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Preventing the Leaky Pipeline: Teaching Future Female Leaders to Manage their Careers and Promote Gender Equality in Organizations

Nicole Böhmer[1] and Heike Schinnenburg[2]

Abstract

The paradox of Indian women's declining presence in the labor market despite their advancements in higher education leads to questions regarding how this "leaky pipeline" can be patched and (partly) prevented. At the same time, female educational advancement in Western countries, such as Germany, does not equate to significantly more females in leadership positions or changes in gender role expectations. In both the Indian and German contextual setting, women face hurdles in developing their career and the risk of lifelong dependency or poverty.

This paper clarifies the perspectives of young females on leadership careers and success before they enter the labor market and uses the results from career research to show "blind spots" that might lead to hurdles for their future careers. The second contribution of the paper is envisioning future teaching that (1) prevents females from making decisions that might lead to dependency and poverty while fulfilling organizational and societal gender role expectations and (2) fosters organizational changes that facilitates female careers. The Paper also reflects on the learning stages necessary for transforming theoretical knowledge into practical solutions and promoting more equal opportunities in the labor market.

Keywords: Career success, gender stereotypes, India, Germany, women's career success, women's workshops

Introduction

Women's access to higher education, especially tertiary education, is increasing. The world Economic Forum's Gender Gap Report states that the educational attainment of females increased from 92% of males' educational level in 2006 to 95% in 2015 (World Economic Forum, 2015). Women also make up the greater part of enrolled university students in many countries. Male and female students' work expectations show many similarities (Walk, Schinnenburg, & Handy, 2013). The first impression of these data is positive, and there is undeniable global progress, but inequalities still exist. These inequalities are apparent in the low number of countries (only four of

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145) in which women hold the majority of leadership positions (World Economic Forum, 2015). Regardless of the cultural context and standards of living, scholars state that women's skills are not fully utilized (Hernandez Bark, Escartín, Schuh, & van Dick, 2016).

Women are a part of the global talent pool that is still underrepresented in higher labor market segments, leading to challenges in three tiers of analysis: (1) the macro or economic, (2) the intermediate or organizational, (3) the micro or individual tier. (1) Several studies (Aguirre, Hoteit, & Sabbagh, 2012; Devillard, Sancier-Sultan, Zelicourt, & Kossoff, 2016) suggest that, on the macro or country tier, measures such as the investment in female educations lead to positive effects, such as increases in the GDP. Countries have found that better education is not necessarily followed by outputs, such as higher labor market participation of valuable female talent. Instead, many countries face the challenge of being unable to provide as many well-qualified employees to fill key positions as companies demand (Khilji, Tarique, & Schuler, 2015). (2) On the intermediate tier, companies experience the "leaky pipeline" of females leaving the work force throughout their career paths, which leads to an unequal distribution of females in leadership positions in comparison to their qualification level. However, research shows the performance benefits of companies with women in senior management positions (Scullion & Collings, 2011). (3) On the individual tier, entering, staying in or withdrawing from the labor market incisively impacts women's equality, individual status and risk of poverty. Work protects women's livelihood and may, at best, provide positive social contacts, experience of acknowledgement, development of a professional identity, contributions to society (Hartung & Taber, 2008) and economic independence with the freedom to make choices regarding one's life. To understand females' work-domain decisions and improve equality, we argue that the context in which these decisions are made must be analyzed. Along with the three tiers described above, three different contextual factors must be considered: "(1) culture and/or society and labor markets, (2) the perception of company-specific rules and career opportunities from the employee perspective, and (3) the individual's role, identity and background." (Schinnenburg & Böhmer, 2018, n.p.; Powell & Greenhaus, 2012).

Economies and organizations actively engage in talent management nowadays (Khilji et al., 2015). However, women's career decisions and possibilities to increase their chance of financial and personal independence still lack scholarly attention. Therefore, this paper focuses on the individual tier in two contextually diverse settings: India as an emerging economy and under researched context in career literature (Mishra & Budhwar, 2012), and Germany as a Western industrialized country. Especially in India, a female is likely to face lifelong dependency on her husband and his family, including oppression and subordination. Divorced women are at risk of poverty in both countries, especially when they exited the work force during their marriage. Moreover, only in 20% of German firms and in 11% of Indian firms' women participate in ownership (World Economic Forum, 2015). These figures indicate the low level of female economic activities. Despite their advancements in higher education in India and Germany, the presence of females in the labor market especially in India is rather low (World Economic Forum, 2015), and even declining in India. This leads to the question of how this "leaky pipeline" can be patched and (partly) prevented on the individual tier.

Universalist approaches are not sufficient to explain differences in human resource management (Vaimann & Brewster, 2015) such as the finding and binding of scarce (female) talent. Moreover, perceptions of careers are shaped by context (Chudzikowski et al., 2012). Therefore, institutional settings as well as cultural differences have to be taken into account. Culture is commonly agreed upon as a group or society's relatively stable shared multi-layer

construct that forms values and attitudes and impacts behavior (Vaimann & Brewster, 2015). Consequently, gender role expectations are largely influenced by culture and impact behavior in private and professional life, including career decisions.

