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## **Socio-Political and Economic Exclusion of Women: A Case Study of Peshawar [Pakistan]**

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### **Abstract**

This Article explores the phenomenon of social exclusion in order to find out that females in Peshawar district are excluded to what extent and in which spheres of society. Based on the concept given by René Lenoir, the present study judges the condition of females by using three dimensions of social exclusion, viz. economic, political, and social/societal as parameters. This article also sheds light on the causes and impacts of the exclusion the females face in the society of Peshawar. It also highlights the various problems of Peshawar's females particularly and society generally. Although, there is a good amount of literature that focuses on the issues encountered by females living in the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) yet there is probably less investigation about social exclusion of females in the city. This article fills the research gap through scrutinizing the relevant information and data collected from common females living in Peshawar district.

The nature of research is qualitative in which both secondary and primary data was used. Primary data was collected through interviews using non-probability convenient sampling. In findings, this article stated about the causes, and impacts of females' exclusion in the society of Peshawar.

Keywords: Peshawar, KP, Females, Social Exclusion, Pakhtun.

### **Introduction**

Exclusion of females in any society is a very significant phenomenon because it can result in many problems that not only affect females but the entire society or country as a whole. Social exclusion can be defined as a state in which people are not able to partake completely in social, economic, political, and cultural life (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2016). This exclusion can be caused by the absence of opportunities for

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individuals that can avert them to participate in society actively and fully. For example, as per former French Secretary of State for Social Action, René Lenoir, socially excluded persons are physically and mentally handicapped, delinquents, drug addicts, asocial people, abused kids, and single parents etc. (Silver, 1994).

When females are socially excluded it means that females on the basis of their gender are not given the chance to partake in social, cultural, economic, and political life completely. For example, females are not allowed to vote and become politicians because of their gender in some parts of the world. This keeps females away from participating in the decision making that influences them just like any other member of the society. When the point of view of females is not taken in making the decisions which impact them then it is quite possible that those decisions do not solve the problems of the females. Thus, social exclusion of females can cause multiple issues.

Likewise, the females of Peshawar district are also prevented from partaking in different spheres of society, such as economic sector, politics, education, public space, and healthcare etc. This segregation has impacts which prove hazardous for females as well as the entire society and thus, needs to be addressed.

The status of females in different arenas of Peshawar's society is enough to acknowledge the fact that they face the issue of social exclusion. Females in Peshawar do experience seclusion and exclusion because of socio-cultural norms based on patriarchy that eventually refuses to give access to benefits of development. One of the main reasons which resists the empowerment and autonomy of females in Peshawar is the male perception about the role of females.

Moreover, the social status of females in Peshawar has underpinning on the political aspect as well. The various social difficulties faced by Females in Peshawar restrict them to take part in the political space. Local customs strongly discourage political empowerment of females. As per the constitution of Pakistan, there is no restriction on the political participation of females in the country. However, their numbers in the political parties and structures at local, provincial, and state level remains too small due to cultural and structural hindrances. Also, females around the country have faced threats and violence in the exercise of their basic right to vote (Bhattacharya, 2014).

### **Women's social standing in Peshawar**

Females in Peshawar's Pakhtun society play very small role in their social life. They spend more time at home in household work and very less time outside home in outdoor activities. Pakhtuns regard their norms and values as the most valuable property in their journey of life. In these values gender patterns are followed rigidly without any option of getting out of them.

The role and status of females is decided in Peshawar's Pakhtun society by the male and their general role is only home management or limited to home. Females are less advantaged, invisible partners of development, have lack of mobility, not much education, less access to resources, low health, low levels of nutrition, high rates of mortality, face male dominancy and patriarchy (Alam, 2012).

### **Social Exclusion of Females in Peshawar**

Social exclusion is defined as a lack of participation of individuals or certain groups in social, economic, and political arenas. It can also be considered as a kind of individuals' breach of rights if they are subjected to

inequitable treatment in social, political, and economic spheres. Females are usually vulnerable to exclusion in society and likewise, in Peshawar, females are also socially excluded. The data collected from 16 females states that females are socially excluded because of various social causes, such as men not allowing their women to partake in different institutions of society that is clearly linked to patriarchy which plays a great role in our society in excluding women from various significant activities, such as getting education or participating in politics etc.

