Social Determinants of Psychological Strain among Pakistani Married Working Women

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Abstract

▶ The burgeoning body of western empirical researches highlighted the pivotal role of social pressures in implicating psychological distress among working women, unfortunately, few number of studies have been conducted in indigenous perspective of Pakistani culture. Pakistan is renowned for its deep rooted collectivistic and customary culture. Considering this, the current paper in an attempt aimed to investigate the interplay of social pressures encountered by Pakistani working women and their impact on women psychological health in terms of distress. Using expost facto research design sample was comprised of 600 working women (M=38.59, SD=9.32) belonging to educational, health and financial sector of Lahore city. Data was collected by implementing self-administered questionnaires comprised of psychological strain due to societal perception subscale of an indigenous work family conflict strain scale (Ahmad & Muazzam, 2020) and psychological distress subscale of mental health inventory Urdu version (Khan, Hanif, & Naeem, 2015). Statistical analysis revealed significantly positive relationship between societal perception and resulting psychological distress experienced by married working women. Furthermore working women from different profession reported similar level of conflict captured by societal perception subscale which reveals that, no matter the level of education or profession in which woman is engaged, faced similar expectations from society in balancing work and family dilemma. The current findings were discussed in the light of previous literature and cultural background and have some expedient implications to support working women going through societal pressure.

▶ Key words. Society, social perception, work and family, working women, psychological distress.