chance, but also because it is in the name of the family that Ayesha is willing to stand aside in favor of her brother.

4.3. Family and The Continued Generation

In the life cycle of a family business, succession is crucial. The attitude and behavior of the two primary characters determine the ability to successfully manage this procedure. According to recent research, female businesspersons are extra cautious and equipped to cope with progression because of their style of leadership, which is defined by teamwork, flexibility, and concern for people. It is more difficult for entrepreneurs to envisage someone else leading their company, but it is more accepted for women entrepreneurs to believe that their businesses can be passed down to their families. Even when they are CEOs, women, unlike males, never abandon their parental role (David, 2006; Cesaroni and Sentuti, 2016; Vera and Dean, 2005).

Furthermore, the transfer of a business to one's offspring is never a foregone conclusion for women entrepreneurs. Women entrepreneurs, in particular, are more cautious to esteem their regular inclination and seldom assert that their kids take on the roles of leadership. For example, Emaan is the creator of a small clothing company. "I never wanted to see my company develop," she admits. "My ambition was to live happily with my family, and my objective was to provide a nice future for my children. I don't want them to make the same sacrifices that I did as a child."

Female entrepreneurs who see their family as a source of generational continuity can be described as parents in both senses of the word. The first has a business connotation since they gave birth to a new company that was created by a female. The second one has a special significance, as they are female businesspersons who have continuously maintained a handy contact with their children and have not once abandoned their role as a parent. This position is frequently moved to the office, resulting in a near-intersection of work and personal life.

4.4. Family, A Wish to Surrender

When a woman's employment responsibilities collide with her personal life, she may be forced to forego having a family. We're talking about single women entrepreneurs who don't want to start a family because of work obligations and challenges harmonizing family and work life. It is, therefore, critical to underline that this isn't always an unrestricted and willing decision. It is frequently a compulsory option, as females understand that starting a household will entail a tremendous deal of responsibility, which would be difficult to combine with business activities. Males are generally less influenced by work-life stability issues; hence it is classically a feminine issue. Women, on the other hand, are acutely aware of the issue, as Zubab's statements demonstrate. Zubab is 28 years old, single, and the owner of a modest beauty salon. The family has become a type of surrender for her, as her career does not allow her to manage a family.

However, in the future, the family may become a limitation, affecting the business and likely limiting its development and growth. "For ten years, I always provided my best and focused nearly entirely on my work," she explains. "My personal life was somewhat jeopardized... But now I'm starting to wonder if it was too much. I'm going to live alone, so I'll have to plan ahead... to go shopping, think a little at home... And I'm well aware that it's quite difficult."

5. Conclusion & Recommendations

The stories of women entrepreneurs in this research demonstrate the value of family and ties in the lives of women who have gone into business for themselves. In this regard, the outcomes of this study back up prior results (David, 2006; Caputo & Dolinsky, 1998) that family is an "intervening variable between gender and entrepreneurship" (Bruni et al., 2000: 159). The various roles that women play within their families last to have a significant impact on their business experiences, where traces of family involvement can always be found. Female entrepreneurs and their families have an everlasting link, according to interviews with female entrepreneurs. Family can be a burden, but it can also be a blessing. It may provide particularly valuable assistance to women entrepreneurs, which is often required to allow them to succeed. It occurs, for instance, when a family delivers major financial assistance or psychologically supports female businesspersons, encouraging their choice to begin a business venture. Family can occasionally provide organizational assistance, assisting women entrepreneurs with household management, child care, and even business management. Particularly intriguing are the ramifications of families' prominent participation in female entrepreneurial experiences. The fundamental conclusion of our analysis, according to a methodological profile, is that if women's entrepreneurial experiences aren't fully understood, their family predicament receives no attention. The main implications of these findings in terms of research highlight the importance of examining the part of the household when exploring females' entrepreneurship: females' selections associated with the creation of business, management, financing, and growth. Also, it cannot be correctly implicit and interpreted if the members of the family are not involved in the inquiry or survey field. Likewise, when examining the effect of female-run businesses, the motives for their failure or success, and the fundamental causes for their decision to endure handling their business ventures or shut them and give up their business, the family should be considered essential. From an economic and sociological standpoint, this approach should assist us in focusing on one of the most significant trials that women face when attempting to manage work and family life.

Work-Life and Personal Life are two different things. This indicates that addressing this issue is critical to encouraging women's entrepreneurship. Knowing and understanding the significance of the household in the entrepreneurial experiences of women is critical in interpreting the details of the victory or catastrophe of female-run enterprises, as family relationships will certainly influence their performance.

5.1. Limitations of the Research

Because this study only looks at a small number of Pakistani businesses run by females, the results may be skewed by the socio-economic circumstances of the individuals. As a result, an additional study should be conducted with a greater number of female businesspersons from various nations to confirm the impact of elements connected to various cultural contexts.

5.2. Future Research

Future research might compare men and women entrepreneurs to see whether there are any major variations in how family plays a part in their entrepreneurial experience. Furthermore, because the conclusions of this research are founded on a trifling number of interpretations, statistical generalization is impossible. Consequently, such evaluations might be grounded on more representative and larger samples in the future.

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