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Psychological Distress, Resilience and Job Satisfaction among Female Household Labors: A Cross-Sectional Study

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to examine psychological distress, resilience and job satisfaction among Pakistani female household labors. For the present research, a quantitative (n=500) study design was elected. Three of well-structured instruments, Kessler psychological distress scale, brief resilience scale and job satisfaction survey scale were administered. The study findings shows that psychological distress has negatively correlation with resilience and job satisfaction. The results of regression analysis also indicated that psychological distress predicted resilience and job satisfaction among women. Additionally, data revealed that nuclear family system and rural labors experienced greater psychological distress at work than joint family labors and urban workers where as joint family system labors and urban workers experienced greater job satisfaction than nuclear and rural living labors. The study findings contribute to better understanding of how resilience affects well-being and tasks performance levels of workers living under one household.

Keywords: Job satisfaction, Household Labor, Psychological distress, Resilience

Introduction:

Now a day's family dynamics depend intensely on the work of female household workers. The study investigated the combined roles faced by these workers to understand their workplace situation better. According to the International Labor Organization, household labor is defined as an individual is paid to assist with cleanse and other household chores they work in a family (ILO, 2023). Numerous researches indicates that women continue to maintain over 75% responsibility for global unpaid work (ILO, 2020) even after many women have entered the workforce. Pakistani research reveals women contribute five times more unpaid household work than men do when it comes to household cooking and childcare responsibilities even though female labor force involvement has strengthened (Rizvi et al., 2020). Typical gender-specific work activities generate both economic growth worldwide and household resilience although they



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frequently remain unacknowledged (Saleem & Sarwar, 2023).

Kessler defined distress in psychology as medical manifestations that occur from depression alongside anxiety and PTSD (Kessler et al., 2019). The World Health Organization (WHO) identifies worldwide mental health problems while highlighting that the pandemic led to a 27% elevation of depression and anxiety cases (WHO, 2022). The psychological situation in Pakistan remains serious because anxiety and depression affect fifty percent of adults particularly targeting women according to Fatima and Khan (2018). Mental health issues from emotional pain result in multiple health problems including depression as well as PTSD and harm psychological integrity (Brewin et al., 2022). Psychological distress diminishes working capability while increasing work absences together with decreased moral that leads to wider societal costs and reduced participation (Seong et al., 2020). Females typically experience increased stress because of their dual roles at work and home yet resilient females are more effective at managing stress without experiencing burnout (Khan et al., 2022).

Resilience was defined by Southwick, as a process by which individuals manage to tackle life activities and aims while operating under structures, thoughts, or behaviours in a context of adversity (Southwick et al., 2018). Numerous researches across the world-wide confirms female household staff maintain resilient behavior while enduring tough workplace situations (Martinez et al., 2022). Research across India, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia indicates that strong coping abilities exist in 38% to 47% of female household workers (Nakangwa & Wada, 2021). In Pakistan, analysis of female household workers reveals that resilience affects 35% to 42% of the workforce when they find support in peer networks and attend to both work responsibilities and family responsibilities (Shahid & Syed, 2023).

According to Spector, Job satisfaction emerges from employee emotional reactions to their jobs which relate to workplace delivery of individual needs and expectations while accounting for job specifications and workplace dynamics (Spector, 2020). World-wide researches on job satisfaction among female household labors reports different outcomes. Research conducted in Latin American countries alongside India and Sub-Saharan Africa and China discovered that 28% to 40% of household staff members expressed job satisfaction due to reasonable pay along with respectful employers and superior workplace environments (Liu & Wei, 2023). Generally female domestic workers felt unhappy because their wages were insufficient and they worked excessively long shifts and lacked legal safeguards and faced limited career advancement options (Yu & Wan, 2020). Job satisfaction surveys involving female household workers in Pakistan revealed that most workers reported unsatisfactory experiences applying to 25% to 33% of the total researchers studied (Hassan & Bashir, 2021; Aslam & Butt, 2023).

