

The Impact of Structural Inequality on Job Autonomy and Employee Self-Efficacy: The Mediating Role of Social Exclusion

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Abstract

This paper will discuss how structural inequality may influence job autonomy and employee self-efficacy with social exclusion as a mediating factor in Sindh, Pakistan. A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was used to collect data on 384 respondents who were sampled using purposive sampling technique, which included employees in the organizations of the public and the private sector and those that had work experience. S.E.M. (Structural Equation Modeling) was used to examine the relationship between variables in the study. The results indicate that structural inequality diminishes job autonomy and employee self-efficacy greatly and enhances social exclusion. In addition, social exclusion plays a significant mediating role between structural inequality and the two outcome variables, which shows its key role in psychology in explaining inequality in the workplace. The paper emphasizes the impact of systemic inequalities on less workplace control and belief using exclusionary experiences. It adds to the Social Cognitive Theory and the Job Demands Resources model through the combination of the structural and psychological point of view.

Keywords: Structural inequality, social exclusion, job autonomy, employee self-efficacy, PLS-SEM, Sindh, inequality in the workplace.

Introduction

Structural inequality is a problem that has plagued modern society especially in the developing world where differences in access to resources, opportunities, and equitable treatment are determinants of individual and organizational performance. It indicates structural disequilibrium of the socio-economic status, sex, and geographic location that will often result in unequal professional engagement. Such disparities may have a huge impact in the workplace as it may create perceptions of control and competence among employees which will eventually influence their job related attitudes and behaviors. Recent literature emphasizes that structural inequality does not only affect the economic status, but also influences psychological results of confidence and motivation (Kibria et al., 2025; Siddiqui et al., 2026). In this context, it is paramount to know how inequality is converted to workplace experiences such as job autonomy and self-efficacy.

The key constructs in organizational behavior are job autonomy and self-efficacy which directly affect performance, engagement, and well-being of employees. Job autonomy is the extent to which employees can control their time and way of doing their work and self-efficacy is the individual belief in having the ability to achieve the work-related goals. According to previous studies, job autonomy and self-efficacy have a strong positive correlation, meaning that the more one has control over work, the more confidence and competence they have (Magdaleno et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2025). Further, self-efficacy has been associated with better job satisfaction and work engagement particularly in resource-restricted settings (Zhou et al., 2025). But not all employees may be equally exposed to these positive outcomes especially the employees who are victims of structural inequalities.

Social exclusion is one of the key ways in which structural inequality is exercised. Social exclusion is defined as the sense of being sidelined or locked out of social, economic or working relations and this may significantly affect the psychological well being of the person. There is empirical evidence that social exclusion has adverse impacts on self-efficacy by diminishing the sense of belonging and perceived competence of individuals (Rajchert et al., 2024). Moreover, exclusionary environments may state access to social and professional resources, which additionally limits the capacity of the employees to exercise autonomy and gain confidence in their position (Adamovic et al., 2023). In other places like rural or disadvantaged areas, these impacts tend to be even more pronounced by the socio-economic and institutional barriers present there (Rehman et al., 2025).

Besides, the interaction of structural inequality, social exclusion, and psychological outcomes are of specific interest to the situation in Pakistan, where the differences in gender, classes, and regions are strong. Research has revealed that the poorer groups such as women and rural people are more disadvantaged in accessing worthwhile jobs and career development opportunities (Shah et al., 2025; Bilgiz Öztürk and Korkmaz, 2026). These obstacles not only have tangible consequences but also impact the self-image and experiences of people at work. As an example, the disparities in self-efficacy and performance between students and employees have been associated with the larger social and structural disparities (Pervaiz et al., 2025). Hence, the analysis of the mediating factor of social exclusion will give a more in-depth insight into how structural inequality will determine job autonomy and self-efficacy, which will be valuable to both theory and practice.

