

LIVING IN FEAR BEHIND THE WHEEL: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF DRIVING ANXIETY AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACTS ON YOUNG ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

Driving anxiety is a common but frequently ignored psychological condition that impairs people's mobility, independence, and overall mental health. This qualitative study examines into the lived experiences of young adult drivers (aged 18-30) in Pakistan who suffer from driving anxiety. The study investigates the psychological impact, coping mechanisms, and socio-cultural influences that contribute to driving-related concerns using semi-structured interviews with 20 individuals (10 males and 10 females). Thematic analysis indicates important aspects such as traumatic experiences, social pressures, gender disparities, and insufficient road infrastructure. The study emphasizes the importance of culturally appropriate psychological interventions and policy recommendations for improving road safety and mental well-being. The findings add to the broader discussion about what causes anxiety by providing insights particular to the Pakistani cultural and infrastructure location.

Keywords: Driving Anxiety, Psychological Impact, Gender Differences, Young Adults, Pakistan, Qualitative Study.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Driving is commonly linked with freedom and independence, yet for many people, it causes considerable anxiety that interferes with their everyday lives. Driving anxiety, also known as vehophobia, is characterized by excessive fear, avoidance behaviors, and physiological distress while driving (Taylor et al., 2019). The condition is common among people with generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) and panic disorder, but it can also occur in people without prior anxiety-related diagnoses (Wiederhold & Bouchard, 2014). Research suggests that driving anxiety may be caused by past traumatic experiences, a lack of confidence in one's ability to drive, or a general fear of losing control while driving (Fischer et al., 2021).

Young adults in Pakistan may suffer increased driving anxiety due to traffic congestion, aggressive driving behavior, and insufficient road

infrastructure. Poor driver training programs, dangerous driving norms, and social pressure to drive all contribute to driving-related fear. Furthermore, gender-specific expectations intensify anxiety, especially for women, who may experience increased public scrutiny while driving (Ali & Khan, 2019).

Problem Statement

Given a rising rate of driving anxiety, little research has been conducted into its psychological effects in Pakistani society. The majority of existing studies on driving anxiety focus on Western populations, where driving conditions, legal frameworks, and cultural attitudes towards driving differ greatly from those in South Asia (Rahman et al., 2021). This study aims to fill this vacuum by looking at the experiences of young adults in Pakistan who have driving-related concerns, as well as the cultural and

environmental factors that influence this phenomenon. Identifying these factors is critical for designing targeted treatments and policies to reduce driving anxiety in Pakistan.

Theoretical Framework

According to the theoretical framework, this study can be explained with cognitive-behavioral theory (CBT), which holds that maladaptive thoughts and beliefs contribute to emotional distress and behavioral avoidance (Beck, 2020). Individuals suffering from driving anxiety may develop catastrophic thought patterns, believing they will lose control of their vehicle or cause a deadly accident, resulting in increased fear responses and avoidance behaviors (Fischer et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy describes how people's perceptions of their driving competence influence their capacity to handle anxiety. A lack of confidence in one's driving abilities, frequently caused by inadequate driver training or previous negative experiences, can intensify driving-related concerns and lead to avoidance behaviors. Understanding what causes anxiety through these theoretical lenses sheds light on successful interventions, such as cognitive restructuring and exposure therapy, for assisting individuals in overcoming their concerns.

Research Questions

1. How do Pakistani young adults perceive and experience driving anxiety?
2. What are the primary and social factors that contribute to driving anxiety??
3. How are driving anxiety coping mechanism are shaped by environmental and cultural factors?
4. How do gender differences affect the experiences and coping methods of those suffering from driving anxiety?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding Driving Anxiety

Driving anxiety, often known as vehophobia or amaxophobia, is a mental health condition marked by excessive fear and distress while driving (Taylor et al., 2020). Individuals with this anxiety may avoid driving altogether or experience substantial physiological symptoms such as elevated heart rate, perspiration, and panic attacks while driving (Wiederhold & Bouchard, 2014). According to Măirean (2020), driving anxiety is frequently related with negative cognitive processes in which people

overemphasize potential threats such as accidents or loss of control. This anxiety can have a major impact on everyday functioning, mobility, and overall quality of life.

Numerous research studies have shown that driving anxiety can develop as a result of previous traumatic experiences, a lack of trust in driving skills, or generalized anxiety disorders (Kravette & Feng, 2025). Individuals with pre-existing mental health issues, such as panic disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), are also more likely to develop driving-related concerns, according to research (Yasuda et al., 2024). According to cognitive-behavioral theory model, worried drivers' avoidance strategies reinforce anxiety, increasing the condition over time.