### **Three Dimensions of Social Exclusion**

The three dimensions of social exclusion, viz. economic, political, and social/societal are effective parameters to know the extent and the spheres in which females face social exclusion in Peshawar.

#### **1. Economic Exclusion**

Economic exclusion means when there is violation of rights if there is unfair conduct with the people in the economic sector. For instance, if females are denied their right to work and are not allowed to use their capabilities in the professional arena then it can be deemed as economic exclusion of females. (Levitas et al., 2007) Another example can be if females are not paid for their work or paid less than they deserve, then it means their right to get salary for their job is being denied which is certainly exclusion from economic sector. (Greene et al., 2016).

##### **a. Economic Exclusion of Females in Peshawar**

###### **i. refutation of Opportunities**

Females in Peshawar are denied their right to work. Out of 16 female participants who live in Peshawar, 7 don't have freedom to work and only 4 have this liberty. Four participants are allowed to work with females only (Maria, 2021). (Lubna, 2021). One didn't have freedom to work but now it's her family's need due to their unstable financial conditions and expenses of kids (Naheed, 2021). Even in such unstable financial conditions, she wasn't allowed to work yet she struggled and took this freedom now.

This means that the four participants who are allowed to work with only females have freedom of work to a very limited extent as in this way they are deprived of availing many employment opportunities and thus, they are also economically excluded to a great extent. For instance, if these females want to work in civil service, army, bank, and many other workplaces where they have to work with men then they can't and remain excluded from many sectors because except for schools or other academic institutions, there is no place as such where women don't have to interact with men. Even in academic institutions women have to work with men to some extent but since, teaching is deemed suitable for females in Peshawar so they are most probably permitted to go for it.

Moreover, many females are forbidden by their in-laws to do job as stated by one participant that after her marriage she had a job opportunity in government sector but she wasn't allowed to work by her in-laws (Naheed, 2021).

Furthermore, lack of opportunities in Peshawar district also excludes females from economic sphere.

*"...at many places, girls can afford things but they don't get opportunities, like in Peshawar, there are no such fashion designing opportunities, but there are many girls who would want to pursue it but then they have to go to Lahore"* (Bano, 2021).

However, many females in Peshawar may not be able to leave for Lahore and thus, they remain excluded from this field in this city as there are no relevant opportunities in Peshawar.

Furthermore, it has been realized that many females in this city are not permitted to work in banks and customer support service work because of their gender, social stigma attached to these jobs, and unfavourable environment for females that can include fear of harassment at these workplaces. Moreover, there is also a perception in some families of Peshawar that daughters or wives when earn isn't deemed good as society doesn't regard it okay for parents or husbands being dependent on their females' salaries. So, even if the females don't give their salaries to their parents or husbands, they aren't allowed to work because of the fear of the opinions of people. All this can also be linked to masculinity of men that deems it shameful to depend on the earning of their women (Shabana, 2021).

*"...we have also problems with opportunities and careers, so, women actually face social exclusion in terms of opportunities or jobs or careers, pursuing their fields the way they want to"* (Shah, 2021).

Moreover, there are less chances of carrier development of the females in comparison to their male colleagues as well as females remained excluded from the meetings regarding decision making in Peshawar. Also, negative behaviour of male colleagues and the previous two issues made working women mentally upset in this city (Akhtar, 1998). This demonstrates that even working women's level of participation in economic life of KP's capital is low as they face denial of opportunities.

## **ii. Poverty**

Moreover, 39 percent of the population in KP is living below the poverty line. A great part of the population, especially females, lives at or close to the poverty line and the vulnerable state of this group becomes worse in the times of natural calamities or economic chaos (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2014). From the stated facts, it is clear that females in KP are facing poverty and since, Peshawar is an important city of this province, so it can be said that some or major part of the female population of Peshawar may also be going through poverty which comes under the domain of economic exclusion.

Poverty is one of the economic causes that plays a role in excluding females from society. It eliminates females from educational arena as they or their families cannot bear educational expenses and hence, without education, participation in economic and political life is impossible to a great extent.

*"I don't have freedom of education because of academic expenditure"* (Neelam, 2021).

