Who is afraid of success and why? Exploring cultural context of fear of success in Hindu Indian and Muslim Arab college men and women

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The present study explores fear of success among Hindu Indian and Muslim Arab college men and women. The sample comprised of one hundred and five college students (45 Muslim Arabs currently studying in India and 60 Hindu Indians; 60 men and 45 women). Measures used included Fear of Success Scale (Zuckerman and Allison, 1976), Indian Societal Values Scale (Khandelwal and Dhillon, 2003), and brief interviews. Analyses included t-test for independent samples and thematic analysis. Results revealed (1) Hindu Indians and Muslim Arabs differed significantly on three of the four societal values, with the Arabs being more uncertainty avoiding, collective and masculine than the Indians, but similar on power distance. (2) Indians and Arabs were found to be similar on fear of success (3) No significant gender differences in fear of success were found for the overall sample and for Indians, although, Arab females were significantly lower on fear of success than Arab males. Thematic analysis revealed that the Arab women were very proud of being in what they perceived as a gender-appropriate field, namely education, while the Arab male students seemed a little wary of being in this gender-inappropriate field. (4) Fear of success was significantly higher for Arabs and men whose mothers were homemakers than whose mothers were employed. Cross-sex identification rather than same-sex identification seems to play a more crucial role in determining fear of success. It is suggested that fear of success is a complex phenomenon that may be shaped by cultural and familial expectations..

Keywords: Fear of success; India; Arab; Cultural Values; Gender; Maternal Employment

Success is something to which we all aspire. Or is it? Success requires change, and change has both negative and positive consequences. It is not the fear of success per se that is the problem, rather the fear of the unwanted side effects of success. Fear of success (FOS) involves the fear that one will accomplish all that she or he sets out to, but she or he still will not be happy, content or satisfied. It is the belief of being undeserved of all the good things and recognition that come in the way as a result of accomplishments and success. Some of the reasons postulated to explain FOS are loneliness, performance anxiety due to increased expectations, fear of being a target, fear of abandonment or sad feeling of alienation from one's roots or isolation, especially among young people coming from poverty.

Research has related FOS to several potent variables such as depression, anxiety, academic self handicapping and achievement (Schwinger, Wirthwein, Lemmer, & Steinmayr, 2014), achievement goal orientation (Andre & Metzler, 2011), barriers in managerial advancement for women (Kets de Vries, 1992), choking in sports (Ferguson, 2004), under representation of women in math and scientific fields (Khandelwal, 2008), alienation and isolation (Ivers & Downes, 2011), negatively to optimism, self-esteem, and self-efficacy (Stanculescu, 2013) indicating that it is a serious problem that deserves research attention.

Early research (Horner, 1969) found that only women to be characterized by a motive to avoid success since social messages make a girl equate intellectual achievement with loss of femininity. Hoffman (1972) explained FOS as a conflict that women face between achievement and affiliation motive. If achievement threatens affiliation, performance is likely to be sacrificed or anxiety may result. Since the 1970s, other studies have produced mixed results. While

some have found women to be higher on FOS than men (Horner, 1972; Kosakowska-Berezecka, Jurek, Besta, & Badowska, 2017), most have found similar FOS levels in men and women (for e.g., Condry & Dyer, 1977; Deeter-Schmetz & Ramsey, 2015), while some have even found men to be higher on FOS (Basha & Ushasree, 1998).

The inconsistency with regard to gender differences in FOS has shifted the focus of researchers from exploring gender differences to cultural differences. It has been suggested that FOS is a cultural stereotype or belief about sex-inappropriate behaviour (Hyland, Curtis, & Mason, 1985). According to Condry and Dyer (1977), FOS may be conceptualized as fear of deviance from sex-role standards. Hyland (1989) proposed the Cognition Hypothesis, which predicts that (a) success avoidance is situation specific; (b) in particular situations, it can be viewed as appropriate by other people; and (c) there is very little variation among people in success avoidance within a given culture.

