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Women's Health In Rural Areas Of Developing Countries – An Overview Of Literatures

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Abstract: The present paper analyses the status of rural women's physical health in a few developing countries in Africa and South Asian countries. It reviews the impact of socio-cultural burdens and, mental state on the physical health of women. The matters such as health needs, widespread women's ignorance, women's rights, women's access to available resources, nutritional stress, fertility and reproductive health, gender discrimination, and awareness of reproductive health infections are also considered. Women face distinct health challenges compared to men, highlighting the need for targeted and comprehensive research on women's health. This paper encourages researchers in the field to conduct diverse studies aimed at protecting and improving women's overall health.

Keywords:- Rural, Women, Health, Developing Countries

Introduction

Women are not confined to traditional roles; they perform in various formal and informal sectors. Women are now part of Business, politics, scientific progress, and Bureaucracy. Their active participation is necessary for creating a balanced, inclusive, and sustainable world. And when it comes to developing countries, women are the backbone of the rural realm.

This paper evaluates the sociopsychological burdens of rural women and their impact on their physical well-being. The condition of women in rural areas is almost the same. However, evaluating the extent to which the circumstances are unfavorable is a matter of discussion.

Material and Methods

The literature review was collected from various journals of National and International level related to the problems of rural women from developing countries. The present narrative review included studies conducted on the social issues of rural women and their relation to mental health and physical well-being.

Objective

To evaluate the relationship between the physical wellbeing of rural women and sociopsychological burdens on rural women.

Review of various studies related to Rural Women

1. **Babati Town, Tanzania Study** – The research aims to study the influence of culture on Non-Communicable Diseases. The research mentions overweight and obesity as an epidemic. Heart attack, hypertension, and obesity were considered diseases of high-income countries but the increasing rate of these problems in Tanzania (which is one of the poorest countries in the world) was an alarming condition. The increased presence of NCDs among the population in Babati shows that it is necessary to investigate the cause of this increase. The study showed that the prevalence of overweight in Babati is not only caused by the increasing process of urbanization, a growing middle class, new ways of labor where physical activity is not necessary, and changes in food and eating

habits. Attitudes, knowledge, and perceptions issues have proved to have a much higher impact.

2. **Mental Health of Rural Women(2020):-** This research paper studies the sociological and psychological challenges faced by women leaders in the corporate sector specifically in the IT sector and strategies opted by women to overcome those challenges.
3. **Psychosocial Burdens of Women in India (2021):** This research has evaluated the different factors responsible for social and psychological burdens on Indian women. These factors include societal value systems, culture, tradition, illiteracy, and poverty. And the impact of social issues responsible for mental health issues.
4. **Social determinants of health in rural Indian women & effects on intervention participation (2023):-** This research is on finding current social determinants responsible for the physical health of rural women. This study found that spousal support, followed by family support was the key determinant in the physical of rural women. Others were time and stable housing.
5. **Sociopsychological factors inhibiting treatment-seeking Behavior among women with VVF in northern Nigeria (2019):-** This research evaluates the sociopsychological factors in the health-seeking behavior of women suffering from vesicovaginal fistula (VVF) in northern Nigeria. This paper has utilized a mixed-method research design.
6. **Ravi Pandey, Purnima Awasthi, Pramod Kumar(2023) Social Justice among Adolescents and Rural Community: A Psycho-Social Perspective-** The present review focuses on adolescents' perspective taking in the context of social justice as demonstrated by their awareness and interpretations. In this paper, the focus is laid on literature related to mental health and social justice, a social perspective that contributes to our knowledge of adolescent development of comprehension of social diversity. It provides the theoretical empirical background for observing adolescents' perspective-taking capacities in the context of social justice.
7. **Ali Siddiqui, Tania Shabir Shaikh(2020) Examining the Psychosocial Barriers of Female Students in Academic Settings of Sindh: The Case of Public Sector University of Sindh, Pakistan-** The twelve Psychosocial barriers are highlighted in this study. They are analyzed to know about the extent in female students in one of the Public sector universities of Sindh, Pakistan. The quantitative design was adopted, and a questionnaire was used as the instrument to measure percentages and frequencies. A five-point Likert Scale was selected for the process of data collection measurement from thirty female participants of the English department.
8. **Dr. Jayaben H. Vadhel(2023) PSYCHO-SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND PROBLEMS OF THE RURAL-AGED WOMEN-** This paper studied the socio-economic conditions and psycho-social problems of the rural female aged. And analyzed the factors fostering happy aging through qualitative analysis
9. **Sharma, Sudhaa; Mahajan, Neha(2018) Menopausal symptoms and its effect on quality of life in urban versus rural women A cross-sectional study-** This paper analyzes the menopause-related symptoms and its impact on quality of life in postmenopausal women from an urban and rural area.
10. **Alfred Grotjahn(1915):-** Gave the postulates that disease from a social point of view is determined by the frequency with which it occurs. Social factors determine the origin and causes of diseases, but these diseases may in turn exert an influence on social conditions through their outcomes.
11. **Carstairs:-** He was the first person to systematically study the Indian traditional system of medicine and faith. He did his study in Rajasthan on healers, curers, and indigenous medical practitioners.
12. **Marriot (1965) :-** He observed and reported that the members of the same family and same village have varied medical beliefs and follow widely divergent practices.
13. **World Bank,1993:-** "About one-third of the total disease burden among women aged 15-44 years in the developing countries is linked to health problems arising out of pregnancy, childbirth abortion and reproductive tract infections".
14. **Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) (2018):-** studies on lifestyle disease. According to the ICMR India State-Level Disease Burden Study report "India: Health of the Nation's States", the estimated proportion of all deaths due to Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) has increased from 37.09% in 1990 to 61.8% in 2016.
15. **Min Qin, Athina Vlachantoni, Maria Evandrou (2018)-** The purpose of this study is to analyze the internal consistency, and external validity of the 12-item General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12) among older adults in India.
16. **Qaf Qurat Ul Ain1*, Malik Aabid Rasool(2024) ; Women's Health and the Impact of Gender Roles and Expectations: Challenges and Opportunities-** his study primarily examines the barriers to advancing gender equality and improving women's health outcomes. The study focuses on how