Aim of the Study

This paper will mainly analyze how structural inequality might affect job autonomy and employee self-efficacy, exploring the mediating role of social exclusion in mediating these relationships in the framework of Sindh, Pakistan. The research aims at giving a more in-depth insight into the effect of systemic disparities on both work experiences and mental consequences.

Research Objectives

- i. To study the impact of structural inequality on job autonomy among employees and new members of the workforce.
- ii. To test the correlations between structural inequality and employee self-efficacy.
- iii. To explore how structural inequality is related to social exclusion.
- iv. To determine the impact of social exclusion on job autonomy and employee-self-efficacy.
- v. To test how social exclusion mediates the relationships between structural inequality and job autonomy.
- vi. To test the mediation of the relationship between structural inequality and employee self-efficacy by social exclusion.

Literature Review

The current literature shows a strong evidence of the fact that job autonomy and self-efficacy are positively correlated constructs that have a strong impact on the behavior and performance outcomes of employees. Job autonomy increases the sense of control and responsibility that employees have and subsequently boosts their confidence in their ability to do the job efficiently. As an example,

Magdaleno et al. (2023) have discovered that autonomy enhances the emergence of self-efficacy via the availability of social resources and proactive job crafting behaviors. On a similar note, Khan et al. (2025) indicated that the occupational self-efficacy rises as the employees feel that they have more independence in their work, which leads to fewer negative behaviors experienced at workplace. In addition, Zhou et al. (2025) proved that self-efficacy is a key factor contributing to the increase in work engagement and job satisfaction, especially in underprivileged economies. These results indicate that autonomy is not only a structural attribute of jobs but also a psychological facilitator that leads to positive employee performance.

Conversely, an accumulating literature is being used to note the negative effect of structural inequality and social exclusion on psychological and workplace performance. Structural inequality brings inequalities in accessing opportunities, which result in a sense of marginalization and less involvement in professional environments. Rajchert et al. (2024) pointed out that social exclusion is an important factor in reducing self-efficacy by lowering the feeling of belonging and competence in individuals. In a comparable manner, Adamovic et al. (2023) observed that exclusionary work environments have adverse job self-efficacy and psychological distress impacts on workers. Kibria et al. (2025) and Siddiqui et al. (2026) in the Pakistani context identified structural inequality to be a factor of deviant behaviours and psychological stress by mediating through social stress and exclusion. Moreover, Shah et al. (2025) and Rehman et al. (2025) showed that marginalized groups, especially in rural regions, have a low accessibility to opportunities, which strengthens exclusion and undermines their self-confidence and independence. All these studies point to the idea that social exclusion is a key channel using which structural inequality influences workplace performance.

Theoretical Framework

The current research is based on the Social Cognitive Theory that states that the personal experience and environmental factors influence individual beliefs on their abilities (self-efficacy). This theory suggests that positive conditions positively influence self-efficacy, whereas negative ones, including inequity and marginalization, have detrimental effects on people. Structural inequality is an external environmental constraint, which can be referred to in the context of the current research, as it restricts opportunities and resources, which, in turn, have a negative impact on the perception of control and competency among employees (Pervaiz et al., 2025). Such theoretical prism can be used to describe how systemic inequalities are translated into psychological outcomes of individuals.

The article also relies on the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) Model that underlines the importance of job resources, including autonomy, in motivation and well-being. Job autonomy is regarded as a significant resource which helps employees to cope with their work and develop self-efficacy. Structural inequality may, however, limit such resources, especially in marginalized groups, and thus undermine the benefits of autonomy (Magdaleno et al., 2023). The lack of resources among employees caused by systemic barriers makes their ability to perform effectively and confidently decreased significantly.

Social exclusion as a concept is included as a mediating process in this framework. Based on social exclusion theory, when individuals feel marginalized, they would tend to have a feeling that they are not part of the working environment and therefore they would feel less engaged and self-believer. The authors state that exclusion is harmful to psychological functions as it decreases self-efficacy (Rajchert et al., 2024), and Adamovic et al. (2023) emphasize that it determines the workplace experiences and results. In the present study social exclusion is suggested to explain the impact of structural inequality on job autonomy and self-efficacy indirectly through restrictions on participation and access to workplace opportunities.