The influence of culture on FOS has been explained through the Cultural Models theory. Cultural models are deeply embedded, internalized complex cognitive structures that are shared between people of the same socio-cultural context (Strauss & Quinn, 1997). Educational anthropologists in the United States suggest that cultural models play a profound role in school-related experiences and achievement (Stone & McKee, 2000).

Cross-cultural differences on FOS have been established (for instance, Torki, 1985). Clearly, it is crucial to understand differing cultural value systems to be able to understand FOS. Further, it has been suggested that examining demographic characteristics is crucial to understanding within-cultural variations in achievement motivation and success (Chen, 2007). One such variable that has the potential to affect FOS is maternal employment, which has been found to influence children in many positive ways. For example, Dunifon, Hansen, Nicholson, and Nielsen (2013), in a longitudinal study on 135,000 Danish children, from birth through 9th grade, found maternal employment to have a positive effect on children's academic performance. Bakhtari, Ahmadzadeh, Hassan, Ebrahimi, Sabzmakan, and Javadivala (2015) reported that elementary and high school students with working mothers in Iran showed better mental health and social functioning than non-working mother's children. Having a working mother has also been shown to lead to more egalitarian gender role attitudes among both men and women (McGinn, Castro, & Lingo 2015).

Past research has also dealt with the relationship between mother's occupational status and educational and career ambitions of children, particularly daughters. It is suggested that girls especially profit from a working mother, as she signals the image of female competence (Berk, 2003). However, such studies provide only a broad conceptualization of the relationship between maternal employment and daughter's attitudes. A more direct examination of FOS of both boys and girls and mother's occupational status is crucial.

The present study thus aims to explore some constructs that underlie FOS, viz. culture, gender and maternal employment. It seeks to compare cultural values and FOS of Hindu Indian and Muslim Arab students. It further examines the effect of gender and maternal employment on FOS.

Hypotheses

1. Arab and Indian students will differ significantly on perception of societal values.

2. Arab and Indian students will differ significantly on FOS.

3. (a) Male and female students will differ significantly on FOS.

    (b) Male and female Arab students will differ significantly on FOS.

    (c) Male and female Indian students will differ significantly on FOS

4. (a) There will be a significant difference on FOS between those students whose mothers are homemakers and those students whose mothers are employed.

    (b) There will be a significant difference on FOS between Arabs whose mothers are

homemakers and those whose mothers are employed.

(d) There will be a significant difference on FOS between Indians whose mothers are homemakers and those whose mothers are employed.

(e) There will be a significant difference on FOS between males whose mothers are homemakers and those whose mothers are employed.

(f) There will be a significant difference on FOS between females whose mothers are homemakers and those whose mothers are employed.

Method

Participants

The sample comprised of 105 college students, currently studying in India, consisting of 30 Indian men, 30 Indian women, 30 Arab men, and 15 Arab women (a larger sample was unavailable). The mean age of Arab students was 30.33 years, while the mean age of the Indian students was slightly lower at 23.77 years. They were almost equally divided at educational levels of under graduation, post graduation and M.Phil/Ph.D. Majority of the Arab sample was living in India from 2-4 years, while all Indian respondents had been living in India since birth. In terms of religious orientation, the entire Arab sample was Muslim (45), while the entire Indian sample was Hindu (60).

Design

A cross- sectional design was used with two different samples of students- Indians and Arabs, further subdivided by gender. In order to control relevant variables, only those Arab students were included who had spent at least 2, but not more than 4 years in Delhi. All the participants were at least undergraduates.

Measures

Demographic data sheet. This was given to obtain information on age, gender, education, nationality, years spent in India, parents' occupation, siblings and religion.

Fear of Success Scale (FOSS). Developed by Zuckerman and Allison (1976), they defined FOS as a disposition to be anxious about achievement, because achievement has negative consequences. This scale consists of 27 items, describing the benefits and costs of success, and the respondent's attitudes toward success when compared to other alternatives. 11 items are reverse scored. Potential scores range from 27 to 189 with high scores indicating high fear of success.

