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Reserved Yet Excluded: an Analysis of Job Quota Policies and the Marginalization of Women with Disabilities in Kohat Division, Pakistan

Dr. Qudrat Ullah¹, Farooq Ahmad Khan², Mehak Sana², Salma Yasmin³, Ayesha Yasmin⁴

1. Lecturer in Sociology at Govt. Degree College KDA Township, Kohat, Pakistan.

2. Lecturer, Department of English, Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak, Pakistan.

3. MS English (Linguistics) Scholar, Kohat University of Science & Technology (KUST), Pakistan.

4. BS English (Literature) Graduate, Department of English, Govt. Postgraduate College Kohat, Pakistan.

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Corresponding Author:

Dr. Qudrat Ullah

Email: gudratsoc79@gmail.com

License:



Abstract: The present study investigates the role of job quota implementation (independent variable) in shaping the social exclusion experienced by women with disabilities (dependent variable) in Kohat Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Utilizing a Quantitative, Cross-Sectional survey design, a sample of 370 respondents was proportionally selected across the districts of the division. Methodological rigor was ensured through coordination with district Social Welfare Offices to accurately identify eligible participants, while senior instructors facilitated the interpretation of responses from hearing- and speech-impaired respondents, enhancing the reliability and validity of the structured instrument. The study focused on women with physical, auditory, verbal, and stature-related disabilities, deliberately excluding individuals with intellectual impairments to maintain conceptual clarity. Internal consistency of the measurement scale was confirmed via Cronbach's Alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.87. Bivariate relationships were examined using Chi-Square (χ^2) tests, and Kendall's Tau-b (Tb) assessed the strength and direction of associations. Analysis of the complete dataset revealed a statistically significant and non-spurious relationship between job quota and social exclusion ($\chi^2 = 25.706$, $p = .000$; $Tb = .264$), indicating that the effect of quota policies persists independently of education. The findings underscore the critical influence of job quota provision on mitigating social exclusion, while also highlighting how educational attainment can modulate the intensity of exclusionary experiences, demonstrating the complex interplay between structural policy mechanisms and individual socio-demographic factors.

Introduction

The lived experiences of women with disabilities represent one of the most compelling yet under-explored dimensions of social inequality in contemporary societies. Women with disabilities confront a “double burden” of discrimination rooted in both gender and disability, which exacerbates their exclusion from key social, economic, and political structures (R Bashir et al., 2021). Globally, persons

with disabilities face significant barriers in accessing employment, education, healthcare, and social services, but the intersection of gender and disability produces unique disadvantages for women. Research indicates that women with disabilities are significantly less likely to be employed than their male peers or women without disabilities, reflecting deep-seated structural biases and persistent social stigmas that restrict their full participation in society (UN Women, 2020; Ruh Global, 2021). These compounded disadvantages not only limit individual well-being but also undermine broader objectives of inclusive development and human rights.

According to international data, women with disabilities experience markedly lower rates of employment compared with both men with disabilities and women without disabilities (UN Women, 2020). Globally, women with disabilities are approximately twice as likely to be excluded from the workforce as compared to non-disabled peers, underscoring entrenched barriers to meaningful economic participation (UN Women, 2020). Furthermore, data from multilateral surveys suggest that discrimination against disabled persons in hiring and workplace practices remains widespread, resulting in persistent employment and wage disparities (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2025). These patterns highlight that disability is not merely a medical condition but a social construct shaped by societal norms and institutional arrangements that disadvantage people with impairments, especially women. The stark employment gaps reveal that policies aimed at inclusion often fail to address the root causes of unequal access to economic opportunities, thereby perpetuating social exclusion among disabled women.

In the Pakistani context, accurate statistics on disability are challenging due to underreporting and inconsistencies in official data. The most recent census data indicate a relatively low prevalence of registered disabilities (e.g., approximately 0.48% of the population), which scholars attribute partly to social stigma and methodological limitations in data collection (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, cited in Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences Review, 2025). However, other studies estimate that the actual prevalence of disability in Pakistan could be substantially higher potentially more reflective of global patterns indicating that millions of Pakistani citizens live with some form of disability but remain “invisible” in official statistics (Pakistan Today, 2023). Within this population, women with disabilities face additional gendered barriers that constrain their social participation and access to employment. Cultural norms that devalue women’s work, lack of accessible education, and unequal access to mobility and public spaces further exacerbate their marginalization.