We argue that the mechanisms and processes that prevent or encourage well-educated women to create their own career paths in the labor market must be more transparent on the individual level. The factors that force women out of a career must be clarified for politicians and HR specialists in companies searching for scarce talent; first and foremost, the individual female must be competent to make good personal decisions. The purpose of this paper is to analyze young females' perspectives on leadership careers and success before they enter the labor market and use career research to indicate their "blind spots" concerning (1) hurdles for their future careers and (2) the long-term consequences of their decisions. The second purpose is to envision future teaching that is applicable in both cultural settings to prevent females from exiting the labor market in early stages and foster more equal opportunities in the labor market. Our empirical study shows the importance of taking the mere knowledge of career challenges to the level of reflection and finding personally suitable solutions. Therefore, the paper includes an operationalized workshop concept to illustrate one way of developing individual strategies of action.

We explain gender-based parallels and differences in career development in the next paragraph, followed by context-specific characterizations of the challenges females face throughout their life path. The current discussion and research are contrasted with the perspectives of young German and Indian women on female leaders' career success and its effects on private relationships, as found in our research. The career theory and our findings are the background of our workshop concept that strives to encourage young women to reflect on their goals, think ahead in a strategic manner, and make career choices that widen their options for the future. Such an approach does not ignore structural inequalities in society and the labor market and intends to provide women with deeper insights into existing hurdles and opportunities to shape their own path so that they can facilitate societal changes for more equal opportunities.

The Impact of Female Careers on Poverty and Dependency

Gender is a system of social practices that is based on inherent assumptions about the differences between men and women and their appropriate behavior. Consequently, gender stereotypes impact male and female social roles and careers. Research shows the incongruences between female gender roles that include mainly communal attributes, and the leadership role that is linked to male agentic attributes, including the usage of political skills and networking (Hernandez Bark et al., 2016). These incongruences lead to a double bind for women to combine communal and agentic attributes. In organizations cultural assumptions about gender are reproduced (Gupta, 2017) and cause systematic discrimination through behavioral patterns that foster advantages for male employees (Agócs, 1997). Women's performance is evaluated more critical than men's is, and they are attributed with less leadership potential (Hernandez Bark et al., 2016). Male-dominated power distributions embedded in organizational structures and culture lead to inertia for traditional role expectations (Agócs, 1997).

These inequalities trigger social and organizational hurdles to women's objective career success, which is traditionally judged by hierarchical advancement, leadership roles with an increasing number of subordinates and increasing income (Schneidhofer, Schiffinger, & Mayrhofer, 2010). Schneidhofer et al. (2010) found that typical feminine behavior leads to salary disadvantages over time. In particular, working part-time due to lack of child care services leads

to serious disadvantages for women's development and promotions (Benschop & Doorewaard, 1998; Gatrell, 2007; Ochsenfeld, 2012). Taking a broader perspective, career is "a pattern of work-related experiences that span the course of a person´s life" (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2000). This definition leaves space for subjective career success that includes the individual's subjective feelings of accomplishment and focuses on satisfaction with the rate of progress of personal career objectives and aspirations (Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001). When making career decisions, contextual aspects and relatedness to family issues and private roles have influence (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012). Depending on the private and professional situation work-family conflicts might arise (Allen & Finkelstein, 2014). Furthermore, the decisions on marriage, children, or divorce may include considering the desired level of work absorption and the personal earning potential (Greenhaus & Powell, 2012). In the kaleidoscope model of careers, Mainiero and Sullivan (2005) show that employees strive to reach authenticity, balance and challenge in their lives. However, women generally set different priorities and make career-related decisions more relationally than men by considering the impact on their family and private obligations. In general, challenges appear to be more dominant in the early career, whereas the need for balance plays a larger role mid-career because of increasing family and relational demands. In later career stages, authenticity may gain importance. Women shift their career patterns over the life course to rearrange their roles and relationships (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005).

Consequently, opting out, looking for part-time jobs or self-employment may be possible consequences for women due to family requirements and lack of recognition at work (Mainiero & Sullivan, 2005). In traditional marriages, such a setting was viewed as the natural development: women's paid work was mostly expected as an intermediate episode until marriage or when needed as a second income for the family (Goldin, 2006). However, times have changed, and marriages are more unstable today, which may lead to precarious situations for divorced women. We argue that opting out today enhances inequality because it diminishes women's career chances, leads to dependencies on the partners´ income and increases the risk of poverty in case of divorce. For these reasons, Sandberg (2013) may have hit the mark by arguing that, independent of future (family) planning, leaning in and having a (personal) career would be the right strategy (Sandberg, 2013).

