

**The Context of Women's Entrepreneurship in Pakistan: The Role of Patriarchy
and Invisible Masculine Norms**

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Abstract

This paper engages in the debate of gendered entrepreneurship and addresses the impact of patriarchy on women's entrepreneurship. Patriarchy and invisible masculine norms vary in different contexts, but are highly pronounced in Pakistan with its systematic subordination of women to men. So far, entrepreneurship scholarship has hardly addressed this issue of patriarchy and masculinity affecting women's entrepreneurial activity. In this paper, we show that patriarchy is a multifaceted phenomenon that goes beyond a unidirectional process of subordinating women. Our study gives voice to Pakistani women entrepreneurs and their different experiences of how they respond to the patriarchal system and invisible masculine norms. It thereby responds to the scholarly call to contextualize the findings of entrepreneurial studies within the local contexts in which they occur.

Key words: patriarchy; masculine norms; context; women's entrepreneurship; South Asia; Pakistan

Introduction

During the past decades, academic and policy attention to women's entrepreneurship has developed in line with the recognition of its contribution to employment creation and economic development in many countries (Baughn, Chua et al. 2006, Verheul, Stel et al. 2006). So far, most research on women entrepreneurs empirically builds on developed countries (Sengupta, Datta et al. 2013), while rather little research has been conducted in the context of the South Asian region, where women's lives are significantly impacted by socio-cultural variables (Al-Dajani and Marlow 2010). Current research considering the South Asian context is often exploring entrepreneurial motivations or general challenges (Tlaiss 2013). Variations in women's entrepreneurial activities across countries tend to be explained with national, macro-economic differences and cultural values influencing

entrepreneurial activities (Verheul, Stel et al. 2006, Freytag and Thurik 2007, Wennekers, Van Stel et al. 2010, Thurik and Dejardin 2012). The socio-cultural values that impact social and political institutions of any society require the contextualizing of research (Welter (2011), especially when studying women entrepreneurs. The macro-context of any country impacts individuals' behaviors (including entrepreneurial behavior) through dominant socio-cultural and local contexts by nurturing certain values that are deeply embedded in a society and endure over decades (George and Zahra 2002, Welter 2011). Despite the increase in research on women's entrepreneurship, the impact of patriarchal traditions and invisible masculine norms on women's entrepreneurship remain poorly understood (Marlow 1997, Welter, Smallbone et al. 2003, Essers and Benschop 2007). However, particularly in emerging economies like Pakistan, where socio-cultural values are very strong and enduring, patriarchy represents a crucial contextual element for women entrepreneurs.

The aim of this paper is (i) to contribute to a better understanding of how patriarchal traditions and invisible masculine norms affect the entrepreneurial endeavors of women in Pakistan, as perceived by local women entrepreneurs and (ii) to assess how these invisible masculine norms unfold within the gendered nature of entrepreneurship. This article gives voice to the different experiences and perceptions of female business-owners with gendered entrepreneurship and considers how women entrepreneurs are actively involved in concealing this gendered nature of entrepreneurship. Particularly, we use patriarchy as a framework representing an important element of the socio-cultural context of Pakistani women entrepreneurs.

Using patriarchy as a framework to understand women's entrepreneurship is significant for two reasons: firstly, it provides an explanatory framework that is well established within business administration (Essers and Benschop 2007). Secondly, it contributes to

current entrepreneurship research, as the impact of patriarchy on women's entrepreneurship has hardly been discussed in detail before (Lewis 2006), especially in the context of Pakistan. By assessing how patriarchy affects women's entrepreneurship, this study aims to contribute to filling the knowledge gap about women entrepreneurs in Pakistan and to enhance the understanding of why the rate of women's entrepreneurship lags behind in countries with similar cultural values.