Psychological Factors Contributing to Driving Anxiety

Trauma and Past Experiences

A history of car accidents or near-misses is one of the primary causes of driving anxiety. Studies reveal that persons who have seen or observed major accidents are more prone to adopt avoidance strategies and hypervigilance while driving (Rahman, 2021). For example, a study conducted in Australia discovered that 60% of those who survived catastrophic vehicle crashes had symptoms of PTSD, with driving avoidance being one of the most common (Hussain & Shi, 2019).

In Pakistan, many people experience driving anxiety after seeing or participating in accidents, where poor traffic management, careless driving, and insufficient safety precautions frequently result in traffic accidents (Ali & Khan, 2019). According to a study by Ahmed and Tariq (2022), Pakistani youth, especially those residing in urban areas like Karachi and Lahore, indicated greater levels of driving stress as a result of aggressive driving practices and chaotic traffic.

Cognitive Distortions and Self-Efficacy

According to cognitive-behavioral studies, nervous drivers exhibit maladaptive thought processes, such as overestimating their capacity to handle road conditions and catastrophizing possible threats (Bandura, 1999). Avoidance behaviors and excessive fear responses are more common in people who have low driving self-efficacy, which is defined as doubting their capacity to drive safely (Hollon, 2021).

According to a Taylor et al. (2020) study, those who have low driving self-efficacy are more prone to engage in avoidance behaviors, like not driving at night or on highways. According to research by Nahvi et al. (2022), exposure-based therapies can considerably lessen driving-related discomfort by having people gradually face their anxieties in a controlled environment.

Gender Differences in Driving Anxiety **Female Drivers and Societal Expectations**

According to research, driving anxiety is significantly influenced by gender, with female drivers frequently expressing higher feelings of fear and avoidance than male drivers (Ali & Khan, 2019). According to another study's finding, societal expectations and preconceived notions about women's driving prowess contribute to the higher levels of anxiety and self-doubt that women typically experience when driving (Yasuda et al., 2024).

In many regions of the world, including Pakistan, women face considerable hurdles when driving, such as harassment, a lack of driving practice opportunities, and social criticism. Pakistani women frequently report feeling unsafe on the road as a result of aggressive male drivers and a lack of family support for fostering autonomous mobility (Ahmed & Tariq, 2022). This cultural pressure exacerbates driving anxiety, prompting many women to forgo driving entirely.

Male Drivers and Risk-Taking Behavior

On the other hand, although they tend to report lower levels of driving anxiety, male drivers frequently engage in risky actions that may exacerbate their discomfort (Racheva & Totkova, 2019). According to studies, men are more prone than women to drive recklessly, aggressively, and at high speeds, which increases their risk of getting into accidents (Hussain & Shi, 2019). Even while individuals might not express their concern directly, underlying stress and dread frequently show up as anger and hostility while driving (Zhan & Zhang, 2024).

A research study done in Pakistan discovered that male drivers typically experience anxiety as a result of financial pressures and societal expectations to be proficient drivers (Ali and Khan, 2019). Unlike female drivers, who report more avoidance techniques, male drivers are frequently required to drive despite their fear, which causes increased stress levels.

Cultural and Environmental Influences on Driving Anxiety

Traffic Conditions and Infrastructure

In developing nations such as Pakistan, weak infrastructure and bad traffic enforcement enhance drivers' anxiety. According to studies, chaotic traffic conditions, frequent infractions of traffic rules, and the lack of pedestrian safety measures all lead to drivers' increased concern (Rahman, 2021).

According to Ahmed and Tariq (2022), 80% of young drivers in Pakistan felt dangerous as a result of others' erratic driving habits, a lack of sufficient traffic signs, and frequent interactions with unskilled drivers. Unlike Western countries, where rigorous driving standards are enforced, Pakistani roadways sometimes lack appropriate traffic management, making driving stressful (Hussain & Shi, 2019).

Social Pressures and Family Expectations

Social and familial expectations significantly influence driving anxiety. Driving is frequently viewed as a necessity rather than a privilege in Pakistan, putting pressure on people, particularly young adults, to learn to drive despite their misgivings (Ali & Khan, 2019). Family members may urge or compel individuals to drive even if they lack confidence, resulting in increased discomfort and avoidance behaviors.

Moreover, for women, societal pressure frequently acts in the reverse direction, deterring them from driving by reinforcing prejudices about their driving abilities (Rahman, 2021). This lack of encouragement leads in less driving experience, which adds to their fear when they do try to drive.