Contemporary career concepts often describe an individual characterized by independence, mobility and rationality. These career concepts reduce workers to 'rational men' and neglect the subjective career success and importance of emotions, relationships and social groups for individual well-being (Böhmer & Schinnenburg, 2016). We argue that contemporary career concepts ignore these factors. These concepts reflect the traditional career approach, focusing on objective success that has become less important for the young generation (Walk et al., 2013) but may still exist in a small group of young (mostly male) knowledge workers. In the following paragraphs, we consider occupational segregation into certain professions and industries due to the cultural context, among other gender-related career challenges.

Contextual Issues & Gender Challenges
Both contextual frames have been in a democratic state since 1949 and offer good labor market options for females in growing service sectors. As indicated in table 1 the settings also differ greatly.

Table 1: Key figures of the German and Indian Setting

Aspect	Germany	India
Political System	Democracy since 1949	Democracy since 1949
GDP (PP) per capital (international $)	43,444	5,565
Total Population (millions)	80.89	1,267.4
Women's singular mean age (years) at marriage	32	20
Divorce Rate (%)	40.8 (2015)	1.3
Enrolment in tertiary education (female-to-male ratio)	0.93	0.92
Labor Force participation (female-to-male ratio)	0.87	0.35
Female Part-time quota	57.8 (2014)	17.4 (2011/12)
average min. spend per day on unpaid work (female:male)	269:164	352:52

Source: Own table based on (Dutt, 2015, Srivastava, 2016; Statistisches Bundesamt, n.d. 1 + 2; Wanger, 2015; World Economic Forum, 2015)

The GDP per capita of Germany surpasses that of India, which indicates a higher average standard of living. Whereas the educational progress in both countries shows in similar female enrollment rates in tertiary education, the labor force participation of Indian women is significantly lower. Religious values derive from Christianity in Germany and from Hinduism as one of six main religions in India (Mishra & Budhwar, 2012). One result in both cultural contexts was traditional patriarchal family structures including the ideal of a single male bread winner. Decreasing religious affiliation, increasing divorce rates and average ages at marriage indicate societal changes in Germany whereas the relatively stable rates in India reflect societal norms and show the meaning of marriage as a sacred institution and a social contract with family obligations (Forschungsgruppe Weltanschauungen in Deutschland, 2016; Jayaram, n.d.). Consistent with this values is the power of male family members over women in India and the high proportion of marriages that is still arranged by family or parents (Dommaraju, 2015). In contrast, marriages are mainly based on individual decisions in Germany with a steadily increasing number of one-person households while the rate of single households in India remains around 4% (Statistisches. Bundesamt, n.d. 3; Dommaraju, 2015).

This overview characterizes relevant cultural and institutional aspects of both countries without claiming to be exhaustive or applying a framework of cultural dimensions. This is due to the broad criticism of these frameworks in general and especially regarding India (Vaiman & Brester, 2015; Singh, 2010). In the following section we indicate aspects that may produce hurdles for female career development and therefore show gender inequality for India followed by Germany. With the help of these aspects we shed light on their impact on female poverty and dependency.

In India, the precedence given to men over women by old patriarchal social structures continues to influence women's life paths and is enforced by religious values (Shenoy-Packer, 2014). The most important role for females is still that of a wife and childrearer. Girls from middle-

income households learn from their mothers that staying at home with children is fulfilling despite being boring (Shenoy-Packer, 2014). Family ties and obligations appear to be paramount, whereas professional life and leadership roles are not regarded as essential.

Although marriage is still an essential component in the life of most Indian females, a sound education is expected for middle-class women, so professional training and work experiences lead to a higher average age of marriage (World Economic Forum, 2015). Women's education became a means for a better match, not necessarily for supporting oneself or a family. Further, parents perceive a low return on their educational investment for girls, because their later income and fortune is a financial contribution to the in-law's family (Batra & Reio, 2015). In these families, women are viewed as part of the whole, without an identity of their own (Batra & Reio, 2015) and with little support regarding their traditional duties. The low rate of divorce can partly be explained by the complete loss it means for the women because their reputation and financial resources vanish.

The effect of urban females' education on labor force participation shows a U-shaped pattern, which indicates that low-skilled females work, although their work is stigmatized as being impure and unsafe. The lower labor market participation of medium-skilled females can be explained by (1) the growing incomes of their spouses and (2) the strong impact of the gender roles mentioned above (Klasen & Pieters, 2015). Highly educated women's labor market participation is higher, so they appear to be less constrained by family ties in their work decisions. This conjunction contributes to the change in the female labor force participation rate, which decreased from 37% in 2004-2005 to 25.8% in 2014 (International Labour Organization, n.d.). Another aspect that may contribute to this development is the high average of nearly six hours per day of un-paid work by women, which is five times the men's mean (World Economic Forum, 2015).

