Perception about Mother-in-law

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Abstract

Qualitative research was conducted to explore the perception about mother-in-law in Pakistan. The sample consisted of 14 females (7 unmarried, 7 married) with an age range of 25-35 years. In this qualitative study data was collected through two focus groups. One focus group was conducted among unmarried females and the second focus group was conducted among married females to know about their perception about mother-in-law in Pakistani society. The following themes emerged in the unmarried focus group after analyzing data through IPA: "impact of changing role, dilemma of controlling daughter-in-law, mother-in-law as peacemaker and factors affecting perception." From married female's focus group, following themes emerged after analysis: "Impact of changing role, Mother-in-law as troublemaker, Relational strain because of environmental factors and Factors effecting perception." These findings were discussed against the backdrop of international literature about the perception about mother-in-law. Implications of these findings are discussed.

Key words: *perception, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law, focus group*

In Pakistan, societal life moves around family and relatives. An individual seldom live separately from their family and relatives. The family provides protection and identity to its members. Until marriage, children and parents live together and to form a joint family, sons mostly live with their parents even after marriage.

The primary kinship unit is the house where married couple, their sons, their son's wives and children, and unwedded offsprings live together. After father's death sons establish their separate houses. Squabbles and disunity, especially among the ladies (mother-in-law and daughters-in-law), can prompt the untimely disintegration of a joint family unit (Blood, 1995). According to Webster dictionary (2015) "mother-in-law is the mother of one's spouse." Mother and daughter-in-law don't have a blood relation but are relatives by law. They belong to different families, have dissimilar lifestyle, values and opinions or may have different social status.

As a result, when they brought to live in one family, these differences cause conflict or clashes between them, It was found from the research conducted by Sylvia Mikucki-Enyart, that mothers are more overwhelmingly anxious about their sons getting married as compared to their daughters. And the friction is encountered by both parties; the greater part of the 133 new wives surveyed reported that they feel insecure with reference to their interaction with their mother-in-law because of the fear that she will talk sick about them with their husband or meddle excessively in their wedded life. Mikucki-Enyart surveyed 89 moms to focus their greatest worries about their children getting married. She found that a mother stresses most over her son's general well-being, that he won't visit as regularly after marriage, and that his new wife will change him.

The ladies additionally reported stressing that their daughters-in-law were poor cooks, that their sons weren't content with their new wives and that they got to be less dependable because of the new lady in their lives. Both ladies are basically competing for the part of nurturer to the man, says Mikucki-Enyart, which clarifies the innate envying feelings between them (as cited in Peppers, 2013). In a similar study conducted in India, Thukral (2013) explored "daughter-in-law/mother-in-law" relationship. Women in the study were at first reluctant to open up about their interaction with mother-in-law and also did not highlight any significant

concern in the relationship before marriage. The "daughter-in-laws" expressed their feelings about "mother-in-laws" as unequivocal in her demands (e.g. house hold chores and family rules and regulations) and they were reported to be inflexible, thus leading to power lopsidedness in this relationship.

Thukral (2013) addresses the conflict that is depicted in the South Asian mainstream media and society however is seldom conveyed or resolved in the relationship. In spite of restricted generalizability and analyst predisposition, this research has provided a lot of information regarding the interpersonal and sociocultural aspects of this important but misperceived relationship, and this misperception adversely affects the spouse-wife and/or mother-son relationship.

Due to cultural propagation of negative mother-in-law and daughter relationship, we usually minimize positive aspects and maximize negative aspects of this relationship (Fischer, 1983; Rittenour & Soliz, 2009; Allendorf, 2010). The elderly saw that the "Bahus" of today are not giving considerable care to their mother-in-law as the present mother-in-law did for their elderly (Ansari, 2011).

Like most family relations, in-law relationships are not anticipated to be static. They excessively are influenced by life course occasions and by the progression of time. Timmer and Veroff (2000) conducted phenomenological research which showed that newlywed couples do not experience conflict very often at first, but as their relationship grows, their understanding level begins to deteriorate, and their prejudice, agony and rivalry intensify, resulting in a condition of conflict between them.