The scale's reliability and validity are satisfactorily high, with coefficient alpha being 0.69 among men and 0.73 among women. Significant item-total correlations have also been reported. A positive correlation between FOSS and Horner's projective measure, and a negative relationship between FOSS and achievement motivation was also reported.

Indian Societal Values Scale (ISVS). Developed by Khandelwal and Dhillon (2003), based on Hofstede's (1980) value dimensions, the scale consists of twenty five items covering four areas, viz. societal power distance (SPD), societal uncertainty avoidance (SUA), societal individualism (SID), and societal masculinity (SMAS), with a 5-point response category. The items are classified as: 7 for SPD (7 positive and one reverse-scored item), 5 for SUA (all positive), 6 for SID (2 positive and 4 reverse-scored items), 7 for SMAS (4 positive and 3 reverse-scored items). Dimension-wise average scores range from 1 to 5, with higher scores indicating greater power distance, greater uncertainty avoidance, greater individualism, and greater masculinity at the societal level.

Split-half reliability of the scale is 0.78. The inter-item consistency scores are: SPD: 0.51, SUA: 0.42, SID: 0.54 and SMAS: 0.67. Item-total correlations ranged from 0.69, implying satisfactory psychometric properties.

Procedure

Foreign Student Advisors of universities where an adequate number of Arab students were available were contacted for permission and contact information. The universities were: Jawaharlal Nehru University, Jamia Milia Islamia, Delhi University, and Jamia Hamdard University. Indian students were contacted individually from Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University. The students were requested to

participate in the study after building rapport and assuring confidentiality. The questionnaires were administered one-on-one by the second researcher. Brief interviews were then conducted to explore participant's perceptions of gender roles, cultural values, success, and relevance of education. Observations of their non-verbal behaviour, reactions and appearance were also recorded. Care was taken to not reveal the exact nature of the variables to prevent any bias. Everybody associated with data collection was thanked for his or her cooperation.

Results

Analyses included t-test for independent samples (Tables I, II, and III) and thematic analysis (Tables IV and V). These tables are reported as follows.

Table I indicate a significant difference between Hindu Indian and Muslim Arab students on three of the four societal values, SUA (t(103)=3.25, p=0.002, Cohen's d= 0.64), SID (t(103)=2.61, p=0.01, Cohen's d= 0.51), and SMAS (t(103)=1.98, p=0.05, Cohen's d= 0.39). Hypothesis 1 is therefore accepted.

Table I. SPD, SUA, SID, and SMAS for Arabs and Indians

	Nationality		t	df	p	Cohen's d
	Arabs	Indians				
SPD	2.79 (0.68)	2.67 (0.51)	1.01	103	0.26	0.20
SUA	3.62 (0.76)	3.17 (0.66)	3.25**	103	0.002	0.64
SID	2.91 (0.53)	3.21 (0.62)	2.61**	103	0.01	0.51
SMAS	2.78 (0.62)	2.60 (0.58)	1.98*	103	0.05	0.39

Note. *=p ≤0.05, ** p ≤ 0.01. Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means.

Table II. Comparison of FOS means between Arabs and Indians, Men and Women, Arab men and Arab women, and Indian men and Indian women

	Nationality		t	df	p	Cohen's d
	Arab	Indians				
FOS	104.22 (10.46)	103.03 (12.14)	0.53	103	0.60	0.10
	Gender					
	Men	Women	t	df	p	Cohen's d
FOS	105.12 (11.26)	101.44 (11.41)	1.64	103	0.10	0.32
	Arab Men	Arab Women	t	df	p	Cohen's d
FOS	106.43 (10.03)	99.80 (10.19)	2.08*	43	0.04	0.64
	Indian Men	Indian Women	t	df	p	Cohen's d
FOS	103.80 (12.39)	102.27 (12.05)	0.48	58	0.63	0.13

Note. *p ≤ 0.05, **p≤ 0.01. Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means

Table III. Comparison of FOS between those whose mothers are homemakers and those whose mothers are employed