Focusing on poverty here, it was the issue of poverty that was moulded into the problem of social exclusion. Also, it is the same poverty that deprives females of availing the healthcare services because they cannot afford the cost of using these services. (Shah, 2021)

Moreover, it is gender inequality that has given rise to poverty particularly, in the developing country (Khan, (Naushad) 2018) and poverty itself comes under the dimension of economic exclusion, hence, making gender inequality a cause of females' social exclusion in Peshawar.

## **iii. Unemployment**

Furthermore, the female labour force participation (FLFP) in Peshawar district could rise from 9.4% to 13.4% by eliminating some measurement errors. However, the anticipated FLFP is still quite low by regional and international

standards (Redaelli & Rahman, 2021). This indicates that a large number of females are unemployed in this city. Unemployment itself comes under the economic dimension of social exclusion, however, it is also one of the causes of social exclusion of females in Peshawar as when females are unemployed they are deprived of partaking in many social institutions, for example availing healthcare services or taking part in recreational activities.

**iv. Gender Wage Gap**

Also, the gender wage gap in Pakistan is highest in the world. It has been found out that females account for almost 90% of the bottom 1% of wage earners in Pakistan (International Labour Organization, 2018). This data is though of entire Pakistan yet it possibly takes into consideration for females living in Peshawar too.

**v. Exclusion from Property Matters**

Focusing on property matters, evidence related to females of Peshawar shows that 62.2% of its female respondents were ignored in the matters related to property (Muhammad et al., 2010). This also manifests clearly that in the affairs of property – which is an economic matter – females of Peshawar are denied involvement. A property matter of one family living in Peshawar district also demonstrated the same in which females were even denied the rightful share in their father's property (Riaz, 2021). Hence, all the before mentioned facts clearly manifest that females in Peshawar are facing economic exclusion.

**2. Political Exclusion**

According to Todd Landman's and Duffy's definitions of social exclusion, political exclusion can be defined as a kind of rights violation if there is inequitable treatment of people in political sphere and concept involving inability to participate in political arena effectively, respectively. (Ramachandran, 2016)

Political exclusion can include the refusal to give citizenship rights to people, such as political participation and the right to organise, and also of personal security, the rule of law, freedom of expression, and equality of opportunity (GSDRC, 2015).

Focusing on political participation, it involves a broad range of activities by which individuals develop and express their perspectives on the world and how it is ruled, and try to partake in and shape the decisions that influence their lives. These activities can be developing thinking about social issues at individual or family level, joining groups and organizations, doing campaigns at all levels, taking part in formal politics, for example casting vote, becoming a member of political party, or contesting elections (World Health Organization, 2010).

**i. Lack of Political Participation**

The facts don't show a good picture of females of Peshawar in the context of political dimension of social exclusion especially when focus is on political participation. Out of 16 females living in Peshawar from whom data has been collected, only 1 said that she has a freedom to join politics while others said that they aren't allowed to join politics or denied this right. This very fact manifests that females in Peshawar district don't enjoy absolute political participation which means they are politically excluded in the city. However, out of the 16 female respondents, 9 have freedom to vote while 7 even don't have this liberty which shows that even in today's time, when females voting is quite common, there are still some females in the capital of KP who are deprived of this right.

Furthermore, in the General Elections of 2013, there were total 864496 registered male and 618073 registered female voters in Peshawar for 4 national and 11 provincial constituencies. Out of them, only 39.57 percent male and 23.08 percent female voted on the election's day. Also, in 2015, during the last local government elections, 861996 male and 617006 female voters were registered while 39.69 % men and 23.12 % women voted in those elections in Peshawar as per the data of Election Commission of Pakistan (Gohar et al., 2018).

Moreover, in the General Elections of 2018, on Peshawar's 14 general seats of provincial assembly only 4 females contested elections (*Candidate List KP Assembly MPA Election 2018*, n.d.) and in those 14 seats, only one woman namely, Samar Haroon Bilour, secured victory in the elections, remaining 13 seats were won by men. Also, the triumph of Samar Haroon Bilour is more related to the death of his husband in election campaign rather than women's empowerment in the political arena of the district.

