

Understanding the Lived Experiences of Dual Career Couples in Peshawar, Pakistan: A Qualitative Approach

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Many studies have examined that how the simultaneous demands of occupational role and family obligations are affecting dual career couples, there is very limited studies exploring this issue in Pakistan. This study was carried out to examine the lived experiences of marital partners having dual career marriages in Peshawar city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. The main objective underlying this study was to explore how husband and wives having dual career marriages experience the demands of multiple roles and how they cope with the simultaneous demands of family and occupational role. A qualitative research protocol was adopted and 22 study participants including wives and husbands having dual career marriages were interviewed in the three selected universities of the targeted locale. Analysis of the interview transcripts revealed five themes including 1) Role balancing is difficult; 2) Child care is difficult to manage with occupational role; 3) Have little but quality time together; 4) Friendly communication is helpful; 5) Coping mechanisms are very useful. It was concluded from the study that the simultaneous demands of family and occupational role was challenging and problematic for the study participants. Moreover, the storyline of the study participants revealed that role balancing became more challenging when parenting role was added to the existing workload because of the lack of organizational support and non-availability of child care assistance in the workplace. The best possible coping strategies reported by the study participants were role sharing, friendly negotiation, positive communication, proper planning and appropriate scheduling.

Keywords: participants, family, negotiation, communication, planning

Since few decades, the traditional boundaries between work and family have been constantly changing while new family pattern and work organization is immensely emerging. The labor market in the current time is comprised of a considerable numbers of women as a consequence

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the traditional role of men as breadwinners and that of women as caregivers have changed (Joseph & Inbanathan, 2016). Such transformations have given rise to alternative family pattern and work organization within which the most highlighted subject is dual career couples (Cherpas, 1985; Haddock et al., 2001; Lucchini, Saraceno, & Schizzerotto, 2007; Rizzo, 2009; Netemeyer, McMurrian, & Boles, 1996; Oscharoff, 2011; Valli, 2012).

The term dual career couples was initially coined by Rapoport and Rapoport (1969) who described that a marital pattern in which both spouses have high powered occupational careers. Being a new partnership constellation, dual career couples have strong identification, attachment, career aspirations and a commitment to perform marital and family obligations (Lucchini, Saraceno, & Schizzerotto, 2007; Haddock et al., 2001). The estimated numbers of dual career couples are not known in Pakistan, however it has been generally observed that because of the rising ratio in higher education and women participation in the paid job market is gradually increasing especially in the academic and medical settings in Pakistan. Because, of the simultaneous engagement in occupational role and family obligations, the family related emotions of the members of dual career couples spills over and affect work and work induced stresses crossover and affect their family relations which is known as role conflict (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Researchers have found that performing the dual roles of family and job is problematic for marital relations and also challenging for dual career couples in the workplace (Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969; Cherpas, 1985; Netemeyer, McMurrian, & Boles, 1996; Oscharoff, 2011; Valli, 2012; Kaur & Kumar, 2014; Majhi, 2016). They identified that work based stressors are problematic for family interactions especially marital ties, intimacy and over all marital satisfaction (Voydanoff, 2007; Faulkner, Davey, & Davey, 2005; Azeez, 2013; Joseph & Inbanathan, 2016).

Dual Career Couples: A Theoretical Perspective

Hence, job and family are the two important facets of the lives of dual career couples therefore every spouse in a dual career marriage is committed to perform job along with his/her family obligations. Because of the dynamic engagement in job and family obligations, each member of dual career couples may experience some difficulties in reconciling the simultaneous demands of work and family domain. The challenging aspect of dual career couples have examined from various theoretical perspectives including role strain theory (Goode, 1960) and theory of spillover effect (Netemeyer, McMurrian, & Boles, 1996). These theoretical perspectives posit that multiple role performance may be problematic for individuals in term of time, energy and mental strength. For instance, theory of role conflict and role strain suggests that individual may not be able to perform effectively while having diverse role obligations. This may be attributed to the incompatibilities of the demands of varying role as a result individual have to assign more energy, time and attention to certain role while negotiating the other role. Likewise, scarcity hypothesis posits that every individual has certain amount of energy to perform his/her assigned role in a given space and time. As individual consumes his power and energy by conducting some roles he/she will start to feel emotional and physical exhaustion unless his energies are not replenished (Goode, 1960; Marshall & Bennett, 1993).