To accomplish its objectives, this article first puts forward the core issues of invisibility of gender and invisible, yet influential masculine norms. Next, it introduces patriarchy as a main ground for exploring the gendered nature of entrepreneurship and describes the patriarchal system of Pakistan. After the method section, we present our findings and analyses. **Lastly, theoretical implications, limitations of our study and suggestions for future research are outlined.**

Invisible strings of masculine norms

The assumption that entrepreneurship is gendered means that distinctions between men and women as well as masculine and feminine underpin and are inherent in considerations of 'advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity' (Acker 1990) connected to entrepreneurship. Gender is then just not an addition to entrepreneurial processes, but it is seen as a crucial aspect of entrepreneurship research to explore the gendered nature of entrepreneurship (Acker 1990, Mirchandani 1999, Bird and Brush 2002, Ahl 2006, Bourne and Calás 2013). Entrepreneurship scholars have pointed out that gender aspects are often invisible even to oneself: for example, based on Whitehead (2001), Lewis (2006) explains how men - being part of a privileged group - often do not realize how gender affects everyday life.

Considering entrepreneurship as gendered rejects the gender-free approach often taken in entrepreneurship research. Such gender-free approach makes gender invisible and continues to strengthen privileged groups in society, feeding masculine norms that are invisible, but strong enough to continue male dominance and setting the benchmarks to evaluate individual behaviors (Lewis 2006). The invisibility of the masculinity embedded in entrepreneurial activities is so routine-based that terms such as ‘entrepreneur’ and ‘male’ have become largely interchangeable (Ahl 2006). For women entrepreneurs, this means that their activities are defined and evaluated according to the standards of an invisible, masculine norm. Attempts have been made to challenge the dominant masculinity that informs our understanding of entrepreneurship by drawing on an alternative discourse informed by feminist thought (Mirchandani 1999, Calas, Smircich et al. 2009). In this paper, we will assess how patriarchy, through its preferred masculinity and women’s systematic subordination, impacts women’s entrepreneurship (Welter, Smallbone et al. 2003, Lewis 2006, Essers and Benschop 2007, Roomi and Parrott 2008).

Patriarchy

Applying the concept of patriarchy allows to grasp the scale of gender prejudices and inequalities. The concept of patriarchy “captures the depth, pervasiveness, and interconnectedness of different aspects of women’s subordination within the household, family and society” (Walby 1990: 1), requiring women’s obedience and subordination to men (Stanistreet, Bamba et al. 2005, Andersen, Ertac et al. 2013). Through systematic subordination of women, patriarchal societies produce and reproduce social exclusion (Kabeer 2005). They tend to be based on a strict gender-role division where women take

care of the family, while men earn money (Rothman 1994), limiting women's labor and economic participation (Cain, Khanam et al. 1979, Mies 1998).

Different forms of patriarchal structures exist (Walby 1990), and these have been categorized depending on whether patriarchal relations are characterized by the total domination of women by men (named 'classical patriarchy') or by cooperation and conflict (named 'bargaining patriarchy') (Isran and Isran 2012). In a classical patriarchy, girls tend to be married at a young age into households headed by their husband's father, where they are not only subordinate to all men, but also the more senior women, especially mother-in-laws. Usually, women do not have any claim on their father's inheritance (or, in Muslim communities, pressing for their inheritance rights would equal losing her brother's favors, see Isran and Isran 2012: 841). The total domination will eventually be superseded by the control and authority gained over her own daughters-in-law, encouraging women to internalize this form of patriarchy – and pressuring them to have sons. A 'bargaining patriarchy' approach acknowledges the household and family as a "complex matrix of relationships, in which there are ongoing negotiations subject to the constraints set by gender, age, type of relationship and outdated undisputed traditions" (Agarwal 1994: 54). Women's subordination, then, can be seen largely as a consequence of their limited bargaining power within the household and their poor prospects outside of marriage due to her limited access to outside resources (see Isran and Isran 2012: 845). Thus, access to employment and income-generating activities can contribute to women's economic independence and increased bargaining power within the household (e.g. Sen 2001). However, in patriarchal contexts, female seclusion which denies women the right to gainful employment outside the home is common. Consequently, women's attempts of decision-making for themselves or their children, and of controlling their own fate become ineffective (Cain, Khanam et al. 1979).