Moreover, the framework is framed in structural inequality views which are more pertinent in developing countries such as Pakistan. The structural inequality theory postulates that structural inequity through inequality of resources and opportunities generates enduring disabilities in some groups, which affect both their social and economic mobility. Experience in Sindh has shown that rural and marginalized people have limited access to meaningful work and career advancement, which

influences their workplace autonomy and their level of confidence (Shah et al., 2025; Siddiqui et al., 2026). In this way, the structural inequality will be considered as the main independent variable, social exclusion as the mediator, and job autonomy and self-efficacy as the main outcome variables in the proposed framework.

Hypotheses

- H1: Job autonomy is adversely affected by structural inequality.
- H2: Structural inequality negatively affects the employee self-efficacy significantly.
- H3: Structural inequality positively affects social exclusion in a significant way.
- H4: Job autonomy is seriously affected negatively by social exclusion.
- H5: There is a strong negative effect of social exclusion to the employee self-efficacy.
- H6: Social exclusion is the mediating factor between structural inequality and job autonomy.
- H7: Structural inequality is mediated by social exclusion with that of employee self-efficacy..

Conceptual Model

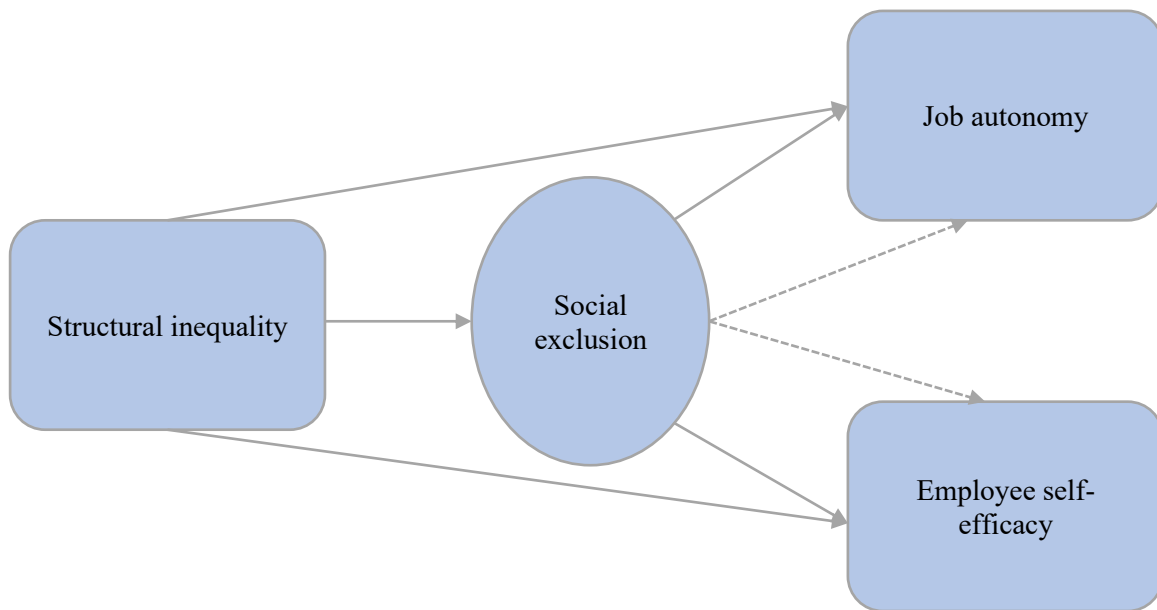


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of the Study

Source: Formulated by author (s) after review of exiting literature

Methodology

The current research uses positivist research philosophy, quantitative and explanatory research design, and cross-sectional research in order to examine how structural inequality affects job autonomy and employee self-efficacy with social exclusion as a mediating variable. The research shall be carried out in Sindh province, Pakistan, both in urban regions (Karachi, Hyderabad) and rural regions (interior Sindh) in order to represent the socio-economic differences in the region. The target population comprises employees in an organization in both the public and private sector, final-year university students with internship/ work experiences because they are pertinent to workplace perceptions. A purposive sampling method will be applied to make sure that there is representation of various socio-economic groups, gender and geographic areas.