One of the most significant sources that we sought some inspiration for this study from other field is the famous concept of Michelle Thaller, a scientist whose famous epigraph tells the story regarding the two objects in the physical universe. The epigraph of Michelle Thaller (2002) *the*

two-body problem which is cited by Wolf-Wendel, Twombly and Rice (2003) in their work entitled the dual-career-couple hiring policies in higher education is especially very helpful in developing our understanding regarding the problems and issues of dual career couples. The epigraph of Michelle Thaller is "Two-body problem: As one body orbits the other, it tugs gravitationally on its partner, altering the original orbit. Then the second body does the same. In the end, there's this give-and-take of a dance, as each body influences the other, constantly changing its path. The bigger, more massive body moves the least, spending most of the time in the center of this dance. The smaller body has to careen all over the place, trying to find the right place to fit into the co-orbit (Thaller, 2002; cited in Wendel, Twombly & Rice, 2003).

Literature Review

Studies have empirically examined the possible negative outcomes of role conflict on relationship satisfaction of dual career couples (Matthews, Conger, & Wickrama, 1996; Azeez, 2013; Joseph & Inbanathan, 2016). Work related stresses of dual career couples may reduce their relationship satisfaction by mitigating communication between spouses and reduces the chances of marital and family togetherness (Story & Bradbury, 2004). The negative spillover of work and family has been reported across different professions which reveal that work related stresses are problematic for the family domain and vice versa. For instance, studies conducted among psychologists, family therapists and clinical workers reveal that the number of hours these professionals give to their occupational role significantly reduces the level of marital satisfaction and family interaction (Oscharoff, 2011; Killian, 2008).

Researchers have also found the negative effect of role conflict and role overload on the occupational performance and satisfaction and described that family life is affected by the factors at work and work related stress has affected the family life (Ahmad, 2008; Carlson, Grzywacz, & Kacmar, 2010; Zhao & Namasivayam, 2012). Generally, these effects have been found in negative relationships either with job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Burke & El-Kot, 2010). Role conflict was also found in negative relation with job performance and marital satisfaction among women researchers in Malaysia (Ahmad, 2008). Role overload was also studied among married women entrepreneur in Singapore which has reported negative association with job and marital satisfaction (Lee & Choo, 2001). Likewise, in a cross sectional study conducted in Finland, Netherland and United Kingdom, it has been found that longer working hours, working for longer at higher speed, and dissatisfaction with work were associated with role conflict in all countries (Tammelin et al., 2015).

Furthermore, role overload is becoming more problematic for the spouses when they also become the father/mother of child/children (Dew & Wilcox, 2011). Generally, child/children is considered as a binding force for marital union but relationship satisfaction is reduced because child raising is also a major challenge for the marital partner having dual career marriage (Luhmann et al., 2012; Azeez, 2013; Kaur & Kumar, 2014). Furthermore, studies have also investigated the correlation between number and age of children and the level of role conflict of dual career couples and concluded that age and numbers of children as significant predictors for marital relations (Thomas, Albrecht, & White, 1984; Michel et al., 2011). Furthermore, the couples having younger children have been found having more roles overload issues in relations to the couples with older children (Beauregard, 2006; Kaur & Kumar, 2014). For instance, a research conducted on the role pressure and age of the children of dual career couples have reported that parents having children aged as 2-5 years were experiencing lesser pressure in relation to the couples having children aging 2 years or less (Galvin, Byland, & Brommel, 2011).

Likewise, studies have also examined the impact of coping mechanisms in dual career couples and explained various types of coping mechanisms including positive psychological responses, personal or behavioural efforts and cognitive abilities of marital partners (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The best coping mechanisms reported by some researchers are control scheduling and spousal support (Kelly, Moen, & Tranby, 2011; Carlson, Grzywacz, & Kacmar, 2011; Kaur & Kumar, 2014; Michel et al., 2011). In a qualitative study conducted on 15 dual career couples, it was reported that the couples used to split down the problematic situation into small parts for better control and management (Bird & Schnurman-Crook, 2005). Findings of the research conducted on the impact of coping mechanism have revealed that positive coping mechanisms have a significant and positive impact on the lives of dual career couples (Sciangula & Morry, 2009; Erol & Orth, 2013). The literature we reviewed generally highlights the experiences of dual career couples in the individualistic cultures of industrially advanced societies however there is no compelling evidence regarding the experiences of dual career couples in the collectivistic culture of Pakistani Society, therefore this study was carried out to understand the lived experiences of the husband and wives having dual career marriages. It was examined that how wives and husbands experience the simultaneous demands of work and family domain and how they cope with the challenging aspect of dual career families especially in the absence of organizational support and public policy.