Patriarchy does not work in simple or unidirectional ways. Rather, multiple factors relevant at different levels of society intersect and interact (Dekeseredy and Dragiewicz 2007, Heise 1998). In fact, “patriarchal interests overlap with systems that also reinforce class and race privilege” (Chesney-Lind 2006: 9), and thus the life situation of different groups of women within patriarchies can greatly differ.

Patriarchism in the context of Pakistan

According to the World Economic Forum’s Global Gender Gap Report 2012, Pakistan ranked 134th out of 135 countries (World Economic Forum 2012: 9). Similarly, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) ranked Pakistan as 123rd out of 148 countries (UNDP 2013), demonstrating very clearly how the country’s patriarchy continues to discriminate against women. The traditional household in Pakistan is headed by a (senior) male member, who holds control and decision-making power of the household’s financial, material and labor resources and who mediates women’s relations with the outside world (Isran and Isran 2012: 848). The patriarch directs the affairs of the family, protects its interests, and expects complete obedience from its members, often disguised as religious or ethical obligations. As daughters are expected to join their husbands’ families after marriage, they are only seen as temporary visitors in the house, and thus often little investments are made to increase women’s potential economic productivity (Agboatwalla 2000: 181).

The OECD Atlas of Gender and Development assesses the current situation of women in Pakistan as follows: “The Constitution of Pakistan upholds the principles of equal rights and equal treatment of all persons. As a result of patriarchal traditions, women are subject to systematic subordination to men. Women are seen to have mainly a

reproductive role and their movements are restricted through the Islamic practice of purdah. Even though a slow closing of the gaps between men and women has been observed, women still have limited access to education, employment and health services. The lack of government resources, high poverty and low levels of literacy all contribute to the fact that very few women are aware of their rights, while also complicating the implementation and enforcement of reforms intended to improve their situation” (OECD 2010: 188).

The underinvestment into women in Pakistan in the area of health also is reflected in its maternal mortality rate, which is one of the highest in the world, and the infrastructure is inefficient in taking adequate care of women’s health (Agboatwalla 2000). The underinvestment into women in the area of education is especially pronounced in much of Pakistan’s rural society, which still represents 70% of the country’s population, characterized by high rates of illiteracy (ibid).

Many women in Pakistan continue to face limited mobility and segregation, and thus work within the private sphere of the household (Azid et al. 2001). Such female seclusion, or purdah practice, is still common in many tribal and rural parts of the country (e.g. Ibrah 1992). To reach out to a market with the products they manufacture at home, these women are dependent on middlemen as intermediary to shopkeepers or other marketplaces, and this position of dependency tends to be exploited by the intermediaries who underpay the women. This concentration of women in the informal sector is also a consequence of its lower requirements regarding formal education and training.

Obtaining finances for setting up or developing entrepreneurial activities is also a challenge: While Pakistani women are entitled to access bank loans and other forms of credit – with a number of credit institutions now specifically targeting women – their

access continues to be limited in practice by their inability to provide the required collateral. Women with low literacy or limited mobility are further disadvantaged by their inability to obtain the National Identity Card needed to secure a loan (OECD 2010: 189). The financial autonomy of women in Pakistan is also hindered by the Muslim practice of assigning husbands the financial mandate over their wives (see Bhattacharya 2014).