FOS Means	Maternal Occupation		t	df	p	Cohen's d
	Homemaker	Employed				
Overall Sample	106.32 (10.81)	99.38 (11.14)	3.18**	103	0.002	0.63
Arabs	108.52 (8.87)	98.85 (9.96)	3.44**	43	0.001	1.03
Indians	104.87 (11.80)	99.86 (12.33)	1.56	58	0.13	0.41
Men	108.12 (11.03)	97.53 (7.93)	3.60**	58	0.01	0.94
Women	102.45 (9.47)	100.64 (12.89)	0.53	43	0.60	0.16

Note. *p≤ 0.05, ** p≤ 0.01. Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means

Table II reveals a non-significant difference between Arab and Indian students on FOS (t(103)=0.53, p=0.60, Cohen's d= 0.10), with both falling within the average range. Hypothesis 2 is therefore rejected. Further, a non-significant difference between men and women (t(103)=1.64, p=0.10, Cohen's d= 0.32) is found. Hypothesis 3(a) is also rejected. In contrast, a significant difference between Arab men and women on FOS (t(43)=2.08, p=0.04, Cohen's d= 0.64) was found, with the former being more fearful of success than latter. Hypothesis 3 (b) is accepted. Lastly, a non-significant effect of gender among Indians (t(58)=0.48, p=0.63. Cohen's d= 0.13) is found (Table 2), with both Indian men and women being moderate in their FOS levels. Hypothesis 3 (c) is rejected.

Table III indicate that students whose mothers are homemakers fear success significantly more than students whose mothers are employed (t(103)=3.18, p=0.002, Cohen's d= 0.63). Hypothesis 4(a) is accepted. Further, Arabs whose mothers are homemakers fear success significantly more than those whose mothers are employed (t(43=3.44, p=0.001, Cohen's d= 1.03). Hypothesis 4(b) is also accepted. However, non significant differences on FOS are found between Indians whose mothers are homemakers and those whose mothers are employed (t(58=1.56, p=0.13, Cohen's d= 0.41). Hypothesis 4(c) is rejected. Further, men

whose mothers are homemakers fear success significantly more than men whose mothers are employed (t(58=3.60, p=0.01, Cohen's d= 0.94). Hypothesis 4(d) is accepted. Interestingly, non significant differences on FOS between women whose mothers are homemakers and those whose mothers are employed (t(43=0.53, p=0.60, Cohen's d= 0.16) are also found, leading us to reject Hypothesis 4(e).

These findings have been validated by the thematic analysis of the qualitative data obtained through interviews. Thematic analysis was undertaken to compare Arabs and Indians on cultural values (Table 4), and their perceptions of success and relevance of education (Table 5). While the former employed a deductive approach using a predetermined set of themes and categories to organize the quotes (Hofstede's four value dimensions), the latter employed an inductive approach.

Table IV indicates that both Indians and Arabs emphasized obedience. While for Arabs, search for absolute truth was important, Indians felt that relative was more important than absolute. Further, Arab students were a little hesitant when first approached, substantiating their high UA position. A typical response was, *"When you gave your questionnaire, I took very long to reply. That is because we get a bit scared…who is asking these questions and why? There is still political instability there and we don't want to answer in case it is someone*

Table IV. Thematic analysis: Comparison of Arabs and Indians on SPD, SUA, SID, and SMAS

S. No	Value Dimension	Arabs	Indians
1	SPD	Expectation of greater control and direction from guide; Emphasis on obedience from children; Powerful people just lucky	Emphasis on obedience from children; Powerful people blessed; Hierarchies not very important for functionality
2	SUA	Mistrust of strangers; Search for absolute important; Conflicts to be avoided; Preparation for future; India is too calm (in unpredictable situations like traffic jams)	Indifference towards strangers; Relative more important than absolute, Emphasis on luck/destiny; less on planning for the future
3	SID/SCOLL	Emphasis on helping others even if inconvenienced; High in-group loyalty and high out-group intolerance (hostile comments towards Iranians); Importance of friendship and community	Tolerant of out-group (moderate while talking about the India-Pakistan conflict), Caste not considered very relevant in todays times; Opinion of peers more important than family at times
4	SMAS	Strict gender roles; Virginity very important; Emphasis on marriage; Husband should take care of wife; Women viewed as a "precious jewel" by men	Fluid gender roles; Virginity important, but not very strict adherence to chastity; Financial independence important for women; Preference on late marriage by women