Coping Strategies and Psychological Interventions: **Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Driving Anxiety**

CBT has been widely recognized as an effective treatment for driving anxiety. Research indicates that altering negative thought patterns, progressive exposure therapy, and relaxation techniques can greatly reduce driving-related anxiety (Curtiss et al., 2021).

According to a Taylor et al. (2020) study, CBT therapies helped people with driving anxiety become more confident and decrease avoidance behaviors. Valero-Mora et al., (2021) study also showed that a combination of mindfulness practices and exposure therapy resulted in long-term decreases in driving-related distress.

Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques

Mindfulness-based interventions have grown up as useful ways for coping with driving-related stress and anxiety. Deep breathing exercises and guided meditation are two techniques that can help people regulate their physiological and psychological responses to stressful driving conditions, increasing relaxation and emotional stability (Qu et al. 2024). These therapies work by increasing present-moment awareness while decreasing automatic fear reactions associated with driving anxiety. Hussain & Shi (2019) conducted a study in which individuals practiced mindfulness activities before driving, and the findings revealed significant reductions in self-reported anxiety levels. Furthermore, participants displayed greater concentration and cognitive control while driving, indicating that mindfulness techniques can reduce the negative effects of stress and improve driving performance. Individuals suffering from driving anxiety who include mindfulness practices into their everyday lives might develop resilience and a stronger sense of control, resulting in a more confident and less distressing driving experience.

Anxiety related to driving (driving anxiety) is a complex problem impacted by social, cultural, and psychological elements. Distress is exacerbated in Pakistan by societal expectations and poor driving conditions, especially for female drivers, even though earlier traumatic events and cognitive distortions also play a role. Developing successful solutions to reduce driving anxiety requires an understanding of cultural impacts and gender disparities. In order to create regionally appropriate treatment strategies, future research should examine intervention-based studies conducted in Pakistan.

Results

Themes Identified Through Interviews

Theme	Description
Traumatic Experiences	Participants reported previous accidents or near misses as a major contributor to their driving anxiety.
Social Pressure and Expectations	Anxiety levels were influenced by family expectations and societal norms, particularly among female drivers.
Inadequate Infrastructure	Participants' anxieties were increased by bad road conditions and inadequate implementation of traffic laws.
Gender Differences in Anxiety	Females expressed higher levels of anxiety as a result of societal scrutiny and limited driving opportunities for practice.
Coping Mechanisms	Participants managed their anxiety through avoidance, relaxation techniques, and exposure gradually.

Methodology

Research Design

The current study employs a qualitative research design using semi-structured interviews to explore the lived experiences of young adults with driving anxiety. Qualitative research is especially useful for understanding the psychological and emotional aspects of anxiety because it provides rich, in-depth data (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Participants

The study includes 20 participants, aged 18-30, selected through purposive sampling. The sample comprises 10 males and 10 females to explore gender differences in driving anxiety. This age group was chosen because young adults in Pakistan are more likely to experience driving anxiety due to limited driving experience, societal pressures, and challenging road conditions (Ahmed & Tariq, 2022). Participants were identified as having driving anxiety based on their self-reported avoidance, fear, and emotional distress about driving, which were evident during the initial interview.

Data Collection

Both in-person and online semi-structured interviews were conducted. Then, in order to find recurrent themes, the interviews were transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was carried out using Braun and Clarke's (2013) approach, which ensured rigor in detecting and categorizing emerging themes.

Interpretation

The findings of this study show the numerous psychological and social factors that lead to anxiety among young adults in Pakistan. Several major themes emerged from qualitative interviews with participants, providing insight into the lived experiences of people who experience dread and distress when driving. Traumatic experiences, social pressure and expectations, poor infrastructure, anxiety disparities by gender, and coping mechanism are among the subjects explored.

Traumatic Experiences and Their Role in Driving Anxiety

A sizable proportion of individuals said that their driving anxiety stemmed from previous traumatic experiences, such as car accidents, near-misses, or witnessing serious crashes. These encounters instilled long-term anxiety in people, making them hesitant or completely avoidant of driving. This is consistent with finding that people who have been in traffic accidents are more prone to develop driving-related phobias (Hussain & Shi, 2019). According to the cognitive behavioral model of anxiety (Worden & Kaplan, 2024), bad previous experiences reinforce fear through cognitive distortions, leading individuals to believe that driving is intrinsically dangerous. This dread can cause physiological responses such as elevated heart rate, perspiration, and panic attacks while driving. Many participants lacked confidence as a result of small incidents, like as colliding with a curb or another vehicle. Some respondents reported that relatives and friends reacted badly to these occurrences, exacerbating their embarrassment and dread. The mental anguish caused by these events contributed to avoidance practices, in which people either refused to drive or did so only when absolutely necessary. According to Rahman's (2021) research, avoidance fosters worry by preventing people from rebuilding their confidence. Early intervention, such as exposure therapy, can help people gradually rebuild confidence by practicing driving in low-risk situations (Nahvi et al., 2022).