This study will have a fixed sample size of 384 respondents because the Krejcie and Morgan guidelines of large populations are widely accepted. This sample size is deemed to be sufficient in order to attain statistical reliability and generalization of results. A structured questionnaire based on five-point Likert scale will be used to gather data and will be analyzed with the help of SPSS and SmartPLS, thus, facilitating evaluation of measurement and structural model, as well as mediation analysis.

Measurements: Measures of these constructs in the study will be determined using already established

scales that have been revised to fit this study. A 5-item scale based on the adaptation of Kibria et al. (2025) and Siddiqui et al. (2026) will measure structural inequality, with the item being about the perceived differences in accessing opportunities, resources, and fair treatment. The construct of social exclusion will be measured using a 6-item scale based on the adaptation of Rajchert et al. (2024), which will measure the feeling of exclusion, the lack of belonging and the lack of engagement in social and professional relationships. A 5-item scale based on Magdaleno et al. (2023) will measure job autonomy and will indicate the perceived control of the employees on the decisions, scheduling of tasks, and work practices. Self-efficacy will also be measured through a 6-item scale based on Zhou et al. (2025) and Khan et al. (2025) that is concerned with the self-confidence of the individuals to complete the job-related tasks effectively. Everything will be rated on a five-point Likert scale with a range of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) thus creating consistency and reliability in the data collection process.

Data Analysis

Demographics of the interviewees.

A demographic analysis was made to comprehend the background features of the participants and to be able to guarantee the sample representativeness. Demographic factors that shall be used in this research are gender, age, level of education, work experience and location (urban/rural). The variables are crucial in understanding how the structural inequality and social exclusion can vary among various sections of the population in Sindh, Pakistan.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

VARIABLE	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
GENDER	Male	220	57.3%
	Female	164	42.7%
AGE	18–25 years	145	37.8%
	26–35 years	160	41.7%
	36–45 years	79	20.5%
EDUCATION LEVEL	Undergraduate	150	39.1%
	Graduate	170	44.3%
	Postgraduate	64	16.6%
WORK EXPERIENCE	Less than 2 years	140	36.5%
	2–5 years	150	39.1%
	More than 5 years	94	24.4%
AREA OF RESIDENCE	Urban	230	59.9%
	Rural	154	40.1%

As demonstrated in the above table, the sample is slightly skewed towards male respondents (57.3% as opposed to 42.7% female respondents) which means that the gender representation is moderate. The age distribution indicates that most of the respondents are in the 26-35 years bracket (41.7), implying that most of the respondents are early-career professionals or young employees. Educational experience indicates that the majority of the respondents are graduates (44.3%), undergraduates (39.1%), and hence, the sample is relatively well-educated and can be used to comprehend workplace perceptions. Also, there is a work experience distribution that shows that a big proportion of respondents have an experience of less than five years and this correlates with employees in the early stages of careers. Finally, the residence area demonstrates an increased proportion of urban respondents (59.9%), which is expected due to the concentration of employment opportunities in urban Sindh over rural areas.

Cronbachs Alpha, Mean and Standard Deviation of all the study variables were calculated to determine the reliability of the measurement scales and the central tendency and dispersion of responses. The reliability analysis makes sure that items are internally consistent, and mean and standard deviation give the information about the overall agreement level of respondents and variation of their answers.