Despite legislative efforts aimed at promoting inclusion, implementation gaps in Pakistan’s job quota policies have been persistent and pervasive. Laws require that government institutions and large employers reserve a percentage of jobs for persons with disabilities, yet studies show widespread non-compliance. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, for example, less than 1% of government employees were persons with disabilities, and none of the surveyed departments met the legal job quota target (typically set at 2%) for disabled persons (Arsh et al., 2024). This phenomenon illustrates the stark disconnect between policy intentions and on-the-ground realities, where quota provisions remain largely symbolic rather than transformative. Such implementation failures underscore the need for stronger accountability mechanisms and targeted enforcement strategies to ensure that disabled persons, and especially women with disabilities, can derive tangible benefits from inclusive employment policies.

The social exclusion of women with disabilities cannot be understood solely through employment statistics; it must also be contextualized within broader social dynamics that constrain their agency and mobility. Women with disabilities in Pakistan, as in many societies, face multiple forms of discrimination including limited access to education, healthcare, and social support systems which compound their disadvantage in the labor market (R Bashir et al., 2021). Even where women with disabilities are

employed, they often occupy low-paid, insecure, or part-time work, reflecting broader patterns of occupational segregation and limited opportunities for career advancement (Ruh Global, 2021). Furthermore, societal attitudes that view disability through a lens of deficiency or dependence contribute to exclusionary practices that devalue the contributions of disabled women. These dynamics highlight that employment quotas, while necessary, are insufficient on their own to dismantle the entrenched barriers faced by women with disabilities.

Intersectionality theory helps illuminate how overlapping identities such as gender, disability, class, and rural–urban location interact to shape unique experiences of marginalization (R Bashir et al., 2021). Women with disabilities are not a monolithic group, and their experiences vary depending on socio-economic status, type of impairment, and access to resources. However, common challenges persist: pervasive stigma, discriminatory hiring practices, lack of reasonable accommodations, and insufficient support services. Addressing these challenges requires holistic policy frameworks that not only enforce job quotas but also promote accessible education, public transport, workplace accommodations, and anti-discrimination protections. Only through such comprehensive strategies can societies begin to confront the structural forces that sustain the social exclusion of women with disabilities and realize the full promise of inclusive development.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the extent to which job quota policies are implemented for women with disabilities in public and private sector employment within Kohat Division, Pakistan.
2. To analyze the relationship between job quota implementation and social exclusion experienced by women with disabilities in terms of employment access, job security, and workplace inclusion.
3. To identify structural, institutional, and socio-cultural barriers that limit the effectiveness of job quota policies for women with disabilities.
4. To assess the impact of employment opportunities under job quota policies on the social integration, economic independence, and self-perceived inclusion of women with disabilities.

Testable Hypotheses

Hypothesis (H₁)

There is a significant negative relationship between effective implementation of job quota policies and the level of social exclusion experienced by women with disabilities.

Null Hypothesis (H₀)

Women with disabilities who are employed under job quota provisions experience lower levels of social exclusion than those who are unemployed or excluded from quota-based employment.

Literature Review

Scholars have long conceptualized disability not as an individual deficiency but as a socially produced set of barriers that exclude people from full participation. The social model of disability—powerfully articulated in British disability studies—frames exclusion as a consequence of social, environmental, and institutional arrangements rather than impairment alone, and it provides an analytic lens for understanding why policy instruments such as job quotas matter. From this perspective, quotas are not merely numeric targets; they are structural interventions intended to reconfigure hiring practices, workplace design, and public expectations about who belongs in paid work (Shakespeare, 2004).

Empirical research from advanced economies shows that people with disabilities face persistent employment penalties lower participation rates, higher part-time work, and greater underemployment that are shaped by discriminatory hiring, inaccessible workplaces, and weak enforcement of anti-discrimination measures. Importantly, workplace studies document that disability often correlates with

perceived discrimination and strained interpersonal relationships at work, conditions that disproportionately harm the career prospects and retention of disabled women who already contend with gendered labor market norms. These findings underscore why quotas alone, without attention to workplace culture and accommodations, may deliver limited gains for women with disabilities (Carr & Namkung, 2021).