Fear, wrath, guilt, and disgrace are common unpleasant emotions experienced by daughters-in-law who are rejected by their mothers-in-law. (Merrill, 2007). While completing everyday tasks, mothers-in-law frequently refers to their daughters-in-law as lazy. One of the most common sources of conflict is criticism (Feeney, 2004).

Marginally more than one-fifth of the daughter-in-law (21%) accepted that their relation with their mother-in-law had not changed over time or even with the important life events, in particular their marriage and the conception of children/grandchildren. The other 79% expressed that there had been some change, if they had developed marginally closer over the long run. Twenty-nine percent of the mother-in-law likewise felt that there was a very little change in their relationship with their daughter-in-law (Merrill, 2007).

Studies conducted by Ago, Sugita and Datta: Poortinga, and Marcoen, (2003) found that Clash with mother-in-law is a typical issue in Asian countries described by patrilineal and collectivistic societies e.g., China, Taiwan, Korea, India, and Japan. For example, clash with mother-in-law is rated as the third most distressing occasion of marriage by wedded Chinese women rated clash with mother-in-law (Zheng & Lin, 1994).

Woolley and Greif (2019) found that if daughter-in-law is cooperative and shared common interests then its an indication of a good relationship between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. The mother-in-law closeness to her son and the son's satisfaction with her connection with the daughter-in-law also indicated a better relationship between the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law. Furthermore, mother-in-law's perception of being left out in the relationship with the son and daughter-in-law was linked to a lack of connectedness. But when mother-in-law spend more time with the daughter-in-law per month, their relationship grew closer.

In numerous Asian nations, married women are in charge of many household chores, and it has been expected from them that

after marriage they should live with and deal with their spouses' parents. It has also been found that in such cases spouses' families treat sister-in-law very unfairly (Altman et al., 1992).

Erikson contended that relationship with husband forms woman's identity and that women must resolve the issues of identity and intimacy simultaneously. On the other side, mother-in-law is going through a stage of generativity or ego integrity and she wants to share her wisdom with her daughter-in-law. From the perspective of life stage model, it is expected to observe conflicts between them. Because daughter-in-law is looking for liberty and mother-in-law wants to guide others and has an influence on the lives of other family members (as cited in Jean, Young, & Black, 2006). Yang and Chandler (1992) conducted a study which revealed that in the context of de-collectivization, the most frequent intergenerational dispute was still reported between the "mother-in-law and daughter-in- law". There were 35.8 percent of the respondents indicated that there were serious problems between elderly women and their daughters-in-law. Wu et al., (2010) conducted a study and found that the marital satisfaction of wives is negatively influenced by the conflicts with the mother-in-law.

Rationale of the study

In any family system, the most critical relationship is the "mother-in-law/daughter-in-law relationship". Every family member is affected when a "mother-in-law and daughter-in-law" do not get along well with each other, whether it's a husband, father-in-law/ son, brother-in-law, daughter-in-law, children/ grandchildren, or sister-in-law. The relationship with mother-in-law is the topic that has not been studied widely but frequently comes up in daily conversation, jokes, popular culture and TV shows is. So there is need to study the perception about mother-in-law in our society.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the present study are:
- To explore the perception about mother-in-law among married and unmarried women.
- To find out perception about the role of mother-in-law in a family
- To find out the factors influencing perception about mother-in-law

Research Questions
- What is the perception about mother-in-law among unmarried girls in Pakistan?
- What is the perception about mother-in-law among married women in Pakistan?
- What is the perception about the role of mother-in-law in a family?
- What are the factors behind this perception?

Method

The aim of the study was to explore the perception about mother-in-law in Pakistan.

Participants

Seven unmarried and seven married educated females with an age range of 25-35 years was selected for this qualitative study to gain in-depth information regarding perception about mother-in-law in Pakistani society. Sample was selected from GCU, Lahore through purposive sampling technique. All the participants belonged to the middle class.