gender roles and expectations related to caregiving, household responsibilities, and work have a significant impact on women's health, limiting their access to resources for economic empowerment, education, and healthcare.

17. **Ruchi Dixit, Aradhana Bhandari(2018) Women's knowledge and practice regarding primary health care services in Garhwal region of Uttarakhand-** This study projected to evaluate the knowledge and practice of women regarding health care services and their source of information. Methods: Stratified multistage random sampling of the target population was done. In the first stage, villages were selected by simple random sampling technique.
18. **Kaaren Mathias,¹ Hira Pant,² Manju Marella(2018) Multiple barriers to participation for people with psychosocial disability in Dehradun district, North India: a cross-sectional study-** This study used a population-based cross-sectional survey to describe the prevalence of psychosocial disability and unmet need for access to services in North India.
19. **Intekhab Hossain¹ & Syed Abul Hafiz Moinuddin(2013) Interrogating Psycho-Social Problems of Muslim Women Indian Experience-** This paper examines and emphasizes the issues of psycho-social circumstances of Indian Muslim women in a sociological perspective with a special indication to their socioeconomic, employment, educational attainment, rights privileges, hindrances and restrictions, role and status as well as their multifarious problems from a socio-religious stance an empirical context.
20. **Sudeshna Ghosh, Subrata Lahiri, Nitin Datta(2017) Understanding Happiness and Psychological Wellbeing Among Young Married Women in Rural India-** The paper examines happiness and psychological well-being and its influence by various aspects of marriage among young married women. Multistage sampling technique was used to interview 654 married women, 13-24 years in rural West Bengal.

Table.1

Authors	Year	Location of Study	Methods	Target Population	Outcomes
Isabelle Rosén, Lise-Lotte Hallman	2014	Tanzania	Qualitative research method	Non-Communicable disease people	Culture has a direct link to an increase in obesity despite the availability of information.
Prabha S Chandra, Diana Ross, Preeti Aggarwal	2020	Rural India	Qualitative research method	Married Women	It showed that Indian problems are unique and require Indian-specific solutions.
Ram, Dushad; Mathew, Akash	2021	Rural India	Narrative Review	Studies in women	Psychosocial burden has an impact on overall mental health. This is an issue that needs to be addressed at all levels.
Aarthi Arun and Manohar Prasad Prabhu	2023	India-Kote and Saragur in Karnataka	Quantitative Study:- Cross-sectional	Women aged 18–45 who have expressed interest in conceiving a child shortly.	This study found that spousal support, followed by family support was the most relevant social determinant of