Though there were 5 female reserved seats from Peshawar as well, yet as compared to the 13 seats of provincial capital occupied by men, females only managed to have 6 seats of Peshawar in KP's provincial assembly (Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, n.d.). This not only demonstrates huge gender gap in but also segregation of females from the formal political process in the city.

## **ii. Absence of Equality of Opportunity**

However, the concept of political exclusion also includes absence of equality of opportunity that is faced by female politicians in the political arena of Peshawar to a great extent. This is because no female from Peshawar's seats has been given part in the KP's cabinet currently. Also, very less females from Peshawar were given tickets to contest election for general seats in 2018 as political parties largely avoided to give tickets of Peshawar's seats to their female members (Amin, 2018).

Apart from the cabinet and legislative body of KP, there is no female among the members of KP's public service commission which is an important institution of the province. (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Service Commission, n.d.). This manifests that even in bureaucracy females in Peshawar district face exclusion as their level of participation in this institution is also low.

*"In our misogynistic and patriarchal society males are considered superior, who do decision-making and looking at the agency of decision-making from governmental till grass root level, we don't see much females but very few here. There is absence of females' representation in different committees and decision-making bodies. Females aren't given representation in decision-making or law making bodies. Though today, females do have representation but still there are some problems in system"* (Bano, 2021). Hence, all these things point towards political exclusion of females in Peshawar.

## **3. Social/societal exclusion**

In order to differentiate the social dimension from the main term of social exclusion, it will be called as societal exclusion. Hence, in the light of Todd Landman's and Duffy's definitions, the societal exclusion can be explained as a type of breach of rights if there is inequitable conduct faced by individuals in societal sphere and a concept including inability of people to take part effectively in social life, respectively. (Ramachandran, 2016).

### **a. Societal Exclusion of Females in Peshawar**

Applying the explanation of societal exclusion of females in Peshawar, it can be said that when there is rights violation and females are being treated unfairly in social arena of this city or when females are not able to participate in social life of Peshawar effectively, then it can be called as societal exclusion of females in this city.

#### **i. Exclusion from Educational Arena**

Females in Peshawar district face societal exclusion at different levels and in various ways. There are many females in this city who are unfairly treated and denied their right to education and education being significant social institution needs to be discussed. Out of 16 females who were interviewed, 8 said that they don't have the right to education. One said that she is allowed to study till matric only, though she wants to do PhD (Wajda, 2021). Another respondent stated that she had the right to education but was deprived of the freedom to opt the subjects she wanted to study (Shabana, 2021). Two participant apprised that they had permission to receive education at her parents' home but after marriage they were not permitted by in-laws to get education. (Naheed, 2021).

Another three participant stated that "I don't have freedom of education because brothers did not allow before marriage and now husband does not permit" (Nausheen, 2021).

"I don't have right to education because of the perception that women look good at home and it is better for them to do home chores and not going out" (Bilqees, 2021).

Moreover, there are various problems faced by females in Pakhtun society. Among them, limited education is one. As Pakhtun families are found to be in great number in Peshawar, thus, it means that the females of these families probably do not have absolute access to education and hence, their level of participation in educational arena is low. Furthermore, the female literacy rate in Peshawar is much lower in its both urban and rural areas. In urban areas, it is 51 percent and in rural areas, it is 31 percent (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2016). Also, the female dropout rate at primary level is 54 percent (Humqadam, n.d.).

This manifests that more than half of the female population in Peshawar have to quit studies just at primary level which clearly excludes them for further stages of education. Plus, almost half of the female population of the urban Peshawar and about 69 percent of females in rural areas of this city don't get their right to education. Hence, a huge number of the females of Peshawar remains excluded from the educational sphere.

#### **ii. Exclusion from Public Space**

Another aspect of females' societal exclusion in Peshawar is, they being excluded from the public space as recreation is an important social institution and public places fall in this institution (*Social Institutions*, n.d.). A public space is an area or place that is open and accessible to all people, regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, age or socio-economic level. Public spaces include plazas, squares, parks, sidewalks, streets, restaurants, stores, markets, and bazaars, etc.