Data collection method

Focus group was used to collect a data in a current study. Two focus groups were conducted to explore the perception about mother-in-law. It is a closed group discussion and all the focus group members were unfamiliar with each other because of which participants share their experiences freely in a group environment where they observed that other group members doing the same (Morgan, 1998). It has also been reported that as compared to one-to-one interview, group discussion elicits more experiential reflection (Palmer et al., 2010). Before late 1970s focus group was used as a tool in market research in the field of business and marketing but in 1980 focus groups were used by health researchers in social action research (Smith, 2003). Focus group has been defined by Krueger and Casey (2000) (as cited in Larson, Grudens-Schuck, & Allen, 2004) as a "carefully planned series of discussions designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment"

Focus group is a method of data collection which is widely used in qualitative research. In focus group, a group of people (usually four and eight) is asked about their attitude, beliefs and experiences towards a specific topic or concept. These participants are the representative of a particular population and have same characteristics or experiences. It is an informal group discussion in which researcher usually plays a role of moderator who encourage group members to interact freely with each other (Smith, 2003). Focus group is a flexible, economical method, which provides in-depth information which is very useful for exploratory research (Deem, 1997).

Procedure

Two Focus groups were conducted. One focus group was conducted among unmarried females and the second focus group was conducted among married females to know about their perception about mother-in-law in Pakistani society. Consent forms were filled by the participants, focus group discussion was carried out. Few questions were prepared before the focus group to initiate discussion. Discussion was flexible structured, and tape recorded. In focus group discussion, all the participants were free to interact with each other. After collecting data, it was analyzed through Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA).

Ethical consideration

Written consent was taken from all the participants. They were also informed about the purpose of the research. Participants' identity was disguised so that no one can identify or traced them. They were assured that the data they will provide will remain confidential and will only be used from research purpose. Participants were also told that they can withdraw from the study at any time. Deception was avoided as well.

Data analysis

For data analysis, all the recorded data was transcribed and analyzed through Interpretative Phenomenological Approach (IPA) because it is a phenomenological and ideographic approach, and it explores an individual's personal perception and experiences about an event. IPA provides in-depth information. In IPA, researcher's priority is to find a sample which is homogenous. IPA is now widely used in health and social psychology.

Smith et al., (2009) support the use of focus groups, and further illustrate that obtained data can be analyzed through IPA if the researcher thinks that the presence of oth1er individuals in the discussion does not create hindrance in sharing the personal experiences. Flowers *et al.* (2001) suggested that focus groups provide wealth of information that would not have been elicited if relied solely on individual interviews. Much published work has used IPA for analyzing focus group data (Flowers et al., 2000; Dunne & Quayle, 2001; Flowers et al., 2001; Earle, Davies, Greenfield, Ross, & Eiser, 2005; Palmer et al., 2010; Dellasega, Añel-Tiangco, & Gabbay, 2012; Choudhry, & Bokharey, 2013).

Results

Unmarried females focus group and married female focus group were analyzed through Interpretive Phenomenological approach (IPA). IPA gives importance to individual experiences and provides in depth information about issues and people's feelings about them. After analysis, four major themes emerged from both focus groups which are "impact of changing role, mother-in-law as troublemaker, relational strain because of environmental factors and factors affecting perception." It was found that both married and unmarried females negatively perceive mother-in-law. Broadly, it was showed that Mother-in-law felt insecure and become possessive because before her son's marriage everything was under her control, her son take care of her but after marriage she thinks that her daughter-in-law will take over and when her son shares time with his wife, she becomes possessive about him. It was found that mother-in-law also takes revenge from her son's wife because of her own past experiences. She is responsible for creating problems in the family, especially between her son and his wife. She conveys negative messages to her son. She doesn't give time to daughter-in-law for adjustment and always look for weakness in daughter-in-law and tries to highlight them because she wants to keep her daughter-in-law in her control. Who thinks and acts according to her will. Mother-in-law also tries to make situation worse in case of any tension between son and daughter-in-law and in extreme cases she forces her son to divorce his wife. It was also pointed out that in some cases mother marries off her son in the hope of getting dowry and for her, marriage is a form of reimbursement of all the money she has invested on her son. The girl's parents think if they don't give their daughter enough dowry, no one will respect her in in-laws and her mother-in-law will be unhappy and will also create problems for her. Although in most of the cases, mother-in-law plays a negative role but sometimes she also plays a positive role. She provides help in building healthy relationship among family members, especially between newlywed couple. Sometimes, when her son is on fault, she snubs him and supports daughter-in-law. She treats her daughter-in-law as her own daughter, and she doesn't allow others to interfere in their family life. It was found that our existing mental schemas, other people interferences and media plays a vital role in developing negative perceptions about mother-in-law. We have preexisting schemas about mother-in-law that she has a rival relation with daughter-in-law, she can't be helpful and supportive, and she can't be like mother. Other people also play a role in developing mental schemas. Mostly they talk negatively about "mother-in-law and daughter-in-law" relationship. It was also showed that media also portray mother-in-law in a negative way. Mother-in-law is projected as a wicked woman in TV plays, movies etc. Relationships with mothers-in-law are therefore much complicated.