					health in Indian rural women.
Muhammad Anka Nasiru, Faruk U. Abubakar	2019	NORTHERN NIGERIA	CONCEPT UAL MODEL	Rural Women	
Ravi P. Pandey, Purnima Awasthi, Pramod Kumar, Vivek Singh	2023	India	Qualitative Study	Adolescent Girls and Boys	The psychosocial Problems have emerged as a threat in their whole development. Health specialists can't ignore this aspect of their health problem.
Ali Siddiqui, Tania Shabir Shaikh	2020	Sindh, Pakistan	Case Study	Female College Students	The effects of psychosocial barriers on female students have rationally proved to be the major cause of educational deprivation in Pakistan.
Sharma, Sudhaa; Mahajan, Neha	2015	India	Quantitative Study	Urban And Rural Women	The high proportions and the scores of MRS were observed in both rural and the urban women. The severity of symptoms was found more distressing for rural women.
Dr.Jayaben, H. Vadhel	2014	Rajkot district of Gujarat, India	Qualitative Study	Rural Women above 60 years of age.	The study showed The majority of the aged (86.5 per cent) were worried about their future while 46 per cent of the female aged contributed to the up keep of the family and were involved in decision-making in the family.
Malik Aabid Rasool	2022	India	The study used a	Women	This study provides a

			mixed-methods approach		comprehensive understanding of how gender norms and expectations affect women's health, underscoring the need for gender-sensitive interventions to promote health equity and enhance women's lives.
Manzoor Ahmad Malik,S. P. Singh,Falguni Pattanaik	2022	India	Quantitative Study	Aged Population (Secondary Data from United Nations Population Fund for Ageing (UNFPA) survey)	Older adults with higher education levels have a lower prevalence of work stress (35.8%) versus illiterates (57.2%). Similarly, the prevalence rate of work stress is higher among widows and separated older adults than married ones (51.2%).
Manmeet Kaur,B.Mishra,Prakash Singh, Archana Singh	2007	Faizabad district, India	Qualitative study	Household Women	The women under study wanted that education to girls should be provided free of cost and more and more educational institutions should be established in nearby areas.
Tanuja Mohapatra	2011	Cuttack and Bhubaneswar India	Explorative-cum-Descriptive research design	Elderly women (60+)	It was also found that (61.2 percent) of the respondents used to be upset over small issues easily and feel being disliked by their children in their peer groups (38.8 percent). 75 percent of

					the elderly women are not aware of any Geriatric Welfare Schemes.
Ram, Dushad; Mathew, Akash	2021	India	Narrative Review	Women	Psychosocial burden has an impact on overall mental health. This is an issue that needs to be addressed at all levels.
Saeid Karimi and Sahra Mohammadimehr	2022	Rural Area - Iran	Quantitative Study	Iranian rural women.	The results showed significant positive correlations between any pair of biospheric value, ecological world view, awareness .
Jason Hung	2018	Rural Area- China	Quantitative Study- regression analysis	Male and Female- Rural Area	When economic status and educational status remain constant, female samples continue to encounter more sociopsychological challenges than their male counterparts
R David,J.D Sarkar, K.K Shrivastav,M.L Sharma	2008	Bilaspur district Chhattisgarh, India	Qualitative Study	ST Women	
Suresh Gosh, Subrata Lahiri, Nitin Datta	2017	West Bengal Rural Area	Quantitative Study	Young Married Women	No significant association was found between happiness and type of marriage and the husband's currently staying with his wife.
Mihiretu Alemayehu & Mengistu Meskele	2017	Southern Ethiopia	Quantitative Study - A cross-sectional study	Rural Women	This study revealed that a woman's health care decision making autonomy is broadly influenced by

					her age, husband's literacy, household economy, family size, and her involvement in income generating activities.
Kamlesh Singh, Jasieen Kaur, Dalbir Singh	2014	Rural Area-Haryana	Qualitative Study	Rural Women(15-60 years)	The study revealed a significant correlation between subjective and psychological well-being.

Conclusion

The challenges faced by working women in rural areas of developing countries are multifaceted and complex. Married women often bear the dual responsibility of managing their households and contributing to their family's livelihood, which places significant strain on their time and energy. Studies have shown that increasing work pressure, coupled with limited resources and support, negatively impacts the psychological well-being of rural working women. High levels of stress, often exacerbated by inadequate access to healthcare, education, and social support systems, can lead to physical, psychological, and behavioral distress. Stress-related issues remain a predominant concern among rural working women in these regions, requiring targeted interventions and policy measures to address their unique challenges.

There is a significant need for extensive research to provide a comprehensive understanding of the health status of rural women. As women face distinct health challenges compared to men, it is crucial to undertake targeted and integrated studies on women's health. This paper, therefore, urges researchers in the field to conduct diverse and in-depth investigations aimed at protecting and improving the overall health and well-being of women.

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