Major Objective and Justification of the Study

The aim of this study was to examine how spouses either wife or husband in dual career families experience the simultaneous demands of occupational role and family obligations in Pakistan. It is generally viewed that dual career pattern may be more challenging in Pakistan because of the lack of organizational support and absence of a viable public policy on dual career families. Furthermore, dual career families are mostly located in the city centres, consequently sympathetic

family support is not available there. Majority of dual career couples; wives and husbands have to rely on their own coping resources to manage their day-to-day challenges posed by multiple role performance. Keeping in view the above mentioned facts, we envision that studying the lived experiences of wives and husbands having dual career life style may be an interesting subject to explore for guiding future researches and also to guide public policy options regarding dual career couples in Pakistan.

Method

Locale of the Study

This article is a part of our PhD research which deals with exploring the impact of role conflict on dual career couples in Peshawar city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. Hence, we used Mixed Method Research (MMR) in our Ph.D study, therefore during the first phase of quantitative data collection; we identified a total of 22 study participants for in-depth interviewing in the targeted locales. The selected universities for data collection were the University of Peshawar, Agriculture University of Peshawar and Islamia College University, Peshawar.

Study Participants

We purposively selected wives and husbands having dual career marriage with child/children while having at least one year job experience. It was not possible to interview both couples jointly in a single setting because of their different work stations. In many instances, the work station of either

husband or wife was out of our selected locale therefore we selected either wife or husband having dual career life style. They were informed about the time of interviews which were subsequently undertaken with them in the participant's settings. The interviews with all the identified participants either male or female spouse were conducted in face-to-face interaction in the local language (Urdu, Pashto), and were transcribed word by word and subsequently analysed.

Research Questions and Data Analysis

All the participants were asked how you manage multitasking and integrate family life with occupational role? Did you feel any juggling effect in their family or work domain? Did you feel the pressure when the other partner is stressed? How you deal with occupational role when you have also having child/children? What are the antecedents of two careers? How you integrate work and family life successfully?

The narratives reported by the study participants on the above questions were read many times with the purpose to develop familiarity with the research materials and thus analysed all the narratives and identified the issues, problems and the remedial measures as narrated by the study participants. The narratives stated by the participants were thoroughly examined and the five figural themes were emerged including "role balancing is difficult, child care is difficult to manage with occupational role, we have little but quality time together, friendly communication and coping mechanisms are helpful. The themes are discussed with the help of few selected narrations of some study participants in the discussion section. Because of the sensitive nature of the study especially when the participants are asked to tell personal stories regarding their social lives, we decided not to use even pseudonyms rather we preferred to use the word "male" or "female" study participants while referring to their narratives in the discussion section.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Feature of the Study Participants

The important features shared by the study participants were their gender in which 13 were male and 9 were female. Similarly, the current job position hold by the participants was teaching, medical and administrative position. All the participants were highly qualified and majority being 10 were having Ph.D qualification. The participants were aging between 29 and 45 years and their job experience was ranging from 5 to 17 years. All the study participants were having children and the most common number of children was three. The reported marital duration of the study participants was between 3 to 15 years. Hence, the longest marital duration of the sampled study participants was 15 years therefore the age cohort of the children was 1-8years, an age cohort where the child/children mostly dependent on their parents for caring.

Role balancing is difficult

Based on the narratives of our study participants, it was outlined that the simultaneous demands of work and family was challenging and the study participants had found it difficult to maintain a successful balance between work and family roles. All the study participants expressed their experiences of being engaged in negotiating at least three commitments i.e. his career, spouse's career and sustaining family relationships. To stay efficient in these domains, the study participants had to spend more time and energy in order to strike a successful balance between occupational and family roles. It was found that the most frequently reported challenges by the participants were time

scarcity, role overload, lack of physical energy and emotional strength. As one of the male participants narrated about the role overload as