Figure 1: Four major themes emerged after analyzing focus group data conducted with married and unmarried females through IPA
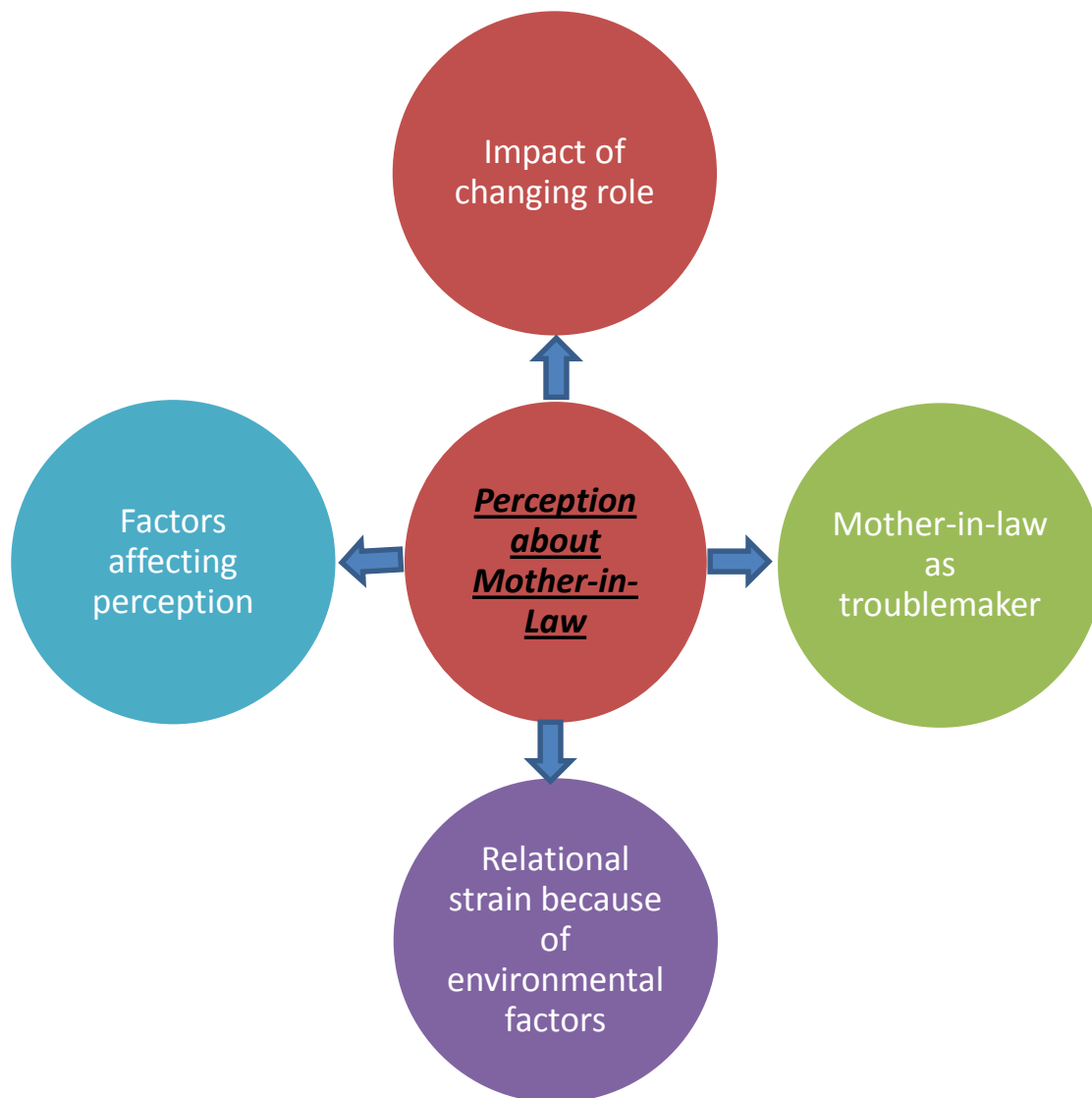