

## Psychological and Emotional Functioning of Elderly in Pakistan a Comparison in Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan

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**Abstract :** In Pakistan, elderly population though increasing but it has been neglected by the researchers and policy makers which resulted in compromised quality of life of the ageing population. Two regions, Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) were selected for comparison as Lahore and Multan (Punjab) are highly urbanized, large cities whereas Gilgit and Skardu are remote and mountain bounded valleys in GB. This study focuses on psychological and emotional functioning of elderly and a series of measures translated and adapted in Urdu language was used to assess quality of life, psychological and mental well-being, actual and perceived social support, attachment patterns, forgiveness, affects, geriatric depression, and emotional disturbance patterns (depression, anxiety, and stress) in elderly. A gender-equated sample of 201 elderly participants, 93 from GB (60 from Gilgit, 33 from Skardu) and 108 from Punjab (61 from Lahore, 47 from Multan) with over 60 years age was collected from the multiethnic community of Punjab and GB through purposive convenient sampling technique. Findings revealed that elderly from Multan have better psychological and emotional functioning, higher levels of social support, tendency to forgive, better mental wellbeing and quality of life and lower levels of stress, anxiety, depression, negative affect and attachment avoidance and anxiety related to partner as compared to the elderly from Lahore. Furthermore, both elderly male of Gilgit & Skardu have adequate mental well-being including subjective well-being and psychological functioning which showed positive aspects of mental health but elderly female are more attached to their home and neighbourhood which shows their social and environmental mastery. Gilgiti elderly male reported more degree of positive affect such as enthusiasm, active, alertness, excitement and strong whereas among elderly from Skardu shows more negative affect i.e. aversive mood states, irritability, hostility, and general distress. The need of psychosocial therapy and family counseling for the elderly in urban areas has been identified, which can facilitate in reducing or preventing the depressive and stressful tendencies. The findings are expected to have implications for improving quality of life of the elderly, designing interventions, support system and rehabilitation services to help them. However, findings may attract attention of policy makers and researchers as currently this is the most neglected population in Pakistan.

**Keywords :** psychological, emotional, aging, elderly, quality of life

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