Sometime, I feel pretty in a rush and think that I am navigating on the two ships. On few occasions, I feel some pressure especially when both or at least one of us has to keep up with a tight schedule in the workplace. It has been few days during the week when I have are lax work and family schedule (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Considering the modern day labour market, role conflict may not be only attributed to individual having dual careers but every employee may experience difficulties in balancing his/her family and occupational role. However, we examined that work and family domain were more intertwined in case of the individuals having dual careers therefore they may experience slightly higher cross domain effect. Being member of dual career couples, our participants narrated in some manner about the negative antecedents of multiple roles on their daily lives. The participants narrated that multitasking becomes difficult especially when they had to move with tight schedule either in the work or family domain. Another female participant narrated that Sometime, I had to move with tough schedule and had to cut off family time to go through a tight schedule at my office. It becomes more difficult when I had to stay longer in the office. After a longer day in the office and domestic tasks at home reduce my chance to give proper time to my kids in the evening (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

The simultaneous demands of work or family domains make it difficult for either male or female spouse within dual career families to make their leisure time enjoyable. A tight schedule at the office and a busy evening at home may result in reduced family gatherings and less time spending with children. Likewise, family based role may also interfere with occupational role especially when they had to move to their offices while leaving some undone work at their home. In this regard, a female participant stated as

I have to reach my workplace on time but usually remain preoccupied at workplace about the family tasks which I had left undone at my home. Such preoccupation takes away my chance of being happy and joyful at my workplace (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Another respondent narrated her storyline as

We both have high powered academic careers and we have to take more time and spend more energy to have great success in our careers. The thing about which we are concerned the most is that we both have to ensure productivity in the job to compete for promotion on the job (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

The above storyline is representing the views of a female study participant while stating the collective experiences as member of dual career couples. Her narrations suggest that role conflict stems from family domain has been shown to have some negative outcomes for job especially for the individuals having no external support from their family members. Such lack of external support may hinder the chances of the study participants to stay focus for achieving job productivity and

occupational performance. Majority of the interviewed respondents were having academic background which is comparatively more demanding in terms of efficiency, performance, results and productivity. However, member of dual career couples with similar job nature especially those in academia may have the relative advantage because they can easily complement each other in their careers in relations to the individuals with varying occupational careers. Furthermore, members of dual career couples with similar occupation can easily understand the problems, needs and requirements of the other partners and can complement each other career.

Child care is difficult with occupational role

Generally, child care is a full time job which requires commitments, dedication and assurance on the part of the parents. Child care may be slightly more demanding because children with different ages have different needs such as the pre-schoolers must be carefully nursed by moms and the school going kids are to be properly assisted by the parents. Likewise, the newly born needs to be cared by mom and the toddlers will have to look after by the father. All the interviewed study participants were having children and they reported that child care is difficult to perform with occupational role. However, narratives of the study participants suggest that child caring is slightly more challenging during the first three years after the birth of the child. In this regard, one of the females study participants narrated her experiences as

I often take my baby to my office because we have no option to look after the baby at home. I have to care the baby at the office because our organization also does not have a baby care facility. During my lecture (as the respondent was a lecturer), I had to remain preoccupied about my baby and in few cases I had to leave the class and rush to the baby when she was crying. The ultimate solution for this problem was to hire the services of an old lady in the nearby locality (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

The above narratives highlight the experiences of a female participant with a child. Previous studies have also found that the presence of a child is more demanding for parents with occupational careers. The dominant view regarding the parenthood in dual career families prevails that the arrival of a child adds up more responsibilities for the couples in the family domain. We found that dual career couples usually rely on family support because institutional child care arrangement is still less common in Pakistan. The couples have to look out for an alternative child care measure or relying to hire the services of baby sitters to look after their babies. One of the female respondents narrated her experiences as

While I am at work, I need someone who truly willing to look after my newborn baby because he needs an intensive care at this stage. I searched out in my locality but being obsessed with findings the most reasonable person for my baby care and ultimately I had to compromise on this and brought a grandmother type to look after my baby so that I may move to office without being worried about my child(Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Parenting needs more time, energy and constant assurance of the first hand quality services for the children. Marital partners with dual career of family and job have to arrange an alternative child care measure especially during their working time on the job. The career couples who are living away from their joint family network confront this problem because of the non-availability of the sympathetic familial support to their children. In such scenario, the couples have to arrange an

alternative child care measure because of the lack of organizational support and absence of child care assistance on the job workplace in Pakistan. In this regard, one of the male respondents narrated his storyline that