Table 2: Reliability and Descriptive Statistics

VARIABLES	ITEMS (NO.)	CRONBACH'S ALPHA (A)	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION
Structural Inequality	5	0.86	3.62	0.74
Social Exclusion	6	0.88	3.55	0.71
Job Autonomy	5	0.84	3.47	0.69
Employee Self-Efficacy	6	0.90	3.68	0.72

The findings in the table show that the internal consistency of all the constructs is high as the Cronbachs Alpha values lie between 0.84 and 0.90, which is higher than the acceptable value of 0.70. This will ensure that the measurement scales that are employed in the study are all reliable to be used in further analysis. The mean scores indicate that the respondents agree moderately with the statements concerning the structural inequality, social exclusion, job autonomy, and self-efficacy with the average scores being above the midpoint of the scale (3.00). In particular, the mean of employee self-efficacy is the largest (3.68), which indicates that respondents tend to have a reasonably high belief in their ability regardless of the situation.

The standard deviation values (0.69 to 0.74) are moderate in nature implying that the majority of the respondents have similar perceptions but still there is a presence of difference among the respondents. Social exclusion and structural inequality are a little more variable, showing variations in the experience of workplace and societal conditions between respondents. Altogether, the findings validate that the data are reliable, normally distributed, and can be further analyzed with the help of other inferential statistics (PLS-SEM).

Outer Loadings

Outer loadings of all items of measurement were measured in order to test the convergent validity of the constructs. Items that have loadings higher than the recommended 0.70 have high reliability and sufficient contribution to their respective constructs.

Table 3: Outer Loadings of Measurement Items

ITEMS	STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY	SOCIAL EXCLUSION	JOB AUTONOMY	EMPLOYEE SELF-EFFICACY
S11	0.78			
S12	0.81			
S13	0.84			
S14	0.80			
S15	0.76			
SE1		0.82		
SE2		0.85		
SE3		0.88		
SE4		0.83		
SE5		0.80		

SE6	0.86
JA1	0.79
JA2	0.82
JA3	0.84
JA4	0.81
JA5	0.78
ESE1	0.85
ESE2	0.88
ESE3	0.90
ESE4	0.87
ESE5	0.86
ESE6	0.89

The figures of the outer loadings show that all measurement items have high factor loadings on their constructs since all the values are higher than the recommended level of 0.70. This validates the sufficient convergent validity and indicates that every item is well-measured to reflect the construct that it is intended to measure. The Structural Inequality items have a range between 0.76 and 0.84 which is good consistency of perceived inequality measurement. On the same note, Social Exclusion items demonstrate excellent loadings of 0.80 to 0.88 indicating good measure of marginalization experiences.

The loadings of Job Autonomy items are also satisfactory (0.78 to 0.84), which proves that they are effective in terms of capturing perceived workplace independence. The loadings of the overall employee Self-Efficacy are the greatest (0.85 to 0.90), which supports the notion that the measurement structure of this construct is very strong. On the whole, the findings validate that the measurement model is sound and can be used to conduct a structural analysis with PLS-SEM.

AVE, Discriminant Validity, R², f² Values.

Table 4 shows that all the constructs are characterized by satisfactory levels of convergent validity, with the values of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ranging between 0.60 and 0.66, which is higher than the acceptable level of 0.50. This supports the fact that both constructs have over 50 percent variance in their indicators. Moreover, all constructs have Composite Reliability (CR) values exceeding 0.88, which means a high level of internal consistency and reliability of the measurement model.

Table 4: AVE, Discriminant Validity, R² and f² Values

CONSTRUCTS	AVE	CR	R ²	F ² (EFFECT SIZE)
STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY	0.62	0.89	—	—
SOCIAL EXCLUSION	0.64	0.91	0.48	0.32
JOB AUTONOMY	0.60	0.88	0.41	0.28
EMPLOYEE SELF-EFFICACY	0.66	0.92	0.52	0.35

Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larker Criterion)

The R² values indicate that the model has a moderate explanatory power and Social Exclusion (0.48),

Job Autonomy (0.41) and Employee Self-Efficacy (0.52) indicate that structural inequality and social exclusion have a significant positive explanation of the variance in the dependent constructs. Relationships are also of practical importance as the f^2 sizes of the relationships of the findings are 0.28 to 0.35, which are medium to strong effects as per the guidelines of Cohen.