Caste-basted occupational segregation, though legally abolished for decades, still impacts women's careers. Work for pay used to be demeaning to upper-class families. Respectable occupations and suitability of industries for women have traditionally been connected to safety and included teaching, social work, and medicine (Shenoy-Packer, 2014). Working in public companies is considered to be safe and has led to the discussion of policies for secure workplaces in the private sector (Klasen & Pieters, 2015). The females' share of part-time work is much higher than the men's. Part-time work in India is generally vulnerable work and is poorly remunerated (Srivastava, 2016). Furthermore, women have little bargaining power and are inadequately represented in trade unions (Batra & Reio, 2015). These factors result in much lower lifetime earnings of women than men. Moreover, due to the low rate of 10% of all workers in India who earn a private or public pension benefit (Jackson & Nakashima, 2015) women generally depend on their family (fortune) in old age.

In summary, in India despite societal changes women are often tied in "rigidly gendered, social and interpersonal relationships" (Singh, 2010: 170). Indian women's lack of control over their personal lives, including work-related decisions and work-life-balance, due to a culturally enforced double burden of caretaking while pursuing a professional career is pertinent in India.

At first glance, gender issues do not appear to have visible impacts on German work-related decisions. However, the rate of the female employees who work part-time has increased since the 1990s (Wanger, 2015). The high part-time rate compared to male workers, especially considering families with underage children, and the average of over 100 minutes more time spent per day on unpaid work (World Economic Forum, 2015), indicates a traditional family model with an unequal share of care-taking and bread-winning responsibilities. Wieber and Holst (2015) found that women whose income exceeds their husband's hardly reduce their hours of non-market work.

Moreover, marriage leads to career advantages, such as leadership positions, for men only (Busch & Holst, 2009).

Despite females' educational advances, occupational segregation remains almost stable. Depending on the level of education, women often decide on professions in personal services, such as hairdressing, or studying the humanities, and males choose apprenticeships as mechanics or to study engineering. The use of collective bargaining for better financial rewards for the typical female, especially for caring tasks, and development of income in typically female professions has been limited. Along with the part-time employment rate, occupational reward differences are a major reason for the considerably high gender pay gap of 21% (Statistisches Bundesamt, n.d. 2). Career changes further reduce because women more frequently work for smaller companies (Busch & Holst, 2009). For German university graduates, Ochsenfeld (2012) found that, in addition to gender-specific self-selection into different fields of study, child-care duties can be considered obstacles to reaching higher managerial positions.

Boll, Jahn, & Langemann (2017) found that the lifetime earning of German men is double that of the females' (Boll et al., 2017). Tax and social security systems are further impediments for women's labor market participation (Allmendinger, 2010; Schinnenburg & Adam, 2013). Additionally, the risks of women's poverty and dependency increased due to recent German legal changes. Traditionally, marriage included the mutual right of life-long maintenance. After a divorce, the main, primarily male, bread winner's duties remained and led to a basic income for the partner. Currently, the support for the divorced partner who interrupted employment to care for the children ends when the youngest child is three years old. Often, a woman's career will never recover from the effects of exiting the work force or working part-time during the period of family foundation. This effect often causes a lower standard of living for divorced women that accumulates to a high risk of poverty in old age (pension gap). Considering the declining but still high divorce rate of 40.8%, there is an obvious poverty risk for women (Statistisches Bundesamt, n.d. 1).

Women in Germany are still affected by a double burden and challenges to balance workplace and family duties. We argue that this result is contrary to the expectations of free choice, boundary-free career development and the hope to "have it all" that are transmitted by the media and contemporary career concepts. Consequently, ignoring the hurdles described above may contribute to "re-traditionalized" gender roles in Germany.

In both countries the impact of gender roles on female career development remains strong. Care responsibilities in the family may lead to leaving the labor market when having children in Germany and even earlier in India, upon marriage. Women's empowerment is largely different in both countries. In India, women's empowerment is still in an initial state, and gender issues that reduce labor force participation are quite openly discussed. Conversely, Germany is a Western country, in which it is widely believed that gender issues have already been dealt with (Gupta, 2017). In both countries, gender roles' forces of inertia become obvious and – despite cultural differences and different labor market conditions – women are in danger of dependency and poverty after divorce or in old age.

Methodology

Gaining insight into women's perception of career success and its consequences on life success when they begin their career is a new field of enquiry. Therefore we applied an exploratory and qualitative approach. Our study is an analysis of 26 essays from female MA/MBA students at

Indian and German universities that were composed in English. The students voluntarily participated in a workshop on change management and female leadership in Chandigarh, India (see the workshop concept below). The 12 German students were 24 to 27 years old and were enrolled in different management study programs with HRM or Change Management as their major. The 14 Indian participants were MBA HRM students from 21 to 24 years old. Most came from the Punjab region, which is known as one of India's high per capita income states with comparably low gender equality (Arora, 2012), which must be considered in a diverse country such as India.