After our marriage, we moved to the city and started living in a rented house. Initially, it was easier for us to manage work and family responsibilities but things were changed when we got our first baby and then the second. Our organization has no child care facility therefore we had to get the support of an old lady in the town to look after our children. Our home is far away from our work place therefore we feel inconvenient to leave the children behind with maid. We decided to take her to the work place and manage a room for them in the girl's hostel where the maid looks after our children and we feel relax now(Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Likewise, one of the respondents narrated his situation as

Every morning we discuss our schedule and set a plan how and who will have to draw up and pick up the child from the school however, if anyone takes the responsibility the other still tries to coordinate so that to get satisfaction about the child (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Our participants talked about the load management especially their alternative way of dealing with childcare issues. As mentioned earlier that caring a newly born baby is a challenging task for the parents in dual career families however parents still perceive that caring a school going child is also a difficult task. As the experiences of the study participant echoed in the above narratives that pick and draw up of a school going child on daily basis require proper planning and scheduling on the parts of the parents. They specifically mentioned about the alternative strategy when they have to deal with additional responsibility at the office. In case of a tight schedule of wife, child care responsibility is taken over by husband who helps them reducing the role overload issue of his wife and vice versa. The spouses have to maintain a strong coordination to effectively cope with the simultaneous demands of work and family domains. In this connection, spousal support and role sharing were found as tested remedies for the couples.

Have little but quality time together

Another aspect of the lives of the members of dual career couples is managing their time for family gatherings and to attend other important events. The wife or husbands in a dual career family whose job stations were different often chalk out strategies to ensure proper time management for family gatherings such as shopping, eating and family outings. Couples with similar workstations have the advantages to have time for family interaction and gatherings however they prefer to make the leisure time more enjoyable especially in the evening by solely focusing on their occupational role in the day time. One of the respondents has expressed her view regrading family gathering as

Our work station is different and it is difficult for me and my spouse to commute on daily basis to either of the workplace. My husband has to travel on each weekend. He usually reaches late at night and leaves early the next day morning to reach his job place. We spend little but quality time together (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Another respondent added that

My first child is four while the younger one is three years old. We celebrated seven birthdays in respect of our children but my husband has missed out every event because of his workstation. We have also been unable to celebrate our marriage anniversary, New Year night and few other important events but we celebrate these events in our leisure time(Source: Field Survey, 2017).

It is generally perceived that marital partners of dual career couples are findings less time to spend together, however we noted that the study participants who were working on different job stations only reported such experiences. The study participants who work on different work stations can only manage to catch up with their family members on weekly or quarterly basis. They narrated that sometimes they missed out some family functions especially the events they have to celebrate in the middle of the week. However, the views expressed by the respondents suggest that they prefer to spend quality time rather than focusing on spending more time together.

Friendly communication is helpful

The best way for the individuals having dual career pattern to cope with the multifarious roles and responsibilities in a non-stressed manner is to have a friendly communication. Viable coping mechanisms of the wives and husbands in dual career families not only overcome their problems but also helpful in increasing their marital happiness. We found the evidence from the views of our few respondents that they had having a stressful time at their offices, however their friendly communication helped them successfully navigate through the stressful time.

One of the male respondents narrated that

The best way to negotiate my work related stresses is to engage in friendly communication with my spouse. I think that we both realize the importance of friendly conversation; therefore, every one of us tries to make the most of it when we come together in the evening. I personally perceive, we know that creating quality memories is more important than mere spending more time with each other(Source: Field Survey, 2017)..

The best way to cope with family and work related difficulties for the members of dual career marriage is to always open up their lines of communication and to engage in positive and friendly communication with each other. It is evident from the narratives of the study participants that warm and friendly communication moderates the negative influences of role conflict and enhances the level of their marital satisfaction. Positive communication could be attributed to many factors in marital relationships and these include paying compliments, thanksgiving for even the slightest of favour extended by one spouse to the other. Regarding this one of the male respondents outlined as

We start our discussion every time with one of us complimenting the other. I do not remember the last event when I have not thanked my wife for preparing the meal. Likewise, she appreciates my efforts for taking children to the park for outing. These are just simple examples, but we know how these are valuable for our marital ties(Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Narratives of the study participants reflect that they can easily understand the perceived challenges of multiple role performance because of their educational qualification, occupational experiences and cognitive abilities. With the help of such personal and social attributes, it is easier to deal with the complex life events. The description shows that the study participants realize the efficacy of marital communication in their lives. The carryover model suggests that emotion of one partner cross over and effect the behaviour of the other in working couples. If one partner initiates positive response, consequently it may sprout a positive response in the other partner. Likewise, a partner overwhelmed with work stressors unable to engage in positive communication with other partner as a result marital gap is likely to be created in this case.