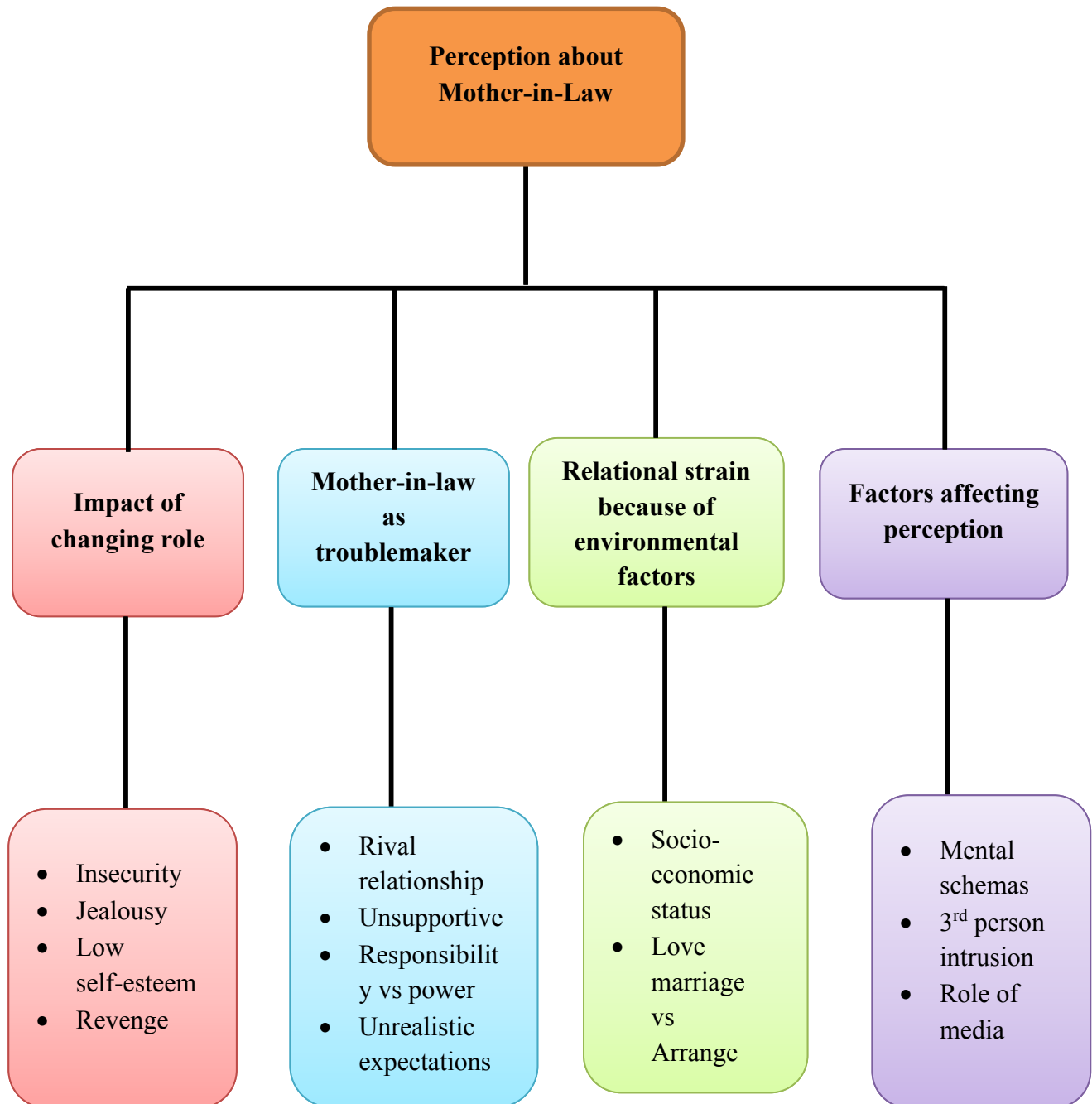
Figure 2:   Major themes and subthemes emerged after analyzing focus group data conducted with married and unmarried females through IPA