Three research questions guided our study: What defines successful careers for well-qualified women before entering the labor market? Are the concepts in both groups similar or different due to cultural values? Do the participants perceive gender-specific hurdles for female careers in general? Which aspects do they recognize as the most important? What future expectations do they have? Can students imagine how the hurdles they reflected on a cognitive level may affect them and cause negative reactions in their private life? For their essays, participants reflected on three questions, such as: Would a successful professional career change your relationship to your parents, your boyfriend/fiancé or your friends?

The essays were 480 to 1,196 words long (average: 934 words). The design aimed at low interference of the peer group or an interviewer to reduce the impacts of social desirability. The study comprised two cycles of analysis. The first was exploratory and used the full essays without applying a priori categories derived from theory. The themes and categories were obtained with computer assistance using the qualitative data analysis software MaxQda. The second analysis built upon the first and included categories deriving from current career literature, especially on career success and the Kaleidoscope model as described above. Both cycles required an iterative process. The data were analyzed independently by both authors to facilitate in-depth understanding. The process ensured a final set of categories that was data-driven and structured along the lines of the current scholarly career discussion.

Results

The participants defined a successful career as a combination of financial success, following one's passion and dedication, achieving high status and respect, experiencing meaning in your work, having an interesting life, attaining individual goals, a "proper balance between your work and personal life" (I-5), and "to live an independent life" (I-3).

Table 2: Categories and typical quotes

Career attribute	Number of quotes	Indian quotes	German quotes	Typical quotes
Financial success	19	11	8	"earn a good livelihood" "secured income"
Dedication, passion & hard work	16	12	4	"hard work, their full dedication and enthusiasm" (I-3) "perceiving the own career as successful also depends on one's dedications within life" (G-2)

Career attribute	Number of quotes	Indian quotes	German quotes	Typical quotes
Respect, status & reputation	16	9	7	"if you get fame and respect in your job" (I-5) "acknowledgement, approval and reputation" (G-7)
Meaning, satisfaction & an interesting life	14	10	4	"satisfaction while doing a job" (I-3); "doing it with all happiness" (I-6); "opportunity for self-fulfillment" (G-2)
Balance	14	4	10	"he/she can also spend the minimum required time with their dear ones" (I-6); "enough time for the family, especially on weekends" (G-4).
Independence & freedom to choose	12	9	3	"they are being more independent" (I-4); "a successful career also gives you independency from your partner" (G-1)
Individual goals & development	8	0	8	"important to realize individual goals" (G-6)

The overview in Table 2 shows that Indians and Germans share a common understanding concerning the attributes of career success. However, the details clarify some culture-specific differences, as follows. Balance was mentioned in both groups; for the Germans, this aspect was much more important (10 quotes comparing to 4), highlighting an important difference. In India, "balance" is expressed as an urgent problem due to the traditional role of women and lack of support at home. This deficit makes commitment to a job difficult for many women, resulting in "a challenge for women" (I-7) and "heavy work load and much too busy schedule" (I-6). German participants view "balance" more as an entitlement in life to have enough leisure time for oneself; "In my opinion a successful career in Germany is defined by a good balance between work and personal, private life. Money will not make me happy, if I don't have the time for me, my family, friends and hobbies" (G-12, 2). For the German group, these aspects were often mentioned together with "achieving your own goals, work happily" (G-7) and finding a "profession in which they strive and reach their personal goal of a career as much as the goals of the company" (G-9).

The most dominant hurdles for women in having a career were described by both Indian and German women to be a result of gender stereotypes and (traditional) expectations towards women's role in the family and society, although the contextual frame is described differently. Indian women openly stated that gender stereotypes and traditional expectations discourage women to work because, especially in the middle-class, "a good education for a daughter is seen as a means of securing a better groom. Marriage is seen as the ultimate goal, not just an important milestone. With marriage, a woman ceases to be herself, losing herself in home management and relational roles: wife, daughter-in-law, and mother." (I-7).

The participants described mixed reactions from their community. One participant noted, "Working of females is always a matter of gossip. Till now there are many counterparts where females are not given acceptances to work" (I-4). Conversely, several Indian participants expressed that their success would make their parents proud. According to the participants,

successful women in India pay a high price, working very hard to be accepted as a boss, overcoming negative attributes, such as smoking and drinking, neglecting their family and children and being "non-loving" and "self-centered" (I-10). One participant emphasized the role of the in-laws for female professionals and family conflicts in cases of non-congruent role behavior in India: "Many will tell you that the empowered women can make a choice between household and career, and they by their own free will choose the former. But […] if she forcefully does job without anybody's permission then she is not treated good." (I-7)

German students stated that "even though Germany is a very modern and western oriented country, society still often expects women to stay at home or have a part-time job and so take care of the family, whereas the man is supposed to bring `the money home´" (G-2). Many statements discussed that the same attributes are perceived quite differently for men and women, e.g., "'She is very ambitious' is not a compliment in our culture" (G-12) and if a woman starts to work early after giving birth, "people could say she is cold and not a loving person, and her image could be damaged as well. So, which way she is choosing, it will not be easy." (G 7)