A cross-national literature evaluating quota regimes reveals mixed evidence about their effectiveness. Recent quasi-experimental work finds that mandatory quotas can increase the documented employment of people with disabilities in eligible firms (partly through new hires and partly through reclassification of existing employees), but the size and quality of those gains depend strongly on enforcement, monitoring, and complementary incentives. Where sanctions are weak or firms can meet targets by assigning low-skill or token positions, quotas can produce numerical compliance that fails to disrupt deeper patterns of occupational segregation and social exclusion especially for women who tend to be concentrated in lower-paid, precarious roles (Duryea, Martínez Alvear, & Smith, 2024).

Australian policy analysis and population-level research further show that inclusion requires a mix of measures quotas or targets, active labour market supports, and attention to gendered career pathways to improve outcomes. A comprehensive Australian review found that, despite policy instruments and support schemes, people with disabilities continue to experience a labor-market penalty; the report highlights how structural features (education transitions, transport accessibility, and workplace accommodations) intersect with gender to shape outcomes for women with disabilities. In short, Australian evidence suggests that quota laws are most effective when embedded in a broader ecosystem of services and regulatory oversight (Buckland et al., 2024).

Canadian studies bring important evidence about gendered experiences of employment supports and how program design can unintentionally marginalize women with disabilities. Qualitative and survey research in Canada finds that women with disabilities often experience employment-assistance programs as individualized “fixes” that neglect systemic barriers; participants report that supports insufficiently address caregiving burdens, accessibility of workplaces, and stigma from employers and colleagues. National analyses of employment quality also indicate that even when women with disabilities gain work, their jobs are more likely to be part-time, insecure, or mismatched to skills outcomes that perpetuate social exclusion despite formal inclusion on payrolls (Chouinard, 2009).

A recurring theme across jurisdictions is the phenomenon of “token” inclusion: firms comply superficially with quotas by hiring or labeling individuals in low-responsibility roles, by relying on temporary contracts, or by offering jobs without reasonable accommodations, thereby reproducing exclusion in different form. Comparative reviews of quota systems in East Asia, Latin America, and Europe corroborate that quotas increase visibility but do not automatically yield substantive inclusion especially for groups at the intersection of disability and gender. This pattern helps explain why women with disabilities remain marginalized: quotas address access to a job slot but not the distribution of job quality, promotion pathways, or the social relations that enable sustained workplace belonging (Duryea et al., 2024).

The literature therefore points to three lessons for research and policy. First, quota policies must be paired with enforceable accountability systems (inspections, transparent reporting, and credible sanctions) and with incentives that encourage firms to develop meaningful accommodation practices rather than minimal compliance (Duryea et al., 2024). Second, gender-sensitive measures such as childcare supports, flexible scheduling, and targeted career development are necessary to address the particular impediments faced by women with disabilities (Buckland et al., 2024; Chouinard, 2009). Third,

workplace culture change anti-stigma training, inclusive management practices, and proactive accommodation policies determines whether quota hires translate into long-term inclusion or into ephemeral, socially excluding employment (Carr & Namkung, 2021).

Finally, methodological work in the field cautions researchers to disaggregate outcomes by gender, impairment type, and job quality indicators. Counting quota hires is a necessary first step but insufficient for assessing whether quotas reduce social exclusion; high-quality longitudinal data, mixed-methods studies, and attention to subjective experiences of workplace inclusion (perceived discrimination, supervisor support, peer relations) are essential to capture the lived reality of women with disabilities. The growing body of cross-national and country-level evidence while mixed converges on the conclusion that quotas can open institutional doors but cannot, by themselves, dismantle the complex social forces that keep many women with disabilities at the margins of work and social life (Buckland et al. 2024).

Methodology

The present study was carried out in Kohat Division, encompassing the districts of Kohat, Hangu, and Karak, with the principal objective of examining the relationship between the implementation of job quota policies (independent variable) and the degree of social exclusion experienced by women with disabilities (dependent variable). The study aimed to generate empirical evidence on how access to employment through quota provisions influences social participation, economic integration, and exclusionary experiences among women with disabilities within this regional setting.

Research Design

A Quantitative Research Design grounded in a cross-sectional survey approach was adopted to systematically analyze the relationship between the study variables. This design was deemed appropriate for identifying measurable patterns, associations, and variations in job quota utilization and levels of social exclusion within a defined population at a single point in time. The *Cross-Sectional* nature of the study facilitated efficient data collection from a geographically dispersed population while offering a comprehensive snapshot of prevailing employment and social exclusion conditions faced by women with disabilities.

