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Understanding the Factors that Contribute to the Social Exclusion of Older Women in the District of Gujrat, Punjab Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to “Understanding the Factors that Contribute to the Social Exclusion of Older Women in the District of Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan”. Globally, the population of older women is increasing, and also a growing urgency in the policy literature to understand numerous issues older women face. The social exclusion of older women provides an opportunity to understand the inequality of various factors and the disadvantages among vulnerable populations. Limited research has been done on how different factors cause older women's exclusion, especially in rural areas. This research examines how psychological factors, poor health, public attitudes, and life status cause older women to be excluded. A quantitative approach was applied to evaluate the research, conducted in the Gujrat District. For collecting data, the researcher assembled the interview technique and developed a questionnaire as an instrument. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample from a target population, which consisted of older women aged 45 and above in district Gujrat. The sample size consisted of 300 older women. The

researcher examined the association between these variables by using correlation and simple linear regression analysis (SLRA). The findings from the correlation and regression analyses revealed a statistically significant and positive relationship between the dependent variable (women exclusion) and the independent variables (poor health, psychological effects, public attitudes, and life status). The study concluded that women's exclusion was due to poor health conditions, psychological effects, public attitudes, and social standing, as women in patriarchal societies have very few resources to survive, which explains why they are excluded in every aspect of life. Therefore, these factors must be eradicated and women must be treated equally with males; this will require a significant effort from all members of society.

Keywords: Social exclusion, Older women, Psychological effects, Health, Public attitudes

Introduction:

Todman (2004) explains that Social exclusion is a procedure in which individuals and society as a whole are intentionally blocked by people from the provision of basic human rights, opportunities, and resources (for example health care, work, and housing) which are provided to the members of society and it is paramount importance for social cohesion. Social exclusion is a process under which people lose resources and opportunities, which shows that they cannot take part in political, civil, and economic related activities of society. Social exclusion is deeply involved in some other major factors like discrimination, lower educational level, and improper standard of living. Pierson (2002) explained that social exclusion detaches an individual from social institutions, social networks, development opportunities, and social facilities; excluding in comparison to all those who are provided plenty of chances. Various researches were conducted in the field of discrimination in the workplace, division of labor, promotions, and inequality of salary and earnings among males and females. A number of researches have also focused on the differences in employee participation and labor participation of males and females and the low participation of females in the labor market. Foley (1999) said that social exclusion will describe society's rights relationship as to how it is and how people are treated and however they see themselves; as to impotence, exclusion, and lack of integrity. But at its core is the lack of sufficient income.

Saraceno (2001) explained that this contains equal access to health facilities, employment, educational institutions, basic human rights, and the justice system, and the ability to take part in the decision-making process and it is valid for people from all walks of life and if someone is denying to accept societal norms, he or she can face several forms of exclusion.

Burchard (1999) argued that a person is excluded socially if (a) that person is an inhabitant of a community, whereas (b) he or she can not engage in the usual activities of people in that society because things are beyond his or her control, and (c) he or she would like to participate in them. Philo (2000) represents that social exclusion is a circumstance in which specific members of a group are excluded from, or become segregated from, much of the usual social life and working atmosphere. Burchardt (2007) said that social exclusion is a phenomenon that is a multi, vibrant facet. The term social exclusion is explained by culture, but a major part of this definition includes lack of involvement. Several factors that restrict the access of people to large systems and exclude them from society are responsible for social exclusion. Social exclusion includes income poverty, but is wider; other disadvantages that may or may not be linked to low incomes such as poor health services, unemployment and poor self-esteem, and improper education facilities. Dynamic initiates a quest to investigate the cause and eliminate the effect of social exclusion from society and policymakers. Multiple-layered is people who suffer exclusion, the causes are known to operate at various levels: community, household, institutional, and individual.

Social Psychological and Economic Factors Responsible for the Exclusion of Older Women's

Pakistan is a state where it is believed that women of all ages are placed in their homes and she is not given the right to interrogate males and is supposed to follow all the decisions made by male heads of the family. As far as household decisions are concerned, the voices of aged women are ignored which leads to self-esteem-related issues. In a society like Pakistan old females are not given importance and follow rules such as 'rule of thumb'. Aged females are considered emotional and soft this is the reason that most of the time they face stocks at work and in their social lives. They also admit that they are bound to stay at their home and are not allowed to work. It is the reason they face exclusion because of stress, depression, anxiety, mental illness,

and various psychological impacts in their old age because they are neglected for their whole life span.