Discussion

As time passes, we cannot deny the importance of family relationships because now our family size is shrinking and life span extending. These relationships become more complex as the children build their own families. The most uncertain and critical relationship may develop after son's marriage, that of "mother-in-law and daughter-in-law" (Fischer, 1983, Fischer, 1986).

For qualitative exploration of perception about mother-in-law, data was collected through focus groups and analyzed by IPA. One focus group was conducted with unmarried females and the other focus was conducted with married females. Four major themes were emerged from both focus groups which include: "impact of changing role, Mother-in-law as trouble maker, Relational strain because of environmental factors and factors affecting perception."

The first theme which emerged from the data focuses on the "impact of changing roles" which includes self-pity, revenge, insecurity and possessiveness, low self-esteem. Mother often becomes possessive, insecure after her son's marriage. Mother's life revolves around her son and she fulfills all his needs but once he gets married he calls her wife for the fulfillment of his needs. Which is very alarming for her and she starts thinking that his son no longer need her, and then makes her go against her daughter-in-law. Findings are supported by the work done by Brink (1987).
One of the participants reported ironically that,
"My mother-in-law becomes sensitive on minor things like if my husband appreciates my cooking he will get sarcastic remarks after 2 or 3 days from her mother that you never appreciate my cooking but you eat 3 breads when your wife prepares food for you. She feels that I am trying to take her place. She has a hold on kitchen only and I am trying to take that hold too."

Mother-in-law also become jealous when her son gives importance to his wife, In this regard one participant reported that,
"Mother-in-law said to her son that you go with your wife on dinner but you didn't ask me to go with you. I sit alone here, poor me, no one is with me. What did I eat, if you took me with you? You are the only one in my life. In such cases mother-in-law never incorporate daughter-in-law in in her life and gets jealous of her daughter-in-law presence in her son's life."

Mother-in-law also starts thinking that she is a worthless person. She has nothing to do. She is spending an aimless life now. In this son and daughter-in-law's family, older parents feel dependent and powerless, mainly because they do not make decisions on family matters but follow the younger couple's decisions but also because they are receivers rather than providers of care (Kim, 1996). To be in a main stream she tries that at home everything should be according to her will. It has also been found that mother-in-law treats her daughter-in-law accordingly as she was treated by her mother-in-law. One of the participants reported that,
"if mother-in-law spent her life under in laws pressure and was also controlled by them, afterword's, when her daughter-in-law come into her house, mother-in-law thinks now it's her time to take revenge."

Second theme emerged from the analysis was "Mother-in-law as troublemaker". All the participants agreed that mother-in-law plays a role of troublemaker. It was found that mother-in-law thinks that her daughter in law is her rival. Fights for the love of one man, dissent over family matters, and personality differences are evident in struggles between "daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law" (Kim, 1996). Perception also involved mother in law as being very inquisitive and don't provide support to her daughter-in-law. She puts responsibilities on her daughter-in-law but never give the power. Brink (1987), Altman, Brown, Staples, and Werner (1992) and Marotz-Baden and Mattheis (1994) support the finding that women contribute labor but are not involved in decision making. She also has unrealistic expectations.

One participant stated that.
"She wants to keep her daughter in law in control. Who thinks and acts according to her will. Mother-in-law tries to make situation worse in case of any tension between son and daughter-in-law and in extreme cases she force her son to divorce his wife."
Another perception was that mother-in-law also becomes judgmental and inquisitive. In case of any problem, she will ask questions like how, what, when and why and daughter-in-law has to answerable in front of mother-in-law. She starts competing with her daughter-in-law. Like participant reported that,
"If her son buys something for her wife, she will say what you brought for me? You didn't think of me when you were buying something for you wife."
She also puts restrictions on her daughter-in-law which cause distant relationship between mother and son. Participant reported that,
"If mother-in-law doesn't give respect to her daughter-in-law and don't treat her in a way in which she has to treat her, in a result, with the passage of time son develops a distant relationship with his mother."
Mother-in-law expectations are also unrealistic (Thukral, 2013). Like one participant reported that,
"At the time of selecting a daughter-in-law, her criterion is that girl should be slim and smart, fashionable, has a haircut. But after 6 months of marriage, mother-in-law expects that she looks like a maid."
Another participant reported in humorous way that,
"Mother-in-law has unrealistic expectations, she expects that daughter-in-law do all household chores but at the same time she should looks like Katrina."
All participants agreed that mother-in-law can't see her son with her wife. She has objections if her son spends time with his wife and provides a helping hand to her wife and considered as "Zaan Mureed". In this regard one participant reported that,
"If son puts plates in a kitchen in his mother presence, his mother become upset for the next one month, pretending that it's a big atrocity on her son."