Coping mechanisms are helpful

While performing family and job role simultaneously, work related stress may permeate and affects family life and family related stresses may cross over and negatively affect work performance of both spouses in dual career families. The most notable of the problems are heavy workloads and long working hours that obstruct the availability of one or both spouses for the family, parenting, and domestic care. Moreover, member of dual career families with daily travel, having children with tough job schedule are likely experiencing more role overload issues which do not allow them to perform better in each domain. However, the relative advantage of education and professional experience of the spouses in dual career families may be helpful in managing the demand of multiple roles. Regarding this, one of the study participants stated that

It is always difficult especially when you want to have a successful career and a satisfied family life. I must say that in our case we both have challenging careers but the key thing for us to be satisfied with our marital life is to be flexible enough to go through smoothly. I think, we have been quite successful in overcoming the challenges of our work and the responsibilities of our family and this is because we have really such a good support mechanisms at our home. We take on by sharing responsibilities, supporting and encouraging each other (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

A female respondent expressed her opinion

In any problematic situation, I have to focus only on one role and put the other work aside because I know that handling both is impossible or problematic. For example, during my Ph.D., I took study leave to remain off from the job and solely focus on my study and children. Similarly, I do not take any additional task assigned by my boss to give myself time to look after my children (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Spousal support, role sharing, effective planning and prioritization are central for managing difficult situation for dual career couples. Sometimes, both or either of the spouses has to be more career-focused while on some occasion they need to be more family oriented. Fixed hierarchy for work and family is difficult to exercise as every situation demands a different strategy and coping resources. About prioritization of role, one respondent explained that

Initially, my first priority was my job, but I had to change my views because now I have children. I try to achieve a balance and prioritize the tasks which I think I should prioritize. I

know that my children are very important for me therefore I must be attentive towards them. I have left the routine of spending more hours on the job to favor my children(Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Some situation demands a psychological response while other needs a concrete problem solving skills. As mentioned earlier that educated and professional spouses possess more emotional competence and mental flexibility therefore they can easily realize the gravity of the situation and they know how to make appropriate emotional and psychological responses in a difficult situation. Regarding this, one of our respondents narrated that

Sometimes when I feel or see any role overload or stress, I begin thinking that I experience this because I want to do something special for my children, spouse, and family. It is this thinking which boosts up my morale and gives me mental strength to face the challenges that I have to move through (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Another respondent stated that

When I feel challenged either by work or family role, I change the way I perceive things around me and I refer to involve myself in self-talk to go through peacefully with situation. I just keep focus on the thing in hand and try to keep the other task on hold until I finish the first one because I know doing one task and thinking about the other is not useful anyway (Source: Field Survey, 2017).

Some situations demand collective responses from the spouses which needs active involvement of both spouses like negotiation and communication. Many of our study participants stated that changing the emotional responses is the best remedy to cope with multiple role obligations. Cognitive restructuring is easy because it could be easily employed and the study participants reported that they have to rely solely on their own resources to cope with any problematic situation. Generally, these are the internal sources which effectively combat the external pressures which can be easily borrowed by the members of dual career families.

Conclusion

This study concludes that dual career family is a new form of family pattern in which both spouses take on occupational role along with marital and family obligations. In order to successfully meet the demands and expectations of occupational and familial role, the marital partners of dual career marriages must have to spend more time and consume more physical and psychological energy. Besides, multiple role performance is difficult especially when the couple becomes parents of their children and have to work on different workstations. These difficulties are predominantly attributed to the lack of organizational support especially child care facilities and absence of public policy for the members of dual career families. As a result, the couples have to arrange an alternative childcare measure which is often not readily available. In view of the above issues, family and work role strain is challenging for both or either one spouse of the couples in Pakistan however when the couples are able to share responsibilities through negotiating gender order, they can maximise the benefits of dual career life style. The best possible remedial measures adopted by the study participants to cope with the problems of role overload were role scheduling and re-scheduling, role sharing, prioritizing and planning of the tasks within the family circle and workplace. Furthermore, positive activities including friendly communication, interaction and cognitive restructuring were significantly helpful for work life balance of dual career couples. While reflecting on our own

observation, we noted that educational qualification, professional skills and emotional competence of our respondents were efficient enough to make them able successfully navigating through the stressful encounters.

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