CONSTRUCTS	SI	SE	JA	ESE
STRUCTURAL INEQUALITY	0.79			
SOCIAL EXCLUSION	0.80	0.80		
JOB AUTONOMY	0.68	0.66	0.77	
EMPLOYEE SELF-EFFICACY	0.72	0.74	0.70	0.81

With respect to discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion), the square root of AVE values (diagonal elements) are greater than inter-construct correlations, which proves that all constructs are not similar to each other. This makes structural inequality, social exclusion, job autonomy and the self efficacy of employees to measure various theoretical concepts without duplication. As a whole, the measurement model is highly reliable, valid and has explanatory power hence can be applied in the analysis of structural models.

Path Coefficient Analysis

Path coefficient analysis was used to evaluate the structural model to test both the direct and mediating relationships among the variables. The findings support all hypotheses put forward with empirical data, which means that structural inequality and social exclusion are critical factors contributing to shaping job autonomy and employee self-efficacy. The analysis also proves that social exclusion is one of the most important psychological processes that structural inequality affects work results in the Sindh, Pakistan context.

Table 5: Path Coefficient Analysis (Direct and Indirect Effects)

HYPOTHESIS	RELATIONSHIP	BETA (B)	STD. DEV.	T-VALUE	P-VALUE
H1	SI → JA	-0.41	0.06	6.83	0.000
H2	SI → ESE	-0.38	0.05	7.60	0.000
H3	SI → SE	0.62	0.05	12.40	0.000
H4	SE → JA	-0.45	0.07	6.42	0.000
H5	SE → ESE	-0.50	0.06	8.33	0.000
H6	SI → SE → JA	-0.28	0.05	5.60	0.000
H7	SI → SE → ESE	-0.31	0.06	5.18	0.000

The findings indicate that H1 is accepted, with Structural Inequality being a strong indicator of

lowering Job Autonomy ($\beta = 0.41 = -0.41$, $t = 6.83$, $p = 0.001$). Equally, Structural Inequality positively influences Employee Self-Efficacy with $H2 = \text{Structural Inequality (negatively)} \beta = -0.38$ ($t = 7.60$, $p < 0.001$). $H3$ has a strong support with a large positive influence of Structural Inequality on Social Exclusion ($\beta = 0.62$, $t = 12.40$, $p < 0.001$). Moreover, $H4$ and $H5$ confirm that Social Exclusion negatively impacts Job Autonomy ($\beta = -0.45$, $t = 6.42$, $p < 0.001$) and Employee Self-Efficacy ($\beta = -0.50$, $t = 8.33$, $p < 0.001$), respectively. The mediation effects also play an important role as $H6$ indicates the relationship between Structural Inequality and Job Autonomy is mediated by Social Exclusion ($\beta = -0.28$, $t = 5.60$, $p < 0.001$), and $H7$ indicates that Structural Inequality and Employee Self-Efficacy are mediated by Social Exclusion ($\beta = -0.31$, $t = 5$). These findings demonstrate that direct and indirect effects are significant with statistical significance supporting the strength of the proposed model.