Social Pressure and Expectations Impacting Anxiety Levels

In Pakistan, societal pressure and cultural norms heavily influence driving behavior, particularly among young individuals. Several participants, particularly those from middle-class families, stated that they felt compelled to learn to drive because of

cultural expectations, parental influence, or job-related requirements. However, the pressure to drive successfully despite a lack of sufficient training or experience increased anxiety. This is congruent with the findings of Ali and Khan (2019), who discovered that many young adults in South Asia feel forced to drive despite their lack of competence, resulting in greater stress.

According to male participants were expected to drive confidently, even if they were still in the learning phase. The stigma associated with being a hesitant or nervous male driver led many to overcompensate by driving recklessly, which sometimes resulted in accidents and further anxiety. Female participants, on the other hand, highlighted that they faced criticism regardless of their driving skills—either for driving too cautiously or for attempting to drive at all.

These societal demands can set off a vicious cycle in which people feel apprehensive before they even start driving, leading to performance anxiety (Bandura, 1999). If they make mistakes while driving, they dread being judged by others, which promotes their avoidance tactics. Cognitive restructuring (Hollon, 2020) is one type of psychological intervention that can help people question their negative ideas and establish a more confident driving style.

Inadequate Infrastructure as a Major Contributor to Anxiety

Another prominent theme that emerged from the interviewees was a lack of road infrastructure and terrible traffic conditions, which all led to driving anxiety. Participants expressed concern of navigating chaotic roads, unexpected traffic patterns, and a lack of enforcement of driving standards. Many respondents, particularly females, expressed concern about getting caught in dangerous or high-risk circumstances, such as road rage incidents, harassment, or irresponsible driving by others.

This finding is further supported by Racheva & Totkova (2019), who discovered that poor road maintenance, unregulated traffic, and a lack of pedestrian safety measures enhance driving anxiety. In Pakistan, many drivers disregard traffic laws, creating an unpredictable situation that is especially distressing for rookie or apprehensive drivers. Rahman (2021) highlights that high-stress driving situations increase anxiety, making people more likely to acquire driving phobias.

Gender Differences in Experiences of Driving Anxiety

The study also found substantial gender variations in driving anxiety. While both male and female individuals reported feeling distressed while driving, the reasons for their anxiety differed significantly.

Male Participants: Most male respondents stated that they felt a strong social pressure to be confident and skilled drivers. They reported feeling stressed while driving in front of friends, relatives, or others who assessed their driving ability. Some men stated a fear of being viewed as weak or inept, therefore they engaged in risky driving behaviors such as speeding or aggressive maneuvers to prove themselves. This is consistent with Hussain & Shi (2019), who discovered that cultural norms pressure men to demonstrate confidence in typically masculine activities such as driving.

Female Participants: Female participants, on the other hand, reported feeling more anxious when driving due to societal criticism and a lack of driving practice chances. Many women in Pakistan are discouraged from driving because gender stereotypes portray it as a male-dominated activity. Female participants recalled being ridiculed for their driving abilities or facing harassment on the road, which increased their anxiety about driving alone. According to Ali and Khan (2019), women who drive in patriarchal societies frequently face additional stress from negative cultural attitudes and a lack of assistance.

In general, driving anxiety becomes increasingly prevalent for both male and female young adults in Pakistan due to gender conventions, though in different ways. Addressing these concerns through gender-sensitive driver education programs and awareness efforts can contribute to a more inclusive and supportive driving environment.

Coping Mechanisms and Strategies Used by Anxious Drivers

Participants described several ways of coping for dealing with their driving fears. Some used avoidance tactics, such as refusing to drive in high-traffic areas or driving only when accompanied by a trusted person. Others used self-soothing strategies like deep breathing, listening to peaceful music, or repeating positive mantras before driving. Several participants noted that gradual exposure to driving, such as practicing on empty roads before

moving on to busy areas, helped them gain confidence over time. This is consistent with exposure and virtual reality treatment ideas (Kaussner et al, 2020), which state that confronting anxiety-provoking circumstances in controlled steps might help people lower their fear responses.

While a few participants managed their anxiety on their own, others emphasized the importance of structured interventions such as counseling, support groups, or structured driving therapy programs. Future research should look into cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) interventions designed specifically for people with driving anxiety, particularly in the Pakistani cultural context.