Female household workers experienced better satisfaction when they developed supportive relationships, maintained stable job situations and received fair wages combined with manageable workloads and essential employee benefits (Faisal, 2024). Job satisfaction creates beneficial outcomes in mental wellness together with physical health by minimizing pressure and burnout which in turn reduces absence days at work to produce increased productivity and well-being (Raza & Iqbal, 2021). Joint family structures benefit their members with both shared work and familial support which helps them cope with stress more easily and enhances their endurance (Shah & Iqbal, 2022). Urban women have better living standards and equal household responsibilities together with better resource accessibility (Aslam et al., 2022). Rural women demonstrate lower satisfaction because they dedicate more hours to work while lacking sufficient backing for their needs (Smith et al., 2020).



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Zulfiqar (2021) performed a Herzberg's two-factor theory analysis of Pakistan female household worker satisfaction which showed connections between emotional distress alongside resilience and coping mechanisms (Zulfiqar et al., 2021). The research has shown that well-managed emotions lead to increased resilience which minimizes psychological stress negatively affecting work satisfaction and motivational levels of this specific group (Khan et al., 2021; Hanif et al., 2022; Gulzar & Hassan, 2022). This comprehensive research shows that economic conditions together with household work influence mental health outcomes throughout multiple cultural settings (Butt & Khan, 2019). During challenging times such as the COVID-19 pandemic resilience aids a person to control their stress levels which improves both their job satisfaction and job performance (Smith & Jackson, 2020).

Rational of the Study:

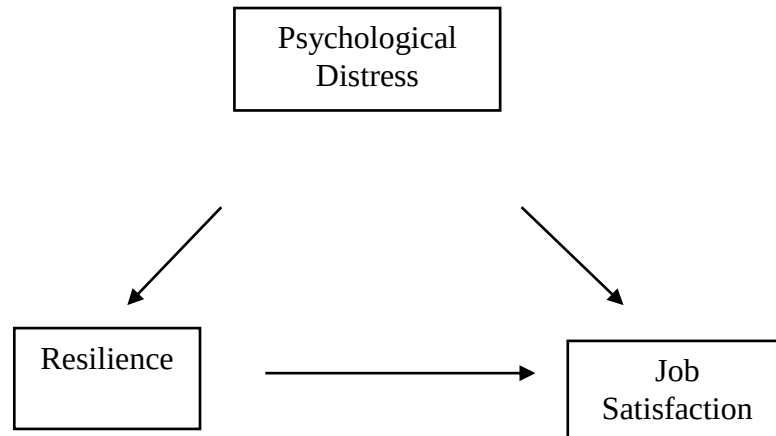
The current study explores the impact of psychological distress, resilience and job satisfaction affect on female household labors. Irrespective of their family system and area of living, household labors experience increased stress and negative health consequences due to unfavourable working conditions such as low wages. The study evaluated psychological distress in addition to job satisfaction and resilience to discover strategies which would enhance both work conditions and mental wellness among household labors. The main objectives of the study are to examine the correlation between psychological distress, resilience and job satisfaction among female household labors. Furthermore, study also maims to explore how the aspects of psychological distress impact job satisfaction in female household labors.

Literature Review:

A research study was conducted in 2021 by Sibanda and Ojewale, by collecting 129 online surveys to understand COVID-19's effects on South African household labor. The authors discovered extensive psychological distress affecting household labor because the workforce faced economic turmoil along with COVID-19 virus anxieties (Sibanda & Ojewale, 2021). Gao and Chiu completed a study of Filipino household labor through standardized assessments (DASS-21 and CD-RISC) on 332 participants to understand psychological distress relationships with resilience. The study revealed that most respondents showed mid-range to severe psychological distress and their distress levels increased with lower resilience among participants who were young and earned less money while working longer hours and experiencing reduced control over their work (Gao & Chiu, 2021).

Household labor faces multiple workplace obstacles which combine to create prolonged hours of work as well as low wages and social detachment while making jobs insecure which produces serious psychological difficulties for employees (McBride & Lucio, 2021). The situation worsens because household workers receive poor moral support and insufficient mental health resources (Hodzi et al., 2021). Research showed that household labor experience significant anxiety (23.8%) and depression disorders (26.7%) rates yet individuals with lower payments spend more time working face higher dangers (Al-Shammari et al., 2021).