Validity and Reliability

To ensure methodological rigor, the research instrument underwent comprehensive procedures to establish its validity and reliability. Internal consistency reliability was assessed using *Cronbach's Alpha*, which produced a coefficient value of 0.87, indicating a high level of reliability across all scale items. Content validity was ensured through expert review and pilot testing, confirming that the instrument effectively captured the dimensions of job quota accessibility and social exclusion relevant to women with disabilities. These procedures collectively enhanced the precision, consistency, and credibility of the data for subsequent statistical analysis.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework postulates that the effective implementation of job quota policies directly influences the level of social exclusion among women with disabilities, while age and educational attainment function as control variables that may shape or condition this relationship.

Control Variables	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
	Variable	Variable
Age & Education of The Respondents	Job Quota	Social Exclusion of Women with Disabilities

Sampling Procedure

According to the 2022 records of the Directorate of Social Welfare, Special Education, and Women Empowerment, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the total number of registered persons with disabilities in Kohat Division is 22,492, of whom 9,396 are women. Based on this population, a sample size of 370 respondents was determined by following the sampling guidelines proposed by Sekaran (2003). Simple random sampling was employed to ensure that each eligible respondent had an equal probability of selection. In addition, proportional allocation across all tehsils was applied using the formula suggested by Chaudhry (2009) to maintain representativeness of the study population:

$$\frac{N\hat{p}\hat{q}z^2}{\hat{p}\hat{q}z^2 + Ne^2 - e^2}$$

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 21. Descriptive statistics were initially computed to summarize the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. The *Chi-Square (χ^2) Statistics* was applied to examine the association between job quota implementation and levels of social exclusion. Furthermore, *Kendall's Tau-b (T^b) Statistics* was employed to assess the strength and direction of the relationship while controlling for age and education, thereby determining whether the observed associations were spurious or non-spurious.

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$$

Ethical Considerations

The study strictly adhered to established ethical standards throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection, and respondents were assured of complete confidentiality and anonymity. The research was conducted with due respect for the dignity, privacy, and specific needs of women with disabilities. Participation was entirely voluntary, and every precaution was taken to prevent psychological, social, or physical discomfort during data collection.

Results And Discussions

The results indicate a statistically significant association between job quota and the social exclusion of women with disabilities at the bivariate level, highlighting that perceptions and adequacy of quotas influence exclusionary experiences. At the multivariate level, controlling for age and education, the relationship remains largely non-spurious, confirming that job quota policies exert an independent and genuine effect on social exclusion.

Association between job quota and social exclusion of women with disabilities

The *Chi-Square (χ^2)* test statistical results reveal a consistent and significant association between multiple dimensions of job quota perceptions and the social exclusion of women with disabilities. Respondents who perceived the existing job quota as insufficient for persons with disabilities reported higher levels of social exclusion ($\chi^2 = 4.396$, $p = .036$; $T^b = .109$), indicating that inadequately designed or weakly implemented quotas may fail to counter structural exclusion (Barnes, 2012). Similarly, the belief that women with disabilities should be treated under the same quota arrangements as men with disabilities was significantly related to social exclusion ($\chi^2 = 5.259$, $p = .022$; $T^b = .119$), suggesting that gender-neutral quota policies may overlook gender-specific disadvantages. The perception that women are less likely to be considered for employment when disability intersects with gender further demonstrated a significant association ($\chi^2 = 5.372$, $p = .020$; $T^b = .120$), reinforcing the argument that intersecting identities intensify exclusionary outcomes in labor markets (Schur, Kruse, & Blanck, 2013).

Notably, the strongest association emerged for the view that increasing job quota for women has never been a separate legislative agenda ($\chi^2 = 7.608$, $p = .006$; $T^b = .143$), underscoring how policy neglect and institutional silence can normalize the marginalization of women with disabilities (Priestley, 2010). In addition, several attitudinal dimensions of quota policy were significantly linked with social exclusion. The belief that quota systems psychologically reinforce notions of weakness among persons with disabilities showed a meaningful association with exclusion ($\chi^2 = 5.787$, $p = .016$; $T^b = .125$), reflecting concerns in the literature that poorly framed affirmative action can perpetuate stigma rather than empowerment (Link & Phelan, 2006). Conversely, the perception that ensuring suitable organizational positions strengthens psychological and social well-being was significantly associated with lower exclusion ($\chi^2 = 7.023$, $p = .008$; $T^b = .138$), highlighting the importance of job quality and role congruence in fostering inclusion (Kalleberg, 2011). Furthermore, beliefs that abolishing the quota system would normalize disabled identities ($\chi^2 = 4.396$, $p = .036$; $T^b = .109$) and that quotas symbolize deliberate social demarcation between disabled and non-disabled groups ($\chi^2 = 4.485$, $p = .034$; $T^b = .110$) reveal the symbolic tensions embedded in quota policies. These findings support sociological arguments that inclusionary policies, if socially misframed, can unintentionally reproduce boundaries and reinforce exclusion rather than dismantle it (Ridgeway, 2014).