While in public discourse Islam is commonly blamed as the main source of patriarchy, women in that religion actually are supposed to have equal legal rights (Adeel 2010). However, this original foundation of the religion has been widely replaced with gender discrimination and violence against women in many Muslim countries, and also in Pakistan. Adeel (2010) points out how according to Islam, personal superiority is only based on piety, and not gender, and it grants men and women equal rights. Thus, there are no restrictions on women to attain education or work outside their home embedded within the religion as such (Hakim and Aziz 1998), but are rather preached by conservative religious leaders. Given that many women are themselves not aware of the rights enshrined to them in Islam, the discriminative interpretation of the religion by men is hardly questioned (see Bhattacharaya 2014). Pakistan is an Islamic republic, which impacts its laws and regulations. Yet there are customs and traditions, such as underage marriage or polygamy, which go against these laws and which are commonly practiced, sanctioned for example by the Council of Islamic Ideology (Khan 2014). This council was created so that legislators could seek clerics' advice before implementing legislation that may conflict with Islamic law, and it tends to take a fiercely discriminatory approach to women, seeking to "legalize domestic violence if a woman refuses to cover her head or face in public, interacts with strangers; speaks loud enough that she can easily be heard by strangers; and provides monetary support to people without taking consent of her spouse" (Craig 2016). Such attempts counteract the government's half-hearted commitment to eliminate

discrimination against women (Bhattacharya 2014) and further fuel the threat of domestic violence, given that there is a tendency to put blame on the women and not men in case of any undesirable behavior on part of men (Ali and Gavino 2008). The patriarch system in Pakistan is obsessed with female 'honor' and men feel entrusted to 'safeguard' the family honor by controlling women through controlling their bodies, both in terms of sexuality and reproductive ability. Thus, when a woman's behavior is seen to threaten the patriarchal order, her body is punished with beatings, burnings, sexual abuse and even murder, all in the name of 'honor' (Bhattacharya 2014). Indeed, in a poll by Thomson Reuters Foundation's TrustLaw, Pakistan was ranked as the third most dangerous country in the world for women to live in (TrustLaw 2011). While women have the legal right to press charges against their abusers, they rarely report incidents out of fear that their accusations will be distorted to place the blame back on them. The problem of lacking physical integrity is signaled by the fact that close to six million women were missing in 1998 (OECD 2010: 189). The problem of inequality is felt in all areas of life (Sen 2001) and women are exposed to oppression and violence in both economic and social areas, e.g. killings in name of honor still persist in Pakistan (especially in rural areas) (Ruane 2000). One very recent example is of an internet based model Qandeel Baloch who was killed by her brother because he did not accept her bold choices (CNN.com, 18th July 2016). Another serious issue is that of acid throwing on women's faces - Sharmeen Obaid, a filmmaker and double Oscar winner, portrayed these issues in her films.

The patriarchal orders breeding masculinity are usually not provided in written form but they are invisible, yet strongly internalized and routinized. Caffarella, Clark et al. (1997) discuss that in patriarchal societies women, and especially working women, start behaving either as being unaware of their gendered beings or they start to behave like men to avoid or escape oppressive forces and suppression. Subsequently, how

women – and women entrepreneurs - deal with systematic marginalization in patriarchal societies and how they develop gender consciousness is a very relevant and timely issue.

Female entrepreneurship in the patriarchal society of Pakistan

In patriarchal societies, men are the heads of the family and women, who are symbols of honor and respect of their families, are given the responsibility of their homes and to take care of their families (Roomi and Parrott 2008). This restriction of the gender role causes the number of female entrepreneurs to remain behind Western countries (Rehman and Azam Roomi 2012). Working women, including entrepreneurs, can face oppression, violence, harassment, and socio-economic exclusion (Campani 2000, DeKeseredy and Schwartz 2002).

As outlined above, gender discrimination is often justified by religion, and a distorted and conservative interpretation of Islam is often used as a safe ground to practice masculine norms and oppress women (McIntosh and Islam 2010). The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) indicates that the inequality against women is still continuing in Pakistan, and what constitutes women rights and responsibilities is still a conflicting debate in Pakistan (Goheer 2003, Weiss 2003).