Table V. Thematic analysis: Comparison of Arab Men and Arab Women on perceptions of success and relevance of education

	Arab Men	Arab Women
What success means	Constant struggle, Envy from others; "Leads to arrogance"	Success emphasized; "All doors open to the successful"
Relevance of education	"Business is a man's field, women should not get involved in physical labour or business fields", "Women good in sensitive things like ideas and are idealistic (which helps them to teach) "; "Sometimes I think I should be doing an MBA".	"Good career to balance work and family"; "Family takes pride in my education"; "Education more important for women as they rear children".

asking about 'Who do you think should be the leader?' etc. But once we know it is just a student doing it for research, we are fine."

Arabs seemed more collectivistic than Indians, expressing higher out-group intolerance than Indians. Some Indian students categorically mentioned the influence of the peers to be greater than that of their family. Gender roles were also seen to be more fluid by Indian students in comparison to their Arab counterparts. Benevolent sexism was apparent in Arab men (Table IV) with comments like "Women are free to study and work, but you need a man to take care of you", *"Women are so good in sensitive things like ideas and are idealistic". "They are like a precious jewel, to be protected"; "It is not fair*

for women to lift heavy things… they are weak"; "Women are emotionally stronger (than men) so if their husband goes (dies), they stick to their duties and responsibilities (while a man quickly looks for another wife)". They also expressed disbelief at the Indian custom of dowry (the bride's family gives money and material things to the groom and his family) and said that in their country, the husband has to take care of the wife. They also put emphasis on virginity before marriage as very important (Table IV), in line with masculine cultures.

The Arab men students were also found to be extremely courteous and responsive. Each one of them offered to buy coffee or tea, saying that it was a 'part of their culture' for

men to buy for women. While the Arab men were almost always dressed in casual wear, such as jeans and t-shirts, and wore no obvious religious symbols, all the Arab women always covered their heads, whether fully with a *hijab*, or symbolically with a scarf. Indians were all either dressed in casual western wear, or in Indian traditional attire. None wore any obvious religious symbol on their person.

Table V indicates that education was considered appropriate for women, while business and physical labour for men. Women made statements expressing lack of ambiguity and apprehension regarding success. A typical comment, *"Success is very important. Of course a successful person is happy… That's what we all are after anyway."* Among these young women, marriage is assuming less importance, they wish be able to "stand on their own feet" first. Clearly, succeeding at studies or the workplace is important for them. In contrast, the Arab men expressed some ambivalence towards success.

Discussion

The present study attempted to explore some important constructs that underlie FOS-culture, gender and maternal employment. Let us now explore the reasons for our findings.

Comparison of cultural values of Indians and Araba

Significant differences between Arabs and Hindus were found on three value dimensions-uncertainty avoidance, masculinity/femininity and individualism/collectivism, but not power distance. In the present sample, both Arabs and Indians moderately accepted unequal distribution of power in society (Table I). This is slightly different from results obtained by Hofstede (2001), who found Arab countries to be less egalitarian than Indians. Since the present Arab students have been living in India for some time, their unique experiences about relations between people at different power levels, like supervisors (see Table 4) may have altered their thinking with respect to power inequality.

Arabs were significantly more uncertainty avoiding than the Indians, that is, less tolerant of uncertain situations than Indians (Table I), results similar to Hofstede's (2001). He related religion, a way of coping with uncertainty to UA. In high UA cultures, he found the dominant religion to stress absolute certainties. The present sample of Arab students consisted of Muslims, Islam being a religion that claims absolute truths. The Hindu religion, followed by Indian students, on the other hand consists of several parallel faiths, leading to the same Truth *(Brahmana)*. In the words of Sinha (2009), "Hinduism is perhaps the only religion that recognizes several valid paths to arrive at the same truth" (p. 30).