Table 1. Association between job quota and extent of social exclusion of women with disabilities

Independent Variable (Job Quota)	Dependent Variable (Indexed)	Chi-Square Statistics, (P-Value) & (T ^b) Value
You consider that the current job quota is enough for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2 = 4.396$ (0.036) $T^b = 0.109$
You deem women job quota is to be considered like men with disabilities	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2 = 5.259$ (0.022) $T^b = 0.119$
You believe that women are not entertained for job when their gender is associated with disability	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2 = 5.372$ (0.020) $T^b = 0.120$
Increasing job quota for women is never been a separate agenda for legislators	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2 = 7.608$ (0.006) $T^b = 0.143$
Quota is job push disabled to embrace that they are weak in all aspects	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2 = 5.787$ (0.016) $T^b = 0.125$
Ensuring suitable positions in organization can strengthen you psychologically and socially	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2 = 7.023$ (0.008) $T^b = 0.138$
You think that to demolish quota system make disabled persons to feel non-disabled	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2 = 4.396$ (0.036) $T^b = 0.109$
Keeping quota in job means deliberate social demarcation by the society between normal and disabled segment	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2 = 4.485$ (0.034) $T^b = 0.110$

Association between job quota and social exclusion of women with disabilities (controlling age of the respondents)

The age-wise analysis through *Kendall's Tau-b* (T^b) statistics clarifies whether the observed relationship between job quota and social exclusion of women with disabilities is spurious or non-spurious when age is introduced as a control variable. Among respondents aged 15–25 years, the association between job quota and social exclusion is statistically non-significant ($\chi^2 = 0.017$, $p = .599$; $T^b = .016$), indicating the absence of a meaningful relationship within this cohort. This suggests that for younger women with disabilities, perceptions of job quota do not substantially shape experiences of social exclusion, possibly due to limited labor market exposure or transitional educational engagement. In classical sociological terms, this indicates a spurious relationship at this age level, where the apparent association observed in the aggregate data weakens or disappears once age is controlled (Babbie, 2020). In contrast, statistically significant and moderately strong associations are observed among women aged 26–35 years ($\chi^2 = 18.736$, $p = .000$; $T^b = .413$) and 36–45 years ($\chi^2 = 28.498$, $p = .000$; $T^b = .425$). These results demonstrate a non-spurious relationship, as the association between job quota and social exclusion not only persists but strengthens when age is held constant, indicating that employment-related exclusion becomes more pronounced during prime working years (Allison, 2018).

A similar non-spurious pattern is evident among respondents aged 46 years and above, where the relationship remains statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 4.406$, $p = .041$; $T^b = .365$), though slightly weaker than the middle-age cohorts. This suggests that prolonged exposure to labor market discrimination and cumulative disadvantage intensify exclusionary experiences among older women with disabilities. Importantly, the statistics for the entire table ($\chi^2 = 46.199$, $p = .002$; $T^b = .253$) confirm that the relationship between job quota and social exclusion remains significant even after controlling for age, thereby ruling out age as a confounding variable. According to multivariate reasoning, when a relationship holds across categories of a control variable, it is considered non-spurious, reflecting a genuine and independent association between the variables under study (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2017). Thus, the findings robustly demonstrate that job quota policies exert a real and independent influence on the social exclusion of women with disabilities, particularly during economically active stages of life.