Women entrepreneurs in Pakistan also face oppression from masculine and patriarchal forces in different ways, such as through families, male relatives, so-called religious leaders, and media. This oppression continues even for strong and powerful women with different intensity, and masculinity comes in different forms and magnitudes in Pakistan. Women entrepreneurs can feel their kin's pressure to fulfill family responsibilities, domestic and/or local pressure to adapt to a certain way of doing things, a lack of job-related training, financial difficulties, lack of decision-making ability and self-confidence, low entrepreneurial spirit, mobility issues, networking problems, communication and

socialization limitations etc. (Roomi and Parrott 2008, Rehman and Azam Roomi 2012). Other obstacles encountered by women entrepreneurs in Pakistan are internal and external resource constraints (Shabbir and Di Gregorio 1996), lack of training, lack of information (Azam Roomi and Harrison 2010) and bureaucratic obstacles (Goheer 2003). A lack of trust in women entrepreneurs' abilities, wages, payments, and fair competition are other problems (Tambunan 2009). The Government of Pakistan has taken certain initiatives over the years to promote women entrepreneurship, but the implementation of these initiatives to make a difference in practice is in dire need of improvement. The government is especially supporting women to gain economic independence through small loans, micro financing, business trainings, and vocational education.

For female entrepreneurs the wish for getting empowered is the main factor to start their own business (Shabbir and Di Gregorio 1996) and the Government of Pakistan is increasingly acknowledging the relevance of gender empowerment and entrepreneurship.

Methodology

Sample and data

This article is part of a larger entrepreneurship research project that is concerned with the extent to which individuals are constituted as enterprising subjects. Six female business owners based in and around Islamabad (Pakistan) were interviewed and followed longitudinally. All business models were service-oriented, in areas like event planning, software designing and interior decoration. To be included in the sample it was important that women entrepreneurs should be in the business field as an entrepreneur for at least five years, they should have lived in Pakistan for most of their life and should have started their businesses in Pakistan. We set this criterion as for our research objectives it was

important that women selected for this study should have enough experience both as an entrepreneur and as an individual interacting with the macro environment in Pakistan. After selecting the first case studies, we used a snowball sampling technique to select the further cases. Multiple interviews were conducted with each entrepreneur. For this paper, we analyze a total of 18 interviews, out of which 12 were recorded electronically and transcribed. The remaining six interviews were of a more informal, follow-up nature and recording was not possible, so one interviewer took detailed notes of these interviews, which were later transcribed and incorporated into the database. All interviews followed a semi-structured approach to allow for in-depth insights and lasted between 100-120 minutes. Interview questions concerned the background of the women entrepreneurs, their business model, business idea origin, resource accumulation, networking, the perceived impact of the macro environment, challenges, family support, social obligations, and support by governmental and other official organizations. All interviews were conducted mainly in Urdu, with rather substantial switching to English in between. This is common practice in Pakistan, where English is an official language mastered by most educated people. We employed a longitudinal perspective to capture elements of patriarchal impact on in women entrepreneurship in Pakistan, following the cases from 2013 to 2016.

Data analysis

A thematic analysis was conducted (Miles and Huberman 1984). Nvivo 10 was used to develop a case database of raw materials, codes and coded materials with the purpose of enhancing the reliability of findings (Yin 2013). All interview transcripts were inserted into the database and codes were developed to identify themes in the data. We conducted our analysis based on the following steps. First, we searched for instances of patriarchal impact on women's entrepreneurship suggested by existing academic literature and policy reports. Second, we analyzed the interviews with the women entrepreneurs for additional

evidence of patriarchal and masculine norms that have not yet been discussed in academic research. Here, different ways of how female entrepreneurs deal within invisible boundaries of masculinity, e.g. being characterized as “males”, and how they escape these boundaries of masculine norms that are rooted in strong patriarchal phenomenon became evident. Third, we wrote case stories for each entrepreneur, covering the different relevant aspects identified above and conducted a within case analysis. Fourth, we conducted a cross-case analysis to identify patterns of similarities and differences across cases (Yin 2013).

Characteristics of the women entrepreneurs in our sample are displayed in Table 1 below.

Please insert Table 1 about here

Findings

Our findings confirm that masculine norms in Pakistan are deeply embedded in everyday practices and set the standard for doing entrepreneurship. The women entrepreneurs in our sample perceive that if women do not adhere to these masculine norms, they are considered as unprofessional. We identified different themes in our analysis that we will discuss next.

Table 2 below summarizes these different themes.