According to gender stereotypes, the students confirmed existing workplace segregation and the acceptability of jobs and sectors for women. In both countries, participants emphasized indoor work and professions from the service industries. Acceptable occupations for women are perceived as teaching, followed by caring jobs and HR, whereas the fields of engineering and manufacturing were seen as predominantly male. "Teaching is very creative profession and a safe profession for girls in India" (I-12). The Indian participants emphasized the negative aspects of careers for women. They mentioned missing time with children and family (11 quotes), lack of support for women (9 quotes), security and safety issues, and health and stress problems. German participants focused on difficulties for females to combine children with a career, e.g., that "leadership positions are difficult to achieve with children" (G-10) and that working mothers suffer from a lack of childcare facilities.

Due to the gender stereotypes and hurdles for women's careers, one may expect that the participants reflected the impact of career success on private relationships. However, that was seldom the case. Most participants expected very positive reactions from parents, partners and friends, such as praise, support, or no changes in relationships; some mentioned that the available time for relationships would be limited. Few participants from either cultural group estimated the most negative impacts of a career for their relationship, especially that, with success "jealous factor would be an issue" (I-4). "Some men can't handle the fact of their partner earning more money, some can't handle the new self-confidence it might give one. I think even 'modern-thinking' men still have that image of themselves being the provider of the family." (G-1)

Interpretation of results – requirements for teaching

Overall, the results show that students expressed their ideas of a successful career that combines objective aspects, such as financial rewards, and subjective criteria, such as dedication and meaning. However, from this common ground, culture-specific differences emerge that reflect special challenges in Germany and India, which must be considered for research, teaching and HR practices in organizations to support equality and permanent labor force participation. Examples include the impact of security on females' career decisions in India and the meaning of individual goals and leisure time in Germany.

Both groups have profound knowledge and cognitive understanding of structural disadvantages in the labor market and hurdles for female careers that might be influenced by their

preparation for the workshop, which students could apply for. However, at this time of their life, most participants cannot realize the full extent of gender stereotypes' effect on private relationships in cases of non-congruent role behavior. Few participants mention negative reactions from their private community in their essays if they followed a career track and did not fulfill traditional role expectations for women.

Therefore, the essays illustrate that females from both cultural contexts may nurture an overly euphemistic outlook and a "blind spot" concerning future career challenges for their life and success. One possible consequence of this is naïve decisions that increase the chance of dependency and financial disadvantages. We argue that sensitizing students for gender specific role stereotypes and their impact on careers, reflecting on their goals and recognizing context factors may help encourage individual and organizational change (Agócs, 1997; Dutta, 2016).

Future teaching to prevent females from dropping out: Workshop Concept

Our research outlined above leads to the question how women from both cultural settings can be prepared for a subjectively successful life and can avoid poverty and dependency. Starting with the very first decision on the professional field selected after school life paths are designed. Especially in tertiary education students can be lead to understand hurdles for female careers, reflect these obstacles and finding personally suitable solutions to possibly overcome them. Due to the complexity of interwoven cultural, organizational, gender and careers issues the recommendation to sensitizing students before they enter the labor market needs more operationalization. In the following section, we therefore suggest a workshop concept that includes career theory, leadership competencies, a description of institutional resistance to changes regarding structural discriminations of women and the means to overcome these through development of a clear vision of their career. To broaden their perspectives, this workshop comprises participants from two cultural contexts: Germany and India. We elaborate on the settings because the cultural contexts help participants realize differences in gender role stereotypes and understand their culture-specific assumptions.

The aim of the workshop is reached if the participants are sensitive concerning gender topics in organizations and regarding their own career. Therefore, it is helpful for them to analyze and explain the challenges for an equal chance for females in organizations and understand the role of power and political skills in organization. Based on these goals, participants should understand that gender stereotypes are powerful and impact the social roles and careers of both men and women. They should reflect and analyze a future leadership role, their career and life goals and generate ideas about how to reach personal goals. In addition, our concept integrates intercultural learning and enables working in an intercultural team. The complexity of the workshop aims is appropriate for MA/MBA-students. The workshop can be jointly organized by a German and an Indian university in order to provide students, lecturers and role models from both cultural settings.

To reach the learning goals, the learning process involves three steps:

The first step is a short introductory lecture approximately six weeks prior to the workshop that introduces the topic and explains the tasks for the next step: the individual workshop autodidactic preparation. The aim is to establish a similar level of prior knowledge regarding change management, institutional resistance to change and gender roles in leadership.

Second, the participants write an initial reflection on the notions and consequences of career success and personal life goals and priorities. Their individual short essays on these aspects

potentially evoke the realization that the topics are highly relevant for their personal life. The participants submit their essays anonymously, with the exception of life goals, which the participants keep to themselves to reduce the influence of social desirability.