The researcher observed a 41.2% measure of psychological distress affecting Iranian household workers who mainly experienced anxiety as their primary cause of distress according to Shafiee. The reported psychological distress reached significant heights among workers with minimal education who performed substantial workloads according to Shafiee et al. (2020).



Source: By Author

A research study was conducted by Zulfiqar in 2021 to investigate job satisfaction and exploitation toward female household workers in Lahore whose informal employment conditions aggravate their situation because of inadequate legal protections. The research evaluates organizational conditions together with work satisfaction through the application of Herzberg's two-factor theory. Many women older than 18 who reside in Lahore are part of this survey to test the relationship linking higher work exploitation with reduced job satisfaction. The study utilizes factor analysis together with simple linear regression for its results analysis. The research makes a substantial advancement in understanding the problems faced by female household workers in Lahore (Zulfiqar, 2021).

Psychological distress produces a continuous cycle with resilience that affects job satisfaction levels. Job satisfaction experiences negative effects from psychological distress because workers become emotionally exhausted while also losing their motivation (Hanif, Naz, & Ahmad, 2022). Resilience functions as a vital factor which creates the link between these cycles. Higher levels of resilience help people avoid psychological distress which leads to increased job satisfaction (Gulzar & Hassan, 2022). Jobs that female household labors handle successfully reduce their psychological distress because they result in higher work satisfaction (Butt & Khan, 2019). Women who lack resilience will develop negative perspectives of their work alongside dissatisfaction and burnout because of the psychological distress they experience at work (Mehmood, 2023).

Objectives of the Study:

The aims of the current study are to:

Examine the correlation between psychological distress, resilience and job satisfaction among female household labors.

Explore how the aspects of psychological distress impact job satisfaction in female household labors.

Hypothesis of the Study:

Following are the hypotheses of study:

H1: There is likely to be a significant relationship between psychological distress and resilience among female household labors.

H2: There is a significant connection between psychological distress and job satisfaction



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among female household labors.

H3: Resilience is likely to predict psychological distress in female household labors.

H4: Job satisfaction is likely to predict psychological distress among female household labors.

Participants and Method:

A correlational research design was used to collect data to make inferences about condition of women working in different workplace. The purpose of this study is to explore effects of psychological distress and resilience on job satisfaction among female household labors. The sample population was based on the women working regularly and respondents are taken overall from different Gujrat and Sialkot public and private institutions. By using purposive sampling technique 500 working ladies were contracted. In order to collect data self-built demographic sheet along with Kessler Psychological Distress-Urdu version scale (Ghafoor, Sitwat & Kausar, 2010) was used. The respondents were asked to rate the 6 items of (KPD) on the Likert scale (1 none of the time to 5 all of the time). The brief resilience scale-Urdu version (Zoaib & Batool, 2020) was used as second assessment tool. This scale includes 6 items with five-point scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), indicating its frequency and intensity of resilience. Lastly, job satisfaction survey-Urdu version (Abbas & Khanam, 2020) was used, it includes 36 items with six-point scale from (strongly disagree to strongly agree). Before the questionnaires were given out, the participants' verbal consent was obtained to confirm their willingness to be involved in the study. Correlation and regression analysis were calculated for descriptive analysis.

Results:

Results revealed that psychological distress has significant negative correlation with resilience and job satisfaction among household labors ($r = -.710^{**}$, $p < .01$; $r = -.663^{**}$, $p < .01$). Table 2 shows that both resilience and job satisfaction are significant predictors of psychological distress. The model explains about 54.5% of the variation in psychological distress, as indicated by the R^2 value (.545). Both variables are statistically significant, as their p-values are less than .05. The findings revealed significant mean difference on basis of family system, nuclear family household workers face greater psychological distress ($M = 17.43$) compared to joint family workers ($M = 14.48$), alongside increased resilience and job satisfaction. Where as, rural workers experience more distress ($M = 17.37$) and lower job satisfaction ($M = 75.40$) than urban workers ($M = 14.39$, $M = 88.17$) (Table.3).