Social factors are the factors that affect the lifestyle of an individual including shopping habits, faith, educational level, wealth, size of family, education, population density, behavior of people, and structure. The educational level can affect and decide your health. Education properly guides them to decide on their health. Highly qualified old women live longer. They take part in beneficial activities like visiting their doctor regularly and actively participate in sports-related activities. They take part very rarely in harmful activities like smoking. A higher educational level is a source of relatively improved job opportunities. It most of the time brings benefits like improved working environment, health assurance and ability to keep relations with others. All these factors lead to improved health. The low educational level plays a crucial part in the exclusion of old women. Despite the improved academic qualifications, a number of young girls left their school without obtaining basic education and basic skills. A large number of things influence the educational level like school factors, the social setup of the family, and the geographical factors like areas in which they live. Mostly girls are forced to stay at home and perform home chores and to leave school it is the reason they are excluded in old age.

Participation of old women in economic activities is also confined and only confined to household work and underpaid jobs. Despite the fact that they are facing difficulties, their important role has never been properly mentioned globally. However, aged females can express that it is a better way for the state with the potential to perform a number of tasks at the same time, which can not be so simple and easy for male employees (Chalchissa & Emnet, 2013). In this way, they are compelled to become laborers or to get low-paid jobs, and due to their low economic level, they are exploited in each and every field like education, health, and public behavior. Morgan et al. 2007 argued that a few research on the relation between the social exclusion of old females and psychological problems but now this is changing with the passage of time. For example, research has shown that single parents, unemployed, old females with lower levels of education, weak social capital, increased risk of mental health, family conflicts, and poor living conditions.

Statement of Problem

Understanding the Factors that Contribute to the Social Exclusion of Older Women in the District of Gujrat, Punjab, Pakistan" is the title of the current study. Pakistan's patriarchal framework permits half of the population to embellish and stand to protect their goals, just like in any other men-obsessed country. Therefore, Pakistan is a typical example of how this trend has resulted in the devaluation of older women. Even though there is equality in some spheres of life, older women are socially excluded due to negative psychological impacts, ill health, public attitudes, and life status. Even women from wealthy educated homes also experienced discrimination. Pakistan's development is closely associated with women's progress because women are 51% of the population and are dependent on their families. If women are given equal opportunities to participate in economic development, our development ratio will rise steadily and the marginalization of women in society will be lessened. This study is essential to revealing the issues that lead to the marginalization of older women. Since women are the fundamental building blocks of society and because societies cannot function without their participation, this study must be carried out.

Objectives

- To analyze the public attitudes and life status towards older women that causes the exclusion.
- To elaborate on the psychological effect on older women that causes the exclusion.
- To find out the poor health status of older women that causes the exclusion
- To suggest suitable outcomes to control these problems.

Literature Reviews

Al-Rashid, M. A. et al. (2021) stated that historically, transportation planning and public health are interlinked. The health of older people is significantly impacted by social exclusion, especially in light of the emerging global problems that we face. However, there is a notable study gap regarding the effects of psychosocial hurdles encountered by elderly people when using public transportation. This study offers empirical support and indicates the influence of some socio-psycho barriers to public transportation that contribute to the social exclusion of elderly people. This study involved 243 Pakistani elderly people under the age of 60–89 who

willingly participated in this cross-sectional research and respondents submitted self-reports regarding their socio-psycho barriers, which encompassed their corresponding social exclusion and their believed norms, attitudes, particular skills, lifestyles hobbies, neighborhood social limitations, and intentions. The data analysis was carried out by using the “Partial Least Square Structural Equation Model”. The structural path model verified the association between social exclusion and socio-psycho barriers. The social exclusion of elderly people was predicted by all psychosocial barriers except for perceived descriptive norms. This study illustrates the significance of socio-psycho barriers in the analysis of social exclusion and provides real-world suggestions for transport developers and urban organizers. The findings of the research can be utilized by the concerned policymakers to develop age-friendly, socially supportable, and healthy cities.

According to Shergold et al. (2012), rural inhabitants and the elderly are linked with a higher risk of social exclusion, and accessibility plays a significant role in mitigating this risk factor. The interaction between the elderly and transport-related exclusion was analyzed by a mixed-method approach and data was collected from more than nine hundred elderly persons residing in south west England and Wales rural areas. However, few respondents responded that they felt they were excluded from society, and the majority of the interviewees reported that they experienced difficulties in participating in special and suitable social activities such as special visits to hospitals and cinemas for entertainment. These findings indicate that although un-availability is critical to reaching some sorts of locations, having cars is not a reliable indicator of overall social integration.