Females in Peshawar don't enjoy the access to public spaces and denied this right as out of 16 females from whom data has been gathered, only 3 said that they enjoy this freedom while other 7 clearly stated that they don't have this liberty. The remaining six apprised that they enjoy highly limited access to public space as some aren't allowed to go to public places alone while some can go in compulsion only and so on.

*“I am not allowed to go to public places alone. Brother only takes me to park”* (Wajda, 2021).

Not being able to go to public spaces alone is synonymous to having no freedom to access the public spaces because the very definition of freedom says that it is a power or right to act as one wants without any constraint. It's also a state of being independent. However, the respondents aren't independent in going to public spaces as they need someone, especially their men, to accompany them when going to public places. Plus, these females can't access the public areas without any constraint as they can't visit them alone which is a big restriction that eventually violates their right to public space.

*“No, I am not allowed to go out of home. In extreme compulsion, I go out”* (Bushra, 2021).

This response clearly shows that respondent doesn't enjoy access to public space as she can't visit them when she wants but only when it is needed that too extremely and even when it is required to go the public areas in less extreme compulsion, she can't go over these places.

*“It is not allowed even but now I say that going out is a need as I have my home and kids. Going out for walk etc. is not allowed”* (Naheed, 2021).

This response also manifests that respondent lacks freedom of accessing public space because she cannot go to these places whenever she wants, such as for recreational purposes.

*“Yes, I have access to public space to some extent. I am not allowed to go to restaurants etc., but bazaars and parks. I have come here for interview even with so much difficulty”* (Bilqees, 2021).

This response also demonstrates that respondent faces certain constraints while exercising her right to public space which means she has no freedom to exercise this right.

Hence, except for 3, all other 13 females, from whom data has been collected, are excluded from public space in Peshawar. Moreover, the segregation of females from this city's public space is also manifested by a fact that three years ago, females' bicycle rally in Peshawar was cancelled after the religious parties threatened to protest against it. (Sirajuddin, 2019).

This means that females in Peshawar cannot use public space the way they want, for example for riding a bicycle or organising a bicycle rally, many people in the city will oppose these practices and thus, excludes females from the public space.

One of the members of a religious party stated that females' bicycle rally was spreading obscenity. Females are opposed to use public space through using such arguments as calling females' certain acts synonymous to obscenity is something very much common in Peshawar no matter how much their acts are far away from obscenity. Eventually, many females are restricted to access the public space especially, for using the modes of transport, such as bicycle or motorbike by their families because of such arguments.

Female population in KP's capital is excluded from public places, for example, from restaurants, gyms, shopping areas, parks, and jogging tracks etc.

*“There are many restaurants, gyms, shopping areas and parks where females aren't comfortable because they are just for males. So, females are facing social exclusion in our society”* (Bano, 2021).

*“If we see the public places, we see any issue of reclaiming the public spaces by women because women are unable to reclaim those spaces. Women can't sit and eat outside like men do. Women can't go to the parks or do the*



*recreational activities like men do. Women aren't able to go on jogging tracks or for walk at night after the dinners as men do. So, this is all about social exclusion and this happens in Peshawar”* (Shah, 2021).

Females in Peshawar cannot access public space for walk whenever they want. They can't sit in parks just like men do and have fun. Many women in this city can't go to the restaurants alone or with their female friends. Hence, all this manifests exclusion of women from public space in KP's capital.

Even on the official site of KP's government, it's clearly declared without any hesitancy that the land of Pathans is an entirely male-dominated society (Taj, 2004). All this reflects that females in Peshawar are excluded from the public sphere to a great extent while males dominate it entirely.

### **iii. Denying Freedom to Decide for Themselves**

Another important aspect of societal dimension of social exclusion is taking decisions for yourself as it's not only related to individuals but also family in our society and family is a significant institution of a society while individuals are the basic parts of this institution. 16 females from whom data has been collected, 10 respondents said that they can't decide for themselves, 3 said that they have this freedom while 3 said that they have this liberty to a little extent which means that they don't have this freedom, as freedom is something that comes fully without any limitations.

*“Females are excluded from certain things, from certain social activities just because of their gender as we see here that the power has been given to the men so they can decide on behalf of women whether they should be married off to whatever family they want, at what age they should get marry, what education they should be pursuing, what career they should follow”* (Shah, 2021).