Table 1.1 Association between job quota and social exclusion of women with disabilities (controlling age of the respondents)

Age	Independent Variable	Indexed Dependent Variable	Statistics χ^2 , (P-Value) & T^b	Statistics χ^2 , (P-Value) & T^b for entiretable
15-25 years	Job Quota	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2=0.017$ $P= 0.599$ $T^b=0.016$	$\chi^2=46.199$ $P= 0.002$ $T^b=0.253$
26-35 years			$\chi^2=18.736$ $P= 0.000$ $T^b=0.413$	
36-45 years			$\chi^2=28.498$ $P= 0.000$ $T^b=0.425$	
46 years			$\chi^2=4.406$	

and above			P= 0.041 T ^b =0.365	
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Association between job quota and social exclusion of women with disabilities (controlling education of the respondents)

The analysis of education levels through *Kendall's Tau-b (T^b) test* provides insight into whether the relationship between job quota and social exclusion of women with disabilities is spurious or non-spurious across different educational strata. Among illiterate respondents, there is a statistically significant association between job quota and social exclusion ($\chi^2 = 6.779$, $p = .010$; $T^b = .192$), suggesting that limited educational attainment may amplify the perceived impact of employment quotas on exclusionary experiences. Similarly, for respondents with primary education, the relationship is even stronger and highly significant ($\chi^2 = 13.146$, $p = .000$; $T^b = .411$), indicating that women with basic literacy are acutely sensitive to the availability and effectiveness of job quota policies, reflecting a genuine, non-spurious association (Allison, 2018). Conversely, among respondents with middle ($\chi^2 = 1.476$, $p = .196$; $T^b = .162$), high ($\chi^2 = 2.586$, $p = .128$; $T^b = .284$), and intermediate or higher education ($\chi^2 = 0.202$, $p = .500$; $T^b = .101$), the relationship is statistically non-significant, indicating that education at these levels may buffer women from the exclusionary effects of inadequate quota implementation. This suggests that for more educated women, other factors—such as skill acquisition, social networks, or occupational opportunities—mediate the influence of quota policies, creating spurious relationships in these subgroups (Babbie, 2020).

When analyzing the entire table, the association between job quota and social exclusion remains statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 25.706$, $p = .000$; $T^b = .264$), demonstrating that, across the full sample, the relationship is non-spurious and reflects a true effect of quota implementation on social exclusion. This indicates that although education modifies the strength of the relationship at specific levels, the overarching influence of job quota policies on social exclusion is independent of educational attainment. The findings highlight the nuanced interplay between education and policy impact: while higher education may mitigate exclusionary experiences, the absence or insufficiency of job quota provisions continues to exert a measurable effect on the broader population of women with disabilities (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2017).

Table 1.2 Association between job quota and social exclusion of women with disabilities (controlling education of the respondents)

Education	Independent Variable	Indexed Dependent Variable	Statistics χ^2 , (P-Value) & T^b	Statistics χ^2 , (P-Value) & T^b for entiretable
Illiterate	Job Quota	Social exclusion of women with disabilities	$\chi^2=6.779$ P= 0.010 T ^b =0.192	$\chi^2=25.706$ P= 0.000 T ^b =0.264
Primary			$\chi^2=13.146$ P= 0.000 T ^b =0.411	
Middle			$\chi^2=1.476$ P= 0.196 T ^b =0.162	
High			$\chi^2=2.586$ P= 0.128	

Intermediate and above			T ^b =0.284 χ ² =0.202 P= 0.500 T ^b =0.101	
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Conclusion

This study concludes that the effective implementation of job quota policies plays a critical role in reducing the social exclusion of women with disabilities in Kohat Division. The findings indicate that limited access to quota-based employment, weak enforcement mechanisms, and prevailing socio-cultural barriers significantly contribute to the continued marginalization of disabled women. While job quota provisions are designed to promote inclusion, their inadequate execution often results in symbolic compliance rather than meaningful economic and social integration. Employment obtained through quota mechanisms was found to enhance social participation, economic independence, and self-perceived inclusion among women with disabilities, underscoring the importance of translating policy commitments into practical outcomes. Overall, the study highlights that job quotas, when effectively implemented and supported by inclusive institutional practices, can serve as a vital instrument for addressing social exclusion and advancing social equity for women with disabilities.

Recommendations

- Government authorities should establish robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure strict compliance with job quota laws across public and private sectors, including regular audits and enforceable penalties for non-compliance.
- Job quota policies should be complemented with gender-responsive interventions such as workplace accommodations, flexible working arrangements, and childcare support to address the specific needs of women with disabilities.
- Targeted vocational training, career counseling, and capacity-building programs should be designed to improve the employability and career progression of women with disabilities, enabling them to access quality employment rather than low-skilled or precarious jobs.
- Awareness campaigns and mandatory sensitization training for employers and co-workers should be implemented to reduce stigma, challenge discriminatory attitudes, and foster inclusive work environments that support the long-term retention and advancement of women with disabilities.

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