Please insert Table 2 about here

Role Stereotyping

Role stereotyping is the main standard influencing all entrepreneurship activities in Pakistan. The standard role stereotype is that earning a living is part of the male domain, while family responsibility is the female domain. When men provide an income for their families, then in many families it is not even an option for women to earn money through work. In Pakistan, male entrepreneurs often start their businesses because they faced the pressure to start earning a living for their families as soon as possible (Papanek 1973, Bari 1998, Faridi, Chaudhry et al. 2009). They face the continuous expectation to have a permanent income and serious career.

In our study, women entrepreneurs fall in two main categories. The first group of women are running their businesses, because it is fun and a hobby for them. They do not need to fulfill financial obligations for their family, which continues to be their husbands' domain. The second group of women mainly runs their businesses, because no male person in their family can afford to provide for them. Only one entrepreneur, Hira, actively chose to challenge the role stereotype and started her own business because she promised herself to challenge the masculine standards deeply embedded in Pakistani society. When her business idea got ridiculed by male peers, this was the tipping point for her to get started on her entrepreneurial endeavor. She tells: *I shared my business plan as my final project and no one believed in me, including my professor. All the male fellows had made plans about science or engineering, but I was always sure to have an event planning business. Everyone laughed at me and made fun of me, and that was the start of new journey of me as an entrepreneur. I told them I will make it a reality and I did.*

However, just because the women entrepreneurs challenge the stereotyped role distribution by entering the male domain of earning money, this does not free them from the continuing expectation of adherence to the female responsibility of getting married and taking care of the household and family. Working women, and women

entrepreneurs, are no exception to this - they have to fulfill their responsibilities at home no matter how busy they are at work or how much they earn. This stereotype could be observed in all of our cases with varying degrees. Asma shared that *I consider myself to be a very successful person, but still my mother will be happiest once I will be married. This sword of marriage is hanging over me 24/7 and 365 days of the year. It is because our society is like this.* Mehvish wants her business to grow and develop, but complains that *I can only run it part-time from home, because I have kids and the household that I need to take care of. But I plan to develop the business more seriously in the future.* This role expectation is so strong that for these women entrepreneurs their business activities and working options sometimes are the result of intra-family negotiations. For example, Kanwal shared that *my father says that when you will be getting married, we will ask your in-laws to allow you to continue to do your business in the same way after marriage.* However, such negotiations can also lead to the opposite result. Umaira told that *although I love my business, I will have to switch to a 9 to 5 job, as I have a daughter now and that is a bigger responsibility.* Also Hira, who runs a well-reputed business in Islamabad, has to compromise on her entrepreneurial activities when soon getting married. Having to move to a different city to join her husband's family, she reluctantly expects to relaunch her business there.

Despite the variation in our cases, it is evident that in Pakistan gender role expectations are very strong and internalized, so that women entrepreneurs routinely fulfill these roles on an everyday basis largely without questioning them. Thus, women entrepreneurs took for granted that no male in their homes would help with household chores or taking care of the family, as men were busy providing income to their families. While they challenged the role stereotype ascribed to themselves, they left the role stereotype ascribed to men untouched.

Networking

Networking and building social capital is crucial in any business (Davidsson and Honig 2003). However, the networking strategies in our cases were highly influenced by patriarchal restrictions. The women entrepreneurs in our sample only relied on strong network ties, mainly their friends and families, while prior research has pointed out the relevance of weak ties for entrepreneurial success. In a patriarch society, developing new network ties can be an uncomfortable challenge for women, as exemplified by Umaira: *I do not like going after people, I only do my events for the people I know, and not anyone else, actually I feel uncomfortable.* Rabia finds that contacts are important for her event planning and interior designing business, but still she only relies on her husband's network. However, in her case, this is not related to feeling uneasy developing new contacts, but the existing access to contacts through her husband's network. She tells: *Why should I look for and run after people, my husband is quite successful and I just ask him, and he will arrange everything.* Similarly, Mehvish tells about how her parents' business activities and her husband being very successful in business as well facilitate her sales efforts of her own business services, as these efforts can be channeled through her family and friends.