Moreover, some cases have been witnessed in Peshawar in which females weren't given the power to decide for themselves in important matters of their lives. (Israr et al., 2018). In one case, female was not allowed to marry a person of her own choice and forced to marry someone else by her family (Salim, 2021). Another female of this city, in an issue of her divorce, faced a lot of pressure from her family and was even coerced to go back to her husband when she didn't want to (Tayeba, 2021). Furthermore, one more girl was forced to study medical by her father when she didn't desire to do so (Maimoona, 2021).

### **iv. Exclusion in Healthcare**

Health is a very important social institution and being excluded from it, means societal exclusion. Females in Peshawar are excluded from healthcare as they aren't provided with various health facilities and services. There are many females in Peshawar who have no access to the doctors evoking agent to infant mortality due to infrastructural and institutional hindrances.

Moreover, many females in this district are not attended by the doctors or nurses on right time because of the absence of the proper medical gynaecologists along with other health facilities. The deliveries of the females are done by the midwife that badly impacts the health of the pregnant women. (Gul et al, 2020). Hence, all this reflects exclusion of females in healthcare in Peshawar.

Furthermore, various health facilities aren't available to females at the hour of need during their pre and post natal periods in rural areas of Peshawar. Also, females not only suffer from exclusion in the context of provision of health

facilities by the government but they also experience exclusion at homes in the context of being taken care by the family members as there is work pressure on women in joint family and they also face harsh attitude of in-laws which are two of the social problems in the way of pre and post natal care (Alam & Khan, 2008).

Also, there are various problems experienced by females in Pakhtun society i.e. low health, low levels of nutrition, and high mortality rates are three of them. Moreover, discrimination between male and female children is also done at homes in the context of providing proper diet to and taking care of the health of kids, as female children are totally ignored when it comes to provision of healthy food.

*“Of course, women are facing social exclusion and because it's not just education, it's the basic necessities that the girls in our society face challenges, for example it is very common to see that parents are more concerned about their male child's health or his diet intake whether it's proper or not than female one. It's deemed more important to give milk to male child. If there's one egg brought to home then that's given to boy rather than giving all children equal share by dividing it or giving other child on the alternate day”* (Bano, 2021).

Also, many females in Peshawar don't have access to the doctors as their health issues aren't considered the important concerns for their families.

*“...I will give example of healthcare services in the context of social exclusion. Females aren't allowed to actually go to the doctors if they fall sick. The family would say that they can be treated at home and provided with the medicine but it's not important to take them to the hospitals or doctors or spend money on their health which is again an issue of social exclusion”* (Shah, 2021).

Females in Peshawar district during their prenatal and postnatal conditions face problems regarding access to the health facilities. Moreover, they also face barriers while accessing health facilities for getting methods related to family planning. Also, female children at their homes don't get proper diet because of parents' discrimination against daughters. Taking care of women's health isn't deemed that important and they are denied access to the doctors. Plus, females in this city don't go to the doctors because either they aren't allowed by their men to do so or it costs them money which they can't afford to pay (Bushra. 2021). Thus, all these things manifest that the females in KP's capital face exclusion in healthcare.

#### **v. Exclusion from Family Decision-Making**

Family is a significant and fundamental institution of society and hence, exclusion from family decision-making means societal exclusion. Decision-making is a term used to define the process by which families make choices, give judgments and conclusions that guide conducts. That the process is called family decision-making indicates that it needs over one member's input and acceptance.

The role of females in family decision-making in Peshawar is an important parameter of societal exclusion. The data collected from 16 women appraises that 11 females do participate in family decision-making however, one out of these 11 women said that she did not have role in it before marriage. The other five said that they don't have freedom to partake in family decision-making.

Majority of females are not included in family decision making as, a family in Peshawar was busy in construction of their home and the father took some wrong decisions while managing the fiscal matters related to construction. However, he didn't consult her daughter who had a better plan for management of those matters (Bashir, 2021).

In very few families, females were given part in family decision-making after they get married (Salim, 2021). There are few females who are included in family decision-making in Peshawar yet some are excluded from this sphere too, especially the single female. Hence, it is the only criterion till now which demonstrates relatively a good picture regarding females' participation in society.