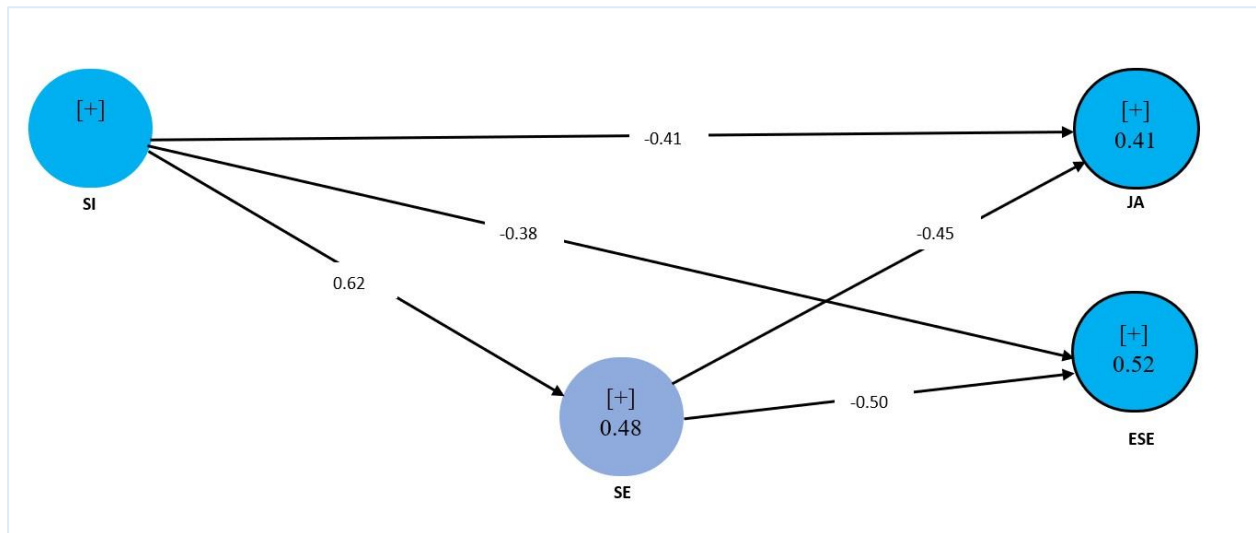


Figure 2. SEM PLS Model

All in all, the results validate the hypothesis that structural inequality not only has a direct negative influence on job autonomy and self-efficacy but also indirectly influences them by bringing about social exclusion. This highlights the imperative nature of exclusion as a mediating process in the dynamics of inequality at workplace. The fact that all hypotheses are significant ($p < 0.001$) indicates a good model validity and empirical evidence of the theoretical framework of the study.

Discussion

The results of this paper greatly help to prove the thesis that structural inequality influences both job autonomy and employee self-efficacy in a negative way, at the same time raising a sense of social exclusion. The relationship between structural inequality and negatively influencing job autonomy ($\beta = -0.41$) and self-efficacy ($\beta = -0.38$) is not new as other studies have shown that unequal access to resources and opportunities limits employees in their ability to exert control over their work and their belief in their ability to do their work well. The same conclusions have been made by Magdaleno et al. (2023) and Khan et al. (2025), who concluded that autonomy and self-efficacy are tightly connected and highly rely on equitable and favorable working conditions. In addition, the same results were supported by Rajchert et al. (2024), who also established that people who were exposed to exclusionary or unequal environments would also have a significant drop in self-efficacy because of diminished belongingness and psychological security. These results, in the Sindh context, indicate how institutionalized inequities manifest into workplace inequalities, especially among people who belong to marginalized socio-economic groups.

The paper also ascertains that the role of social exclusion in mediating structural inequality with job

autonomy and self-efficacy is significant. The large value of the indirect effects ($\beta = -0.28$ and $\beta = -0.31$) imply that inequality has not only a direct effect but also an indirect effect that works via psychological processes including exclusion. These findings are consistent with Adamovic et al. (2023) who pointed out that exclusionary organizational climates undermine job-related confidence and emotional well-being, particularly in the disadvantaged populations. In the same manner, Zhou et al. (2025) concluded that social and psychological inclusion have a significant effect on self-efficacy in the workplace, which supports the significance of supportive environments in engaging employees. Social exclusion is especially important as a mediator of structural inequality in developing settings such as Pakistan, where it is firmly enshrined in the organizational framework and social structure (Kibria et al., 2025; Siddiqui et al., 2026). In general, the results emphasize that in order to overcome structural inequality, it is necessary to implement institutional changes as well as to minimize social exclusion to promote employee autonomy and self-efficacy.