The study concludes that for social integration short travel distances are important for participation in communal activities because it is considered a significant factor in the higher level of communal activities participation. Although, the risk of travel-related exclusion is higher in rural, mostly amongst the elderly because of the general nature of auto dependence. More attention should be given to proper exercise activities because it is considered as a transportation solution, and also some consideration should be given to the travel transportation service that is provided in specific areas such as health.

Pemberton et al. (2013) said that this study represents the challenges associated with social exclusion and mental health problems of poor people who lived in poverty conditions and social exclusion survey. Mental health problems also contribute to the Social exclusion of poor people because they have low-income status, low levels of confidence, also low levels of hospitalization they lose their social connection, the influence of poor health on their socialization, and the stigma of mental illness. However, poverty and Social Exclusion increase the risk of mental health problems because of stress or low financial status, patterns of living, social environment, fewer opportunities for exclusion, and low self-confidence. The mental health domain questions are aimed at determining the existence of mental health problems. The theory of mental health problems is very difficult, and its definitions are reflected by disciplinary and ideological alterations. In this study, the primary method was employed as a well validated instrument, and the public health questionnaires were used to show whether or not symptoms of common mental disorders were present.

According to NESBITT, S. et al. (2019), the ratio of older persons is increasing worldwide, and is necessary for the policy literature to recognize the health-related problems faced by older persons. The perspective of social exclusion provides an overview to comprehend well-being inequality and disadvantage amongst the elderly populations. There is limited research examining the effect of social exclusion on elderly women, mostly are rural areas. The researcher analyzes the issues of social exclusion experienced by Canadian rural elderly women's and also indicates policy suggestions for world health physicians. For the collection of data, the researcher used a qualitative study, and the sample size was comprised of eight participants who identified as women, who were sixty-five years of age and above, spoke English, and who lived independently in private households in rural Durham Region, Ontario. An inductive approach was used for collecting and analyzing data concurrently. Semi-structured interviews were conducted one-on-one. The Researcher concludes a significant association of social exclusion with 6 themes that illuminate the exclusion experienced by older women of rural and they include expectations of the elderly in rural societies, navigating the tensions of belonging within the social fabric, singlehood isolation, driving independence, health infrastructure and changing personal health and affording to age.

Seifert, A., Cotten, et al. (2021) elaborate that the COVID-19 pandemic excluded older persons from society because of their lack of physical social contact with other society members. Marginalized populations just like older persons also tend to be excluded from the digital services. They can not use the internet because they do not have the necessary devices and social network connectivity, or are inexperienced in using the latest digital technology. Older persons who are weak and do not have social accounts in different online apps, numerous of whom are in long-term care accommodations, struggle with the dual burden of social and digital exclusion. This research analyzes the possible outcomes of this exclusion and provides suggestions for fixing the situation, with a special focus on older persons in long-term care accommodations.

Shirindi et al. (2015) elaborate that social exclusion results from long term instability that decreases the number of women in rural areas. The study aimed to estimate the effects of social exclusion on women with hypertension. The investigator employed a qualitative research design to explore the results. The investigator used a targeted sampling strategy for selecting the population and the sixty African women with problems of hypertension were the sample size of this research. Five interviews were undertaken using the data collection technique of focus group discussions while ten in-depth interviews were conducted with women with hypertension. The “Nvivo” program was employed by the researcher for analyzing the qualitative data. The findings of the study show that deep structural elements like discrimination, unemployment, and poverty explain how women experience social exclusion and how their health condition depreciates by high blood pressure. For investigating these challenges of poverty, unemployment, and discrimination of women more intervention agendas must be announced that will enhance women's empowerment.

According to Hrast et al. (2012), the elderly are more vulnerable than other societal groups. In this study researcher used different theories of social exclusion to study the vulnerability of the elderly, A mixed-method approach was used in this study to analyze the social exclusion, which was based on secondary quantitative data and in-depth interviews technique. These findings were employed to recognize the aspects of social exclusion in which older persons are mostly affected in Slovenia. This study highlights the aspects in which mostly older persons are excluded which are material deficiency, housing exclusion, health-related issues and limited healthcare facilities,

and land exclusion. The first three aspects are regarded as the more extensive and problematic. By analyzing qualitative data and solid theoretical approaches, the researcher investigated the strategies of older persons to handle these social exclusions. Certain methodologies were identified in all aspects of social exclusions that show that older people are actively working to better their circumstances.