However, an underlying reason for this practice is that in a patriarchal society like Pakistan women's socializing and developing networks with men is uncommon. Rabia explains how *women's reputation is at stake if they want to market their work. People still do not expect women to have power, so I would just leave the contacting and networking to my husband, I do not want to be labelled as a bold woman.* Asma, who is pursuing her entrepreneurial dreams passionately, tells *as a woman I need to prove myself at every step.*

I need to be strong and assertive in my communication, and sometimes I get remarks like oh, you talk like a man.

The examples above illustrate how women entrepreneurs in Pakistan are limited by the reputation assigned to them in Pakistani society. To practice entrepreneurship, they need to meet patriarchal standards - like adhering to expectations on women, covering their head, and talking in a feminine way. As women's entrepreneurship is largely viewed as the opposite to the 'normal', male entrepreneurship, women entrepreneurs, like Asma, who choose to break with the expectations on their behavior, are considered as manly, because signaling strength and power is seen as a masculine norm.

Mobility

Free mobility remains a challenge for women in Pakistani society. For our sample of well-educated, successful women entrepreneurs this does not mean that they are not allowed to go outside alone (as many women especially in rural areas would be). Still, there are certain restrictions deriving from patriarchal pressures. For example, the women entrepreneur Kanwal is supposed to go anywhere accompanied by one of her brothers, mother or with some elderly figure. She explains *It is not because my parents would not trust me, but simply because they do not feel comfortable with their daughter staying alone outside in evening*. In another case, Asma tells how *I have no problem going outside alone, but as soon as the clock strikes 9 o'clock at night, I start worrying about getting back home. Otherwise my brother would start calling and asking about my whereabouts, just to know if I am safe*. But mobility not only impacts women directly, as illustrated in the two examples above. It also leads women entrepreneurs to change their behavior in more subtle ways, as exemplified by Hira: *I cover my head and behave very serious when I go to*

markets to talk to daily wage laborers or to shop products from the interior city of Rawalpindi. Umaira tells about how she feels uncomfortable going to places where she does not know a lot of people. She remembers a situation in which she arranged a birthday event and mostly males attended, while she was supervising and taking care of all arrangements, concluding: *I felt quite awkward in that situation, so now I only go to places where I know people.*

Our findings show that mobility is a challenge that impacts women entrepreneurs in different ways, and which obviously is not an issue for men entrepreneurs in the same society – who can move around freely at day and night wherever they like.

Performance labelling

Even in less patriarchal societies, there is a tendency to evaluate the performance of women's businesses with male norms, such as profit maximization and wealth creation, as benchmarks (Eddleston & Powell, 2008). This is the case also in Pakistan, where women not only have to struggle with patriarchal structures as outlined above, but also with getting their ventures' performance to be positively acknowledged. Their business performance is evaluated with the same standards as male-owned businesses (cf. Ahl, 2004), i.e. as if they could be run without gendered restrictions regarding finding and acting on a business opportunity. Thus, their businesses tend to end up being evaluated as less successful than male-run businesses in the same market or business area and the women struggled to be taken seriously as business partners. This was true for all of the women entrepreneurs in our sample, though they faced varied challenges in relation to the masculine norms and patriarchal standards. Frustrated with this situation, Rabia recalls *when people wanted to have free consultations and ideas they would contact me... but when they had to pay money they would go to male-owned businesses...I have suffered from such incidents in the past,*

but not anymore...I have learned my lesson...I do not let people exploit me and always discuss my payments beforehand. Kanwal even went a step further, as she created her business model around the hindrances faced by handicraft women to reach the marketplace: *The women artisans that I work with are worth no less than anyone.... but they are considered a failure, just because they do not have access to markets in the same way as males have...so I provide them a platform to sell their products through my exhibitions and to very low fees.* Also Asma told about her difficulties in being paid for her services: *Still after all these years, people do not take me serious as a professional... You know, sometimes my friend's mother or a family member would come and say, come and take pictures of my daughter's engagement. And then they would just thank me at the end, without compensating anything in terms of money... I will not let this happen anymore in the future.* Hira experienced similarly that *people do not respect women professionals, especially in service-oriented businesses....still today some people call me Hira "tent wali" (canopy fixer) and not an event planner.*