#### **vi. Denial of Mobility Right**

At their most basic, mobility rights are the ones that permit people to move from place to place, largely free from government intervention (Centre for Constitutional Studies, n.d.). Mobility rights are very important part of the societal exclusion as they are entirely linked with a society. Females in Peshawar however, aren't given mobility rights as they exercise very restricted mobility because of the culture of this city. Pakhtun culture plays a great role in refraining Pakhtun women from exercising mobility rights in Peshawar (BiBi, H. 2020). Females in the capital of KP can't go out whenever they want especially, unaccompanied. This has also been proved by the data collected from 16 females as except 3 all other females apprised that they exercise restricted mobility.

*"No. I am not allowed to go out of home. In extreme compulsion, I go out"* (Bushra. 2021).

The data also reflects that females hardly can go alone outside. They have to go out most of the time along with someone, especially, their males. Going out alone whenever females want is something not a norm in Peshawar district.

Moreover, the limited mobility of Pakhtun women is manifested in a research in which families were asked various questions. Only 16.2 percent families permitted females to meet relatives, 10.4 percent families allowed women to meet with friends, and 8.13 percent to go out of their homes for recreational stuff. (Ahmed, 2018). Eventually, females exercise very restricted mobility in Peshawar.

Hence, in all six aspects of societal exclusion except family decision-making, females face denial of rights or deprivation from participation in Peshawar district. In family decision-making, they experience inclusion to some extent. This consequently means that females in Peshawar are subjected to societal exclusion.

#### **Conclusion**

This problem of females' social exclusion affects both females and entire society of Peshawar as its impacts are deep. It is an issue that affects females who form a huge part of Peshawar district's population and hence, if a problem is impacting a huge number of people, then the rest of society organically does not remain immune from it. Moreover, the causes of this issue are identified to be political, social, and economic, such as institutional flaws, patriarchy, and poverty etc., respectively

#### **Recommendations**

Social exclusion is a multidimensional concept which is faced by females in Peshawar. However, it is not a problem without solution and therefore, after profound study and analysis, here are some recommendations in order to combat social exclusion of females in Peshawar. The society of Peshawar is such that it will accept the social inclusion of females (Bano, 2021). Thus, individuals, institutes, organizations, and leaders of this city need to take

this problem seriously and end it from the roots because it is an issue so deep that impacts all the sectors and people of KP's capital and not just females.

The very first thing is to acknowledge and reflect on the causes of female's social exclusion in Peshawar. There are also some changes needed to be done in the culture of Peshawar in order to socially include females. These changes can be brought both by awareness campaigns as well as with some initiatives of the government.

*"We need to change the culture of Peshawar by reversing it back to the original Peshawar culture which was more civilized and supportive towards females' social inclusion. To do this we need cultural festivals, promotion of original Peshawar literature. We need help from the media, government, and non-government organizations to promote the original Peshawar culture. We need to engage youth in activities that can motivate all society for positive activities.*

*We need educational and recreational activities where people of Peshawar can find an opportunity to express their creativity. We need to promote our religious values for physical, mental & moral health. We need to promote citizen laws so that the public of Peshawar can become responsible citizens. We need to discourage all the wrong practices of patriarchy and ignorance that are considered legal and are destroying our society like cancer; we should discourage all taboos in strong ways" (Kakakhel, 2021).*

### **Females' inclusion in Decision-Making**

Lastly, females should be given the power of decision-making at domestic, organizational, and governmental level for their inclusion. This can be done by proper policies and their implementation by the responsible agencies.

*"If we want social inclusion of females then it is important to involve them in different decision making committees like the Board of Governors, Board of Directors etc. It's important to give equal representation" (Bano, 2021).*

*"Females can be socially included in many ways. First, we have to give them choices and power of decision making. If we aren't even actually giving them the power to make decisions for themselves at our homes which is actually a very basic institution then I don't think that they would ever be able to achieve anything in their life because if we are providing them with an option like if they want to continue their education or the kind of subjects they want to study or at what age they want to marry" (Shah, 2021).*

Giving females the power of decision-making at homes for sure can help them to get included in various sectors of society as restrictions from home exclude females to a great extent.

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