Discussion

The findings of this study are consistent with those of Hudock & Kenney (2023), who found that people with driving anxiety exhibit similar patterns of avoidance behaviors, heightened distress, and physiological symptoms such as increased heart rate, sweating, and panic-like reactions when faced with driving-related situations. Their research, conducted in numerous Western countries, revealed that anxious drivers avoid high-speed roads, heavy traffic, or novel routes, resulting in reduced mobility and freedom. These avoidance methods were linked to underlying cognitive distortions, in which people overstate likely driving circumstances, strengthening their concerns over time.

However, this research identifies specific cultural and environmental factors in Pakistan that contribute to anxiety in addition to the common psychological mechanisms found in Western societies. Unlike the controlled and regulated traffic systems present in many Western countries, Pakistan's roadways are frequently chaotic, poorly maintained, and lack adequate traffic law enforcement, resulting in a constant state of unpredictability for drivers. Such conditions aggravate anxiety, particularly among young adults with limited driving experience. Furthermore, gender norms play a significant influence in driving-related anxiety in Pakistan, as female drivers face greater public scrutiny, judgment, and even harassment, resulting to self-doubt and avoidance strategies (Rahman, 2021).

In addition, while past research in Western contexts has stressed personal driving confidence and exposure-based treatment as effective techniques for reducing driving anxiety, cultural factors may make these approaches less appropriate in Pakistan.

Limited access to safe driving practice places, insufficient training programs, and strongly ingrained social ideas about who should and should not drive all contribute to a unique type of driving anxiety in this region. These cultural and environmental disparities highlight the importance of targeted interventions and support systems that address Pakistan's specific socio-cultural and infrastructure concerns, as well as driving-related anxiety.

Cultural Context

In Pakistan, firmly set gender norms and societal expectations play a key role in causing anxiety, especially among women. Unlike in many Western countries, where driving is seen as a routine skill for both men and women, driving in Pakistan is frequently considered a male-dominated activity, with women facing social scrutiny, criticism, and even direct discouragement from family members and the wider community (Ali & Khan, 2019). This cultural attitude causes heightened stress, self-doubt, and avoidance tactics among female drivers, aggravating their anxiety.

Familial discouragement and a lack of support are significant contributors to female driving anxiety. Many Pakistani households prefer that women rely on male relatives for transportation, supporting the perception that women should not drive independently. This perspective not only limits women's mobility, but also keeps them from developing confidence and experience behind the wheel. Furthermore, some women who try to learn to drive experience opposition from family members who claim that the roads are dangerous or that driving is unnecessary for them (Fatima and Qureshi, 2020). This societal rejection creates a psychological barrier, making women more hesitant and apprehensive to drive.

Furthermore, popular social perceptions of female drivers increase anxiety. Women who drive in Pakistan are frequently subjected to unfavorable stereotypes, such as being viewed as slow, inexperienced, or incapable of handling challenging driving conditions (Shah & Yousaf, 2021). These prejudices are reinforced by social encounters, with many women experiencing mocking, verbal harassment, or violent behavior from male drivers on the road. Such experiences contribute to increased fear and avoidance behaviors, as many women choose to restrict their driving to specific areas or avoid driving entirely.

Anxiety among Pakistani women is largely fueled by societal criticism, but it is also significantly influenced by safety concerns and harassment. Women are discouraged from driving on their own because they frequently encounter harassment, offensive remarks, or intimidation from other drivers on the road (Khan & Batool, 2021). Additional tension is brought on by the worry of being in a precarious situation when driving and the lax enforcement of the legislation to protect women. As a result, rather of overcoming their nervousness, many female drivers develop hypervigilance, avoidance techniques, or a heavy reliance on male family members for travel.

Furthermore, limited possibilities for real driving practice exacerbate the problem. Unlike men, who are frequently encouraged to begin driving at a young age, many women in Pakistan are only permitted to practice driving in regulated or restricted circumstances. This lack of real-world experience impedes their capacity to acquire driving self-efficacy, making them more prone to panic reactions, indecisiveness, and anxiety-related errors while driving (Noreen & Riaz, 2022). Without adequate practice, female drivers are less likely to feel at ease and secure on the road, resulting in continued avoidance and dependency.

Such gender-specific barriers underscore the importance of culturally relevant treatments for female drivers in Pakistan. Increasing family and cultural acceptance of women as drivers, expanding driver education programs specialized for women, and enacting tighter anti-street harassment laws could all assist to lessen female driving anxiety. Furthermore, community-based