Mother-in-law doesn't provide a supportive role to her daughter-in-law. Previous work done by Fischer (1983) also found that Daughters prefer to seek advice about childrearing from their mothers than their mothers-in-law, thus re-establishing with their mothers (but not with their mothers-in-law) a maternally oriented intimacy.
Like one participant reported that,
"When daughter-in-law needs some rest, she goes to her mother's place and leaves her children there. Mother-in-law isn't available like this. She doesn't play a supportive role."

Unmarried females view mother-in-law as peacemaker along with trouble maker. All of them agreed that mother-in-law not always have a negative role, she also plays a positive role, although it's very rare. She plays a very important role in developing the healthy relation among the family members and between her son

and daughter-in-law relations. Work done by Shih (2011) support the findings of current research found that when daughter-in-law perceive mother-in-law as supportive and accommodating, she also acknowledges and love her for her contribution towards her and her family.

One participant described that

"*She provides help in solving problem. Sometimes when her son is on fault she snubs him and supports daughter-in-law.*"

Another participant also stated that

"*She treats her daughter-in-law as her daughter and she doesn't allow other to interfere in their family matters.*"

The positive and negative roles of mother-in-law lead towards negative and positive perceptions about her.

Another major theme emerged was "Relational strain because of environmental factors". All participants agreed that there is a relational strain between "mother-in-law and daughter-in-law" because of socio-economic status and love marriage. Mother-in-law treats daughter-in-law badly if there is a difference in their socio-economic status. Mother-in-law will have an upper hand. She gives sarcastic remarks and pinpoint daughter-in-law on trivial issues.

It was also found that mother-in-law plays a different role in love marriage and arrange marriage. In arrange marriages mother-in-law herself selects a girl that's why she is more accommodating as compared in love marriage because in love marriage her son selects his wife. In love marriages, mother-in-law has a rival relation with daughter-in-law and always criticizes her on trivial matters. This finding is consistent with the work done by Fischer (1983), he found that a critical mother-in-law tends to be rejecting towards her daughter-in-law, and thus not owning the son's wife.

Like one participant reported that,

"*In love marriage, Mother-in-law looks for negative points in daughter-in-law. In wedding ceremony, she was sarcastically pointing out to my character as loose, and was wondering how her son fell into my trap*"

If daughter-in-law shares her problems with mother-in-law, it is perceived in a negative way and mother-in-law conveyed it to her son like "*she has a big mouth and she argued with me a lot.*"

Dowry also plays an important role in "mother-in-law and daughter-in-law" relationship. A study conducted by Gangoli and Rew (2011) has found dowry to be the main reason of that mother-in-law's violence against daughters-in-law. It has been believed that "mothers-in-law" harass and torture their "daughters-in-law" if they don't bring adequate dowry or to force them to ask their parents for more dowry.

One participant reported that,

"*More respect is given to that girl who brings meager dowry. Dowry is considered as criteria to be loved. She brings that much trucks of dowry; she is really a good daughter-in-law. Wah g wah.*"

Today, a girl is educated so that she can support herself irrespective of her getting married or not. But when she gets married, it is expected that she has to contribute in financial load of the family, the practice that was rare in the past. One participant reported in a sad mood that,

"*If girl is a working women and shares economic burden, than mother-in-law treats her like a daughter but if she don't support financially then mother-in-law treats her badly.*"

Another participant reported that,

"*Love for daughter in law and her importance increases as the trucks of dowry increases.*"