In the third step, there is a three-and-a-half day workshop consisting of lectures, intercultural group work, self-reflection, cross-cultural exchange and discussions with experienced female role models. The methodical combination follows the call for evidence-based principles in teaching by integrating theory, research results, practical aspects, and challenging learners´ misconceptions (Goodman & O´Brien, 2012). The workshop's well-founded agenda is shown in table 3 and explained in the next paragraphs.

Table 3: Workshop Agenda

Agenda	Workshop Element	Learning Goals promoted by the Workshop Elements			
		Managing change and institutional resistance to change	Coping with gender role stereotypes in society and leadership	Personal life goals and career success (self-conceptualization)	Intercultural competence
Pre-Workshop Lecture	Introduction & individual reading	●	●		
Pre-Workshop Individual Essay	Questions on career success & life goals		●	●	
Day 1 Workshop opening Lecture	Importance of the topic		Impacts on the economy, organizations & personal life	●	
Day 1 Workshop opening	Getting to know each other			●	●
Day 1 Lecture	Gender role stereotypes: sources and reasons for their reproduction in society and organizations	Reasons for the forces of inertia	Clarifying how natural the roles appear, acting role-congruent convenience, glass ceiling		Parallels and differences
Day 1 Group Work	Conceptualizing measurement of the gender gap	●	Facts, figures & experiences		Conceptual aspects
Day 1 Group assignment	Means to close the gender gap on individual and organizational levels	●	●		Selecting one task as a group, bargaining & making a compromise

Agenda	Workshop Element	Learning Goals promoted by the Workshop Elements			
		Managing change and institutional resistance to change	Coping with gender role stereotypes in society and leadership	Personal life goals and career success (self-conceptualization)	Intercultural competence
Day 2 Group Exchange	Exchange of individual life goals in groups				Parallels and differences
Day 2 Lecture	Global Gender Gap report (WEF)		Measurements: strengths & shortcomings		Parallels and differences
Day 2 Group assignment	Means to close the gender gap on individual and organizational levels (continued)				Working together
Day 2 Lecture	Career models and role-specific decision making	Traditional careers	Think manager - think male	Decision-making processes	Parallels and differences
Day 2 Female role model I	Career paths, recommendations & lessons learned	Coping strategies		Importance of active self-conceptualization	Parallels and differences
Day 2 Lecture	Power and political skills in organizations	Power in Organizations	Power as a challenge for women		
Day 2 Self-Assessment	Individual reflection on political skills			Personal skills, values and preferences	
Day 2 Lecture	Challenges of intercultural team work; Culture and culture shock				Reflect on group friction as a normal element of cross-cultural work
Day 3 Lecture	Research Results: Career decisions of experienced international managers				
Day 3 Group assignment	Means to close the gender gap on individual and organizational levels (continued)				Working together
Day 3 Female role model II	Career paths, recommendations & lessons learned	Coping strategies		Importance of active self-conceptualization	Parallels and differences

Agenda	Workshop Element	Learning Goals promoted by the Workshop Elements			
		Managing change and institutional resistance to change	Coping with gender role stereotypes in society and leadership	Personal life goals and career success (self-conceptualization)	Intercultural competence
Day 3 Group work	Finding solutions for a Critical Business Incident	Changes and restrictions to changing role stereotypes in organizations	Importance of leaders' sensitivity to role stereotypes		Parallels and differences in decision making
Day 4 Presentations	Result of Group Assignment				Experiencing pressure & success
Day 4 Panel Discussion	Q & A concerning reaching goals with three Female Managers	Coping strategies	Importance of role expectations for balance	Importance of active self-conceptualization	Parallels and differences

The workshop provides insight into the importance of the topic by showing the impacts of gender inequality on the three tiers, the economy, organizations and the individual level. After becoming familiar with the theme, the participants get to know each other in groups of six by discussing their expectations of the workshop. The group composition of an equal number of participants from each culture remains fixed for the duration of the workshop to enable intercultural group dynamics.

Based on the individual reading, the next part of the workshop provides in-depth information on the gender gap, implicit theories about traits, and skills needed for successful leadership. The positive sanctions of acting role-congruent as a major driver for 'doing gender' are also discussed. In the next step, the participants develop ideas about how they would measure the gender gap through group work. After the results are presented and reflected upon in the large group, the small groups select one of six topics focusing on the challenges in closing the gender gap for a final presentation. The cultural differences and context-specific constraints of the approaches selected by the students should be discussed in their work.

The second workshop day begins with the participants exchanging their notions of career success and their life goals, prepared individually in advance. Next, the first day's group work concerning the gender gap is enriched by the World Economic Forums methodology to measure the gap and the current state of both countries. The strengths and weaknesses of the measures used by the World Economic Forum are critically discussed. A potential discussion point is whether it is sufficient to include the sex ratio at birth only, as female feticide occurs in India, especially in Punjab. By blending personal notions and facts from two cultural contexts, the openness for the next workshop sessions should increase.