Research Methodology:

The current study was carried out in Gujrat District and completed by using a quantitative technique. The researcher created an interview schedule to acquire quantitative data. In this study, the researcher used a purposive sampling strategy to choose a sample from the targeted group, which consisted of elderly women over 45. The 300 elderly women were the sample size of this study. The researcher used SPSS to perform bivariate and univariate data analyses. The researcher employed Pearson correlation and regression analysis (SLRA) to examine the association among these variables.

Data Analysis and Results:

Table 1: Correlation statistical test of psychological effects and older women’s exclusion

Ho = There is no statistically significant relation between psychological effects and older women's exclusion.

H1 = There is a statistically significant relation between psychological effects and older women's exclusion.

Variables		Social Setup	Older Women Exclusion
Psychological Effects	Pearson Correlation	1	.453
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Older Women’s Exclusion			1
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The table 1 elaborates on the correlation statistical test of psychological effects and older women’s exclusion. The significant value of P.000 which is less than alpha (0.05) shows that there exists a significant association between psychological effects and older women exclusion. The Pearson correlation value of .453 shows a positive correlation between these two variables.

Table 2: Correlation statistical test of poor health and older women’s exclusion

Ho = There is no statistically significant relation between poor health and older women’s exclusion.

H1 = There is a statistically significant relation between poor health and older women’s exclusion.

Variables		Social Setup	Older Women Exclusion
Poor Health	Pearson Correlation	1	.451
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Older Women’s Exclusion			1
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The table 2 represents the correlation statistical test of poor health and older women’s exclusion. The significant value of P.000 which is less than alpha (0.05) shows that there exists a significant association in between poor health and older women’s exclusion. The Pearson correlation value of .451 shows a positive correlation between these two variables.

Table 3: Correlation statistical test of public attitudes and life-status and older women's exclusion

Ho = There is no statistically significant relation between public attitudes and life-status and older women’s exclusion.

H1 = There is a statistically significant relation between public attitudes and life-status and older women’s exclusion.

Variables		Social Setup	Older Women Exclusion
Public Attitudes and Life-status	Pearson Correlation	1	.488
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
Older women’s Exclusion			1
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The table 3 points out the correlation statistical test of public attitudes and life status and older women’s exclusion. The significant value of P.000 which is less than alpha (0.05) describes that exists a significant association between public attitudes and life status and older women’s exclusion. The Pearson correlation value of .488 shows a positive correlation between these two variables.

Table 4: Simple Linear Regression analysis (SLRA) of psychological effects and older women’s exclusion

Ho = There is no statistically significant relation between psychological effects and older women's exclusion.

H1 = There is a statistically significant relation between psychological effects and older women's exclusion.

Model	Coefficient of Unstandardized		Coefficient of Standardized
	B	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	.727	.055	
Psychological Effects	.035	.004	.453
Adjusted R ² = .205			
Test of the full model; F=76.841, P= .000			

The table 4 points out the simple linear regression analysis (SLRA) of psychological effects and older women exclusion. The application of regression analysis aims to analyze if the psychological effects have any influence on older women's exclusion integrity. The coefficient of determination is .205; therefore, about 20.50% of the variation in the older women exclusion is explained by psychological effects. The overall association provides significance in which $R=0.453$, $F=76.841$, $P= .000$, and the association between these variables was positive leading to the acceptance of the hypothesis that there is a statistically significant relation exist between psychological effects and older women exclusion.

Table 5: Simple Linear Regression analysis (SLRA) of Poor health and older women’s exclusion

Ho = There is no statistically significant relation between Poor health and older women’s exclusion.

H1 = There is a statistically significant relation between Poor health and older women’s exclusion.

Model	Coefficient of Unstandardized		Coefficient of Standardized
	B	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	.590	.052	
Poor Health	.037	.004	.451
Adjusted $R^2 = .236$			
Test of the full model; $F=105.328$, $P= .000$			

The table 5 explains the simple linear regression analysis (SLRA) of poor health and older women exclusion. The application of regression analysis aims to determine if poor health have any effects on older women's exclusion integrity. The coefficient of determination is .236; therefore, about 23.60% of the variation in the old women exclusion is explained by Poor health. The overall association provides significance in which $R=0.451$, $F=105.328$, $P= .000$, and the association between these variables was positive which led to the acceptance of the hypothesis

that there is a statistically signification relationship exist between Poor health and older women’s exclusion.

Table 6: Simple Linear Regression analysis of public attitudes and life-status and older women’s exclusion

Ho = There is no statistically significant relation between public attitudes and life-status and older women’s exclusion.