Sarcastic remarks are given to daughter-in-law if she doesn't bring enough dowry. During the wedding she says she doesn't want anything as dowry, etc, But after the marriage, she taunts daughter-in-law every moment for the simple wedding, that girls family did not serve them properly, that her mother did not give any dowry, etc and more and more things. She keep hurting daughter-in-law by talking bad about daughter-in-law's parents and family. If daughter-in-law asks for something, Mother-in-law says sarcastically that you didn't bring these things from your parents' home. "*Look, how shamelessly she is asking for things*" It was also found from the previous research that, as young brides, women are considered unimportant in the home if they don't bring dowry. Dowry is given in the form of jewelry, money, domestic things, property and a countless consumer items. (Gangoli & Rew, 2011)

Last major theme emerged after analysis was "Factors Influencing Perception about mother-in-law". All the participants reported that our mental schemas, third person's intrusion and media plays an important role in making perception about mother-in-law (Cotterill, 1994).

One of the participants reported that,

"*Our perception has been made from childhood that mother-in-law is a bad women who will judge you all the time.*"

Like one of the participant reported that,

"*I have seen my grandmother; she is a very bad mother-in-law. There are some flaws in my mother too but my grandmother treats her very badly. I have a negative image of a mother-in-law.*"

Another participant reported that,

"*It's a stigma in our society that mother-in-law and daughter-in-law always have bad relationship.*"

Along with mental schemas, third person's intrusion also effects the perception about mother-in-law. People induce negative thoughts in mother-in-law mind.

Like one participant stated that,

"*Look at your daughter-in-law, what she is doing. Your home wasn't like this. After her arrival your home become like this.*"

Extended family develops negative schemas about "daughter-in-law" in "mother-in-law's" mind. They say daughter-in-law will come and do such things in this way. As a result, mother-in-law becomes defensive and "*gets ready to fight in anticipation*"

Here we can't ignore the role of media. Most of the TV plays, films, radio channels and newspapers depicting stereotypical perception about mother-in-law because of which negative perception develop about mother-in-law. One participant stated that,

"*To have some issues between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is natural but media present it as a giant issue and destroy the respect of relations. Media present reality in a shattered way. Just to increase their show's rating, they portray mother-in-law as evil.*"

Conclusion

Relationships with in-laws play a significant role in an individuals' life. Findings of the research suggest that both unmarried and married females have negative perception about mother-in-law because daughter-in-law and mothers-in-law have different expectations, behaviors, and emotions due to their generation or individual characteristics. Four major themes extracted from the unmarried and married females focus groups was also found in the western culture. Although unmarried females perceive mother-in-law negatively but at the same time unmarried females also perceive mother-in-law as peacemaker, who provide

help in developing healthy relationship among the newlywed couple and the other family members. Contrary to this, married females only perceive mother-in-law as troublemaker who is manipulative and has a rival relationship with her daughter-in-law. Both ladies are basically vying for the part of nurturer to the man. *"Women are women's worst enemies"* (Thacker, 2018)

Limitations

There were certain limitations of this research like; one of the limitations of a qualitative research is a small sample size. Similarly this research also had a small sample which means that findings cannot be generalized to the larger population. Similarly, sample was selected from one institutions of Lahore, which also restricted its generalizability. Moreover, selected sample was selected only from middle and upper middle class females, not from lower and upper class. Along with this, data were collected from educated females because of which we cannot generalize it to other population.

Suggestions

There are some suggestions for the future research.
- First of all study should be conducted on a large sample so that researcher can generalize the findings.

- Sample should be drawn from other cities of Pakistan too.
- Sample should also be selected from lower and upper class.
- Data should also be collected from uneducated people.
- Quantitative study should also be conducted along with qualitative study.
- Community workshops should also be conducted to create awareness among people. Such education and training will empower the individual to develop effective communication skills, which will be helpful in reducing several misperceptions we saw as mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law discussed the difficulties of their relationship.

Implications

The study can help in identifying and understanding the perception of unmarried and married females about mother-in-law.

The study can also be helpful for marriage counselors to help newlywed couples and their parents. So that they can begin their relationships in a healthier way.

The results of the study also useful for experts working with families to eradicate misunderstandings between these two generations of women.

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