Table 1
Correlations of study variables

Variables	1	2	3
1. Psychological Distress	-		
2. Resilience	-.710**	-	
3. Job Satisfaction	-.663**	.742**	-

** $p < .01$.

Table 2
Regression Coefficient of Psychological distress, Resilience and Job satisfaction

Variable	B	β	SE
Constant	31.959		.757
Resilience	-3.916	-.484	.365



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Job Satisfaction	-.055	-.305	.008
R ²	.545		

N=500. ***p<.001

Table 3

Mean, Standard Deviation of in Relation to Family system and Area of living

Variables	Nuclear		Joint		t	p	Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			
Psychological Distress	17.43	5.239	14.48	6.092	5.771	.000	0.519
Job Satisfaction	72.90	27.96	89.76	34.23	-5.984	.000	-0.539
	Rural		Urban				
	M	SD	M	SD			
Psychological Distress	17.37	5.524	14.39	5.587	5.838	.022	0.536
Job Satisfaction	75.40	30.577	88.17	33.187	-4.472	.049	-0.400

**p<.01

Discussion:

Psychological distress, resilience and job satisfaction can have detrimental effects on people's productivity and well-being. International and Pakistani researches may provide insight to unique obstacles faced by female household labors. According to research evidence shows that anxiety and depression together with stress decrease job satisfaction and motivation among female household labors which leads to diminished engagement (Liu & Wei, 2023; Wang & Schofield, 2021). The scientific research demonstrates resilience functions as a protective factor against workplace stressors which helps decrease anxiety together with depression symptoms (Chong et al., 2021). Research evidence demonstrates that higher levels of psychological distress directly correspond to lower resilience making resilience act as a protective measure against household stress (Mahmood & Mushtaq, 2023). Data analysis reveals that job satisfaction has a negative link with psychological distress which shows better job satisfaction directly leads to diminished distress (Fatima & Khan, 2018).

Women working in household duties show that their effective performance helps decrease their psychological distress and enhances job satisfaction (Nakagawa & Wada, 2021). Women belonging to nuclear family structures have higher psychological distress than those in joint families because they receive less social support and carry more domestic responsibilities (Hodzi et al., 2021). Joint family structures benefit their members with both shared work and familial support which helps them cope with stress more easily and enhances their endurance (Hussain & Ijaz, 2022). Research findings indicate that female family members in joint households perform better on tests of resilience along with satisfaction in their work than their counterparts residing in traditional nuclear households (Farah & Khan, 2021).

The lack of mental health resources combined with heavier workloads make rural women experience higher psychological distress than urban women. The mental health and job contentment of Pakistani women depends heavily on their family structure (Shafeeq, Naz & Awan, 2022). Urban women demonstrate greater job satisfaction compared to rural women (Hassan et al., 2021). Urban women have better living standards and equal household responsibilities together with better resource accessibility (Aslam et al., 2022). Rural women demonstrate lower satisfaction because they dedicate more hours to work



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while lacking sufficient backing for their needs (Smith et al., 2020). The relationship between psychological distress leads to diminished job satisfaction yet resilient individuals manage stress better which results in higher satisfaction levels therefore requiring better mental health resources and supports.

Conclusion of the Study:

According to the research findings psychological distress at high levels makes workers feel less resilient and satisfied with their jobs. This study produces reverse correlations between these factors even though earlier investigations detected no such relationship for female household workers. This investigation stands out due to its position as the first study to research these elements in Pakistan while delivering vital information about Pakistani workers. Previous research examined psychological distress in individuals with disorders or disabilities but our study analyses the working population free from such health conditions.

Limitations and Recommendations:

The findings specifically address household female workers in Sialkot and Gujrat which restricts their application beyond these areas in Pakistan. Either qualitative data collection methods such as interviews or survey data collection approaches should be used together because quantitative surveys alone cannot reveal in-depth participant experience insights. Growing the participant population along with their diversity serves as a recommendation for reaching broader general application.

Implications:

The study provides meaningful implications because it helps create healthier worker relationships combined with better mental support. The study of resilience among this group matters because it enables the support of family and labors performance and well-being.

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