Discussion and Conclusions

Our study confirms that patriarchal traditions and invisible masculine norms set the boundaries, rules and benchmarks for gendered entrepreneurial behavior. While this findings is not per se surprising for a country characterized by a high level of gender discrimination, our study shows how differently women are impacted by the same patriarchal expectations and invisible masculine norms. Even though our sample of women entrepreneurs was homogenous in that they were well-educated women running businesses successfully established in the market, their experiences varied, lending support to the assumption that patriarchy is not a simple construct with uni-dimensional effects, but that

its interconnectedness of different aspects of women's sub-ordination within the household, family and society create different kinds and degrees of challenges for women entrepreneurs (see Walby, 1990).

Socialization – women as active in hindering ways as men, low degree of questioning system; violence and harassment highly present, though not explicit in our study

Unfortunately, this masculinity is so strongly set as benchmark in Pakistan that is practiced in entrepreneurship on everyday basis. Women try to follow the set standards and stereotypes and when they do not follow, they risk their reputation, honor and dignity. They might be considered bold and in some cases even manly, that of course is not considered a normal behavior for many people. In our data male entrepreneurs had a struggle to become an entrepreneur and grow and establish. However, in case of women they had a struggle to become an entrepreneur on one hand to be a good woman confining to the patriarchal traditions on the other hand. Being women and being entrepreneur is like travelling in two boats at the same time. Ironically these societal pressures are not considered in performance assessments. Women are supposed to have low performances because they lack some competence or skills as compared to males. Nevertheless, in some situations we also witnessed role of women's agency in negotiating and constructing gender consciousness entrepreneurial behavior against masculine norms. This conscious gendered experience reflects and signals the relevance of challenging masculinity and patriarchal traditions and to get flexible and open for gendered entrepreneurship.

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Table 1: Cases for data collection

Name	Firm	Business Profile
Rabia Iftikhar (Married, one son)	Bia's Interior	Interior Designer, Dress designer and event planner
Asma (Unmarried)	Potter's Wheel	Graphic designer, events planning and consultation service
Mehvish Saleem (Married, two kids)	Studio Events	Gift boxes, Birthday events
Kanwal (Unmarried)	The Craft Manager	Event Planner, arranges exhibitions for women artisans and provide the platform to market their products
Umaira (Married, one daughter)	Party Place	Birthday parties planner
Hira (Married)	Revelations	Event planner for birthdays, engagement parties, anniversaries etc.

Table 2: Themes for data analysis

<i>Final theme</i>	<i>Second order</i>	<i>First order</i>
<i>Role stereotyping</i>	Different male and female domains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family is main responsibility (for married women) • For unmarried women parents mostly desire for their daughters to get married and have family • Business, career come as secondary option • Most do it for hobby and fun as their husband earn • Women focusing on their business career seriously always sacrifice when it comes to family e.g. kids care, child birth, husband posting etc.
<i>Networking</i>	Socialization according to patriarchal standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relying on husband or parents network • Closed ties (e.g. family, friends) • Socializing for women is mostly acceptable and seen comfortable with women

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women reputation can be judged and questioned often for being outspoken, bold dressed etc.
<i>Mobility</i>	Patriarchal pressures and no complete acceptance for free moving for women especially in night and evenings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going out with in certain hours e.g. before night • Not going alone outside • Special taking care of appearance, dressing, communication • Informing about whereabouts to family members • Going to familiar places and meeting familiar people
<i>Performance labelling</i>	Profit maximization & Wealth Creation Opportunities within patriarchal boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free consultations • No access to market for women in informal markets • Non-monetary compensations especially within family and friends • Lack of trust and respect specifically for service oriented businesses