H1 = There is a statistically significant relation between public attitudes and life-status and older women’s exclusion.

Model	Coefficient of Unstandardized		Coefficient of Standardized
	B	Std. Error	Beta
(Constant)	.755	.048	
Public Attitudes and Life-status	.042	.004	.488
Adjusted R ² = .238			
Test of the full model; F=93.077, P = .000			

The table 6 elaborates on the simple linear regression analysis (SLRA) of public attitudes and life-status and older women's exclusion. The application of regression analysis aims to see if public attitudes and life status have any influence on older women's exclusion integrity. The coefficient of determination is .238; therefore, about 23.80% of the variation in the old women exclusion is explained by public attitudes and life status. The overall association provides significant results in which R=0.488, F=93.077, P= .000, and the association between these variables was positive leading to the support of the hypothesis that there is a statistically signification relation exists between public attitudes and life-status and older women’s exclusion.

Conclusion and Discussion:

The present study analyzed Understanding the Factors that Contribute to the Social Exclusion of Older Women in the District of Gujrat, Punjab Pakistan. Males are in leading positions of

leadership in Pakistan society, while women are in secondary roles. Older women are consequently exploited in all aspects of life because of the social structure of their society, illness health, disapproving public attitudes, psychological consequences, low self-respect, and the social environment of families. To quantify the psychological effects of older women's social exclusion, the researcher considered measures such as health illness, public attitudes, and life status. Researchers investigating how older women's health status contributes to their exclusion, examining the public attitudes towards older women and how that contributes to their exclusion, and examining the psychological impacts on elderly women which cause the exclusion and also recommend suitable measures to overwhelmed the problems of older women. Social Exclusion means that society members are underprivileged in their rights and also deprived of them to participate in social development processes like health facilities, educational opportunities, living standards, and socio-political activities (Hameed et, al. 2019).

For this purpose, the present study was carried out in District Gujrat and the population of the current study was District Gujrat, district Gujrat has one town and the researcher selected that town Shadiwal by using a convenient sampling technique. The target population was older women over 45 and the unit of analysis was the older women who lived in Shadiwal. The sample size was three hundred older women. Purposive sampling was the technique employed by the investigator to select a sample from the target population. The survey method was used as a research method in this study and the data was composed by using an interview schedule. In the interview schedule researcher used a questionnaire as an instrument for data collection.

Data was examined in the form of univariate and bivariate analyses. For the analysis of univariate researcher used frequency distribution. For analysis of bivariate, the association between numerous factors such as psychological consequences, health problems, public attitude, life status, and women's exclusion was observed using different statistical techniques, i.e. Pearson correlation and regression analysis (SLRA). The analysis of this research was accomplished with the help of the Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 24.

The finding of the study indicated a significant association between psychological effects and older women's exclusion. The research conclusions present that older women have more psychological issues like mental illness, anxiety, depression and mental disorders, loneliness, and

hardness are face more exclusion. So, psychological effects and old women's exclusion have a positive and significant relationship.

The finding of the study indicated a significant association between poor health conditions and older women's exclusion. The findings show that older women who had poor health conditions face more social exclusion because due to health problems, families neglect them and cannot support them appropriately which affects their lives and also their children's lives. So, poor health and old women's exclusion have a significant positive relationship.

The finding of the study also indicated a positive and significant relationship between their living status and public attitudes and older women's exclusion. The research findings present that public attitudes towards older women and life status cause old women exclusion because negative public attitudes effects on their life status and also people marginalize them in public places. So, public attitudes and their living status and older women's exclusion have a positive and significant relationship.

Very few respondents indicated that they do not believe that older women face social, psychological, cultural, and economic challenges as a consequence of their age, while the majority of the respondents believe that older women face these problems. The findings indicate a strong correlation between women's exclusion and social family setups, psychological effects on the mental well-being of older women, poor health conditions, and public attitudes towards older women and living status. Therefore, women must receive the same treatment as men, and these barriers should be eliminated, which need lots of effort from society members.

Recommendations

- Provide decision-making power to elderly women.
- The state should establish policies for old women's empowerment and well-being of the population that provide skills and training to the people that appropriate to the labor market
- The government should organize seminars and informal sessions for old women and convince parents about having strong primary socialization of girls because in the future they cannot face social exclusion.

- There should be equality in society, socio-economic and gender inequalities must disappear.
- The government must bring institutional stability and meritocracy to all sectors.
- The government should take a gender-specific and life cycle approach to discourse social exclusions.

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