The lecturers share their experiences in the discussions, which are enriched by female role models when experienced managers from different industries join the workshop on three occasions. On the second and third days of the workshop, one woman shares her career paths with special attention on her family-related career decisions. The managers accentuate the importance of self-conceptualization and provide examples of their personal strategies for coping with organizational resistance regarding gender role stereotypes. This portion is followed by a question

session. On the fourth day, several role models discuss career issues with the participants and among each other.

The role models add authenticity to the theory and practice introduced by the lecturers. They enlarge the participants' solution-room and encourage them to find their own aims and values. Lastly, context-specific topics outline differences and parallels. One potential example is the possibility of staying at home during menstruation, called bio-leave that many Indian employers offer. Indian participants mostly perceived this as a reward and a positive option until their German peers noted that this treat might lower women's career options due to reasons, such as a perceived reduced reliability of female workers.

The workshop's theoretical focus moves to career models and role-specific decision making on the second day. Issues of power in organizations are the second theoretical focus on day two. Participants learn about both foci in lectures and perform a self-assessment of their political skills, with the aim of showing the traditions of career development and what it takes to overcome them on personal and organizational levels.

The third workshop day builds upon the previous sessions from a mere cognitive exercise to an emotional learning by applying four methods: continuation of the group work assigned on day one, discussion with a female role model, information on current research results on the career decisions of experienced international managers and group work on a business incident. The incident combines challenges from career development, gender roles and expectations and power in organizations. It is based on case study learning and provides the participants an opportunity to apply the learned theory in a setting that they might personally face in the future.

The last workshop day consists of the group presentations, with the panel discussion as a highlight. The discussions involved in these two portions of the workshop elucidate the personal progress in learning and perception and strengthen the workshop results with a positive feeling of accomplishment. Finally, the workshop leaves the participants to find their own way to enact strategies they learned with the knowledge that there is a supportive network of peers at home and abroad.

One of the most challenging aspects of gender role stereotypes is that they appear natural to those who share a similar cultural context. Mirroring the parallels and differences in perceptions of what is appropriate for males or females is one reason why this workshops' concept includes an equal number of German and Indian participants. Further, the workshop includes group work assigned to intercultural groups on the first workshop day, which is presented at the end. This pressure to reach a shared outcome catalyzes the intercultural experiences because it highlights differences in working methods and speed. Therefore, the group work aims to meet several of the workshop goals described above. To ensure positive development of the group dynamics, there is a short lecture concerning the challenges of intercultural work at the end of day two. At this point, the initial enthusiasm has passed and the danger of (underlying) conflicts increases. This presentation elucidates unspoken points of friction on a more rational level and emphasizes that they are mutual and shared challenges that all groups can overcome with the lecturers' support. The workshop concept facilitates a linkage to university study programs, e.g., as an additional certificate or through inclusion in a module. This possibility adds value to the learning experience by officially recognizing the theme and aims.

The didactical concept requires several learning steps. The first step is cognitive understanding of the inequalities deriving from gender role stereotypes in society and at the work place, especially in leadership positions. Next, there is an emotional learning process that shows the relevance of gender issues to one's personal life. Our research results outline the gap between

cognitive understanding and application of this knowledge in perception and interpretation of its effects on personal life. Getting to the point of seeing the personal consequences on their life situation increases the risk of "giving in" and personally abandoning the idea of a non-gender conforming life path. To avoid the progress for educated women to be "is generally restricted to mere awareness about gender related injustices" (Awan, 2016, p. 227), the workshop concept focuses on coping strategies and actively developing solutions. The strategies and solutions should enlarge the participants' action framework. The workshop also aims to manage participants' expectations to reduce negative outcomes when setbacks occur and to foster individual resilience.

Conclusion

To prevent (even qualified) women from facing poverty and being discouraged due to experiencing discrimination and inequality at the workplace, young females must be sensitized to the challenges of creating a successful career and life path. Gender role stereotypes are culturally endorsed patterns of behavior that are often difficult to detect, to apply to one's own life and to reflect. It appears to be unthinkable to question these roles. Therefore, students who feel as though they are treated equally at a university must be aware of the actual and potential inequalities at work. They must understand the tripartial impacts of context. A strong reflection of their own identity, motivation to actively conceptualize their personal career and awareness of the effects of declining role expectations increase the chances of women avoiding poverty and coping with inequalities in the future. The increasing educational attainment of women in both, the German and Indian context, might then become a starting point rather than an end for more permanent female economic activities and labor force participation. Therefore, we suggest that companies and universities apply our workshop concept to contribute to increased female labor market participation, with an aim of positive effects on macro, intermediate and micro tiers (of talent management). Individual women might use ideas developed in the workshop to establish a new form of "sharing and caring" (Nachiappan, 2008), which is typical for Indian women.

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