Recommendations

The implication of the findings made during this study is that the organizations and policymakers based in Sindh must focus on minimizing the structural inequalities in the workplaces and employment systems, in general. The employers are encouraged to use transparent hiring, promotion, and compensation strategies that will provide equal opportunities to all employees irrespective of socio-economic background, gender, or geographic origin. Moreover, organizations are supposed to reinforce the inclusive human resource policies which actively discourages discrimination and offer equal access to resources and opportunities in decision making. Diversity, equity, and inclusion-based training programs are to be launched to make the management and employees aware of the negative impact of inequality and exclusion on performance and psychological health.

Moreover, it is proposed that organizations should work on specific interventions to decrease social exclusion at the workplace. This is possible by building a culture of inclusion by mentorship programs, team integration programs and participatory decision making structures. Employees with rural or disadvantaged backgrounds should be given special attention so that they are not pushed to the periphery in the workplace. Government agencies and institutions of higher learning must also work in conjunction to enhance employability skills and self-efficacy by training and capacity-building, especially to underrepresented groups.

Study Implications.

Conceptually, this research makes a contribution on the current literature by merging structural inequality, social exclusion, job autonomy and self-efficacy into a single conceptual framework. It builds upon Social Cognitive Theory showing the influence of environmental disparities on psychological outcomes in the form of social exclusion. The analysis also supports the Job Demands Resources (JD-R) model by stating that the absence of fair resources and autonomy have a harmful impact on the motivation and self-belief of employees. In addition, it offers empirical evidence of a developing country situation, especially Pakistan, where there is little research on these interrelated constructs.

In practice, the research provides valuable information to organizational leaders and policy-makers by demonstrating the necessity to tackle both structural and psychological aspects of inequality in the workplace. The results highlight that enhancing the performance and well-being of employees cannot only be achieved by amplifying job resources but also by establishing inclusive workplaces that reduce exclusion. Companies that proactively mitigate inequality and promote inclusion tend to have increased employee independence, increased self-efficacy, and overall productivity. This especially applies to Sindh where the socio-economic inequality is incorporated in the organizational systems.

Future Research and Limitations

In spite of its contributions, this study has some limitations. To start with, it adopts a cross-sectional design, which restricts the establishment of causal relationships between variables. Second, the research is based on self-reported data, which can be biased in response. Third, it does not cover the sample of Sindh province, which can limit the applicability of the results to other areas of Pakistan or other international settings. Longitudinal designs ought to be embraced in future studies to achieve a better insight into how structural inequality and self-efficacy change with time. Also, the future research may also utilize mixed-method methods in order to acquire more qualitative data on the experiences of exclusion and inequality among employees.

It should also be investigated in the future to identify other mediating and moderating factors including organizational support, leadership style, psychological resilience, and digital literacy. Further comparative studies between provinces or countries would help deepen the knowledge of how differences in contexts can affect the nature of inequality and workplace outcomes. The research can also be extended to other industries like healthcare, education and technology, which could give a more detailed understanding on how structural and social factors work in a variety of work settings.

Conclusion

This paper has observed how structural inequality affects job autonomy and employee self-efficacy and social exclusion as a mediating variable in the context of Sindh, Pakistan. The results proved that the structural inequality produces a considerable negative impact on the job autonomy and self-efficacy and contributes to social exclusion of people. Moreover, it was observed that social exclusion mediated these associations, which means that psychological processes are very important in converting structural inequalities into labour market performance.

Generally, the research shows that not only is inequality a structural problem, but it is also a psychological and an organizational problem that directly affects the behavior and performance of employees. These issues can only be tackled through a holistic solution involving both policy-level interventions and inclusion policies at the organizational level. Organizations can increase employee autonomy, enhance self-efficacy, and overall productivity and well-being by decreasing structural inequality and promoting inclusive work environments.

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