Arabs were more collective than their Indian counterparts (Table I), implying that they were more integrated into and dependent on cohesive in-groups than Indian students, who had lower in-group out-group differentiation (Table IV). These results are again similar to Hofstede's (2001). Although some researchers have found Indians to be collective (Chaddha & Deb, 2013), others (Khandelwal, 2009; Tripathi, 1988) have found Indians to be individualistic; still others have found Indians to be both collectivists and individualists (Sinha, 2004; Sinha et al., 2002; Jha & Singh, 2011). Arabs, on the other hand, have rather consistently been found to have collective tendencies (for e.g., Kazarian, 2011). Lastly, Arabs were more masculine than Indians (Table I), that is, they adhere to greater gender-role differentiation. Benevolent sexism was apparent in Arab men (Table IV). This is somewhat contrary to Hofstede's results, who found Indians to be more masculine than the Arabs. This could be due to the trend toward metrosexuality in India, particularly in cosmopolitan cities like New Delhi. Verma (2004), argues that Indian metrosexuality has deep roots going back to the ancient times, such as temple texts that talk of male grooming, Krishna (a Hindu God) dressing up his women companions and the Hindu belief in the complementary man and women *'Ardhanariswar'* (half man half woman).

These findings can also be understood using the work of other cross-cultural researchers, most notable of which are Schwartz (1999) and Inglehart and Baker (2000). In many ways, their categories like embededness and hierarchy (Schwatrz) and tradition vs. secular-rational and survival vs. self-expression (Inglehart & Baker) could help us to understand the complex

realities of value systems in the Indian and the Arab world. As Schwartz (2006) noted, India was found to especially rate high on mastery, compared to other South Asian region, as also high in hierarchy and embeddedness and low in autonomy and egalitarianism. Values like social power and wealth are highly important in hierarchical cultures. Arabs were found to more embedded than Indians. Embedded cultures emphasize maintaining status quo and restraining those actions that might disrupt in-group solidarity or the traditional order. Pertinent values in such cultures are obedience, social order, respect for tradition, and wisdom. Such values were also highlighted by our present Arab sample.

Effect of culture and gender on FOS

The surprising absence of differences on FOS between Arabs and Indians may be explained by considering the fact that the present Arab sample represents students who have been able to overcome cultural barriers to come and stay in India for long durations. This may have rendered their perception of success similar to those of Indians.

Since no significant difference between men and women was found on FOS, the present study, along with related research (Condry & Dyer, 1977; Krishnan & Sweeney, 1998) refutes Horner's hypothesis that FOS is found mostly in women. This may be largely attributable to the positive change in women's status over the past several decades. Women, it seems, no longer find situations of success threatening, and are entering the competitive race at a steady stream.

A non-significant effect of gender on FOS was found among Indians. This is in line with Mukhopadhyay (2004), who failed to find any references of American style arguments regarding "male superiority" in scientific fields, and instead found the root of the Indian gender gap to lie in social constructs. In contrast, Arab men were found to be higher on FOS than Arab women. This seemingly puzzling finding can be understood by taking cognizance of the fact that the women in the present Arab sample were in a gender-appropriate field, while the men in a gender-inappropriate field. In a high SMAS society, where gender-role differentiation is

very clear, such deviance of sex-role standards can lead to great anxiety. The Arab men were probably wary of being in a field considered unfamiliar and inconsistent with their sex-role, resulting in high FOS. The Arab women students, on the other hand, were in a familiar field (the mothers or aunts of some were headmistresses and the like), and thus were not ambiguous about succeeding in it. Also, success requires change, but uncertainty-avoiding cultures prefer to maintain the status quo, leading to a desire to strive for success only in familiar areas.

Past research failed to find any gender differences on FOS between Arab men and women from Lebanon (Botha, 1971), Iraq (Adb El Hameed, 1978), Qatar (Al Chaik, 1978) and Kuwait (Torki, 1985). However, these studies were carried out in the actual home countries of the students, unlike the present study, which was carried out on Arab students who had come especially to study in a foreign country. The present sample of Arab women is not just motivated enough to overcome internal and cultural hurdles, but is also likely to be academically brighter, as most such students come through scholarship. Further, marriage and family remained salient for them (Table V), despite their high motivation to study and work, perhaps leading to low FOS. This is in line with Torki (1985), according to whom most Arab women, even those who work and are highly educated, aim to marry and have children and family lives.

Effect of maternal employment on FOS

The influence of maternal employment was not found to be uniform across sexes and nationalities. The large effect size obtained for Arabs and men is noteworthy. In masculine, collective and high uncertainty avoiding cultures (like Arab's), mother's occupation has a significant impact on one's FOS. In a masculine culture that already has strict gender differentiations, having a homemaker mother perhaps further strengthens such demarcations. That the Arab sample was significantly more collective too might have added to the salience of the mother as a role model for the Arabs, as belongingness and strong interpersonal ties are considered more important in collective societies

than in individualistic ones. The greater effect of maternal employment among Arabs could also be because of the important position of the mother in the Arab household. The father is seen as more of a secondary figure; his presence being less stable, while the mother is a stable, permanent figure that the children can rely on. The practice of husbands leaving their wives to marry a second time is common among the Arabs, leaving the mother as the major attachment figure for children. Seeing the most salient, stable figure in their lives going out and working may communicate positive attitudes about work and success to these children very early in life, perhaps buffering them against the development of FOS later.

Further, mother's employment influences FOS of men, but not women. While past research has established the relationship between maternal employment and daughter's attitudes toward success, career and achievement (Berk, 2003; Dunifon, Hansen, Nicholson, & Nielsen, 2013), few studies have addressed this relationship between mothers and sons. If the mother is a homemaker, then the perpetual contact with the mother may inhibit the separation-individuation process, which is crucial for boys to be able to develop a feeling of competence (Lynn, 1959). If separation from the mother is not complete, then boys may not attain complete mastery of their environment, something that could predispose them to apprehension in the face of competition later.

Conclusion

It appears that culture and gender are overarching, macro level categories that influence FOS only indirectly, through the operation of micro level categories, like the mother's occupation. FOS is a complex phenomenon that may be shaped by various kinds of cultural and familial expectations. The effect of maternal employment on fear of success has been found to be quite unequivocal. With rapid social changes all around us, mother's employment today seems to have a positive effect on children, especially boys. This bolsters the need to support working mothers in their effort to balance the dual roles of parent and employee. It also highlights the crucial role that

governmental and organizational policies can play in this respect. Governmental policy in terms of reservation for women at the workplace, and organizational practices such as paid maternity leave, workplace crèches, etc., which are a given in the West, can help women get and maintain employment.

Having a working mother may be even more salient for boys' development than girls', particularly in the Arab and Indian cultural contexts, where the mother figure is so salient anyway. Cross-sex identification rather than same-sex identification seems to play a more crucial role in determining FOS.

Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The present study has certain limitations. The small sample size prevents any generalization. Further, it was carried out on a few Arab expatriate students studying in India. Their values may have got altered due to exposure to the Indian value system. Future research should examine the two nationalities in their original cultural contexts. Having seen the significant albeit subtle impact of cultural context on FOS, more cross cultural studies should be carried out that compare diverse cultures.

The impact of mother's employment and her occupational status can be explored further on other constructs related to FOS like achievement motivation, especially among boys. Longitudinal studies tracing the high scorers on FOS can be conducted to assess future outcomes. Further, a developmental analysis of FOS, comparing respondents of different ages starting from school to the workplace might yield important insights about the onset and course of the syndrome, thereby enabling early interventions that may dampen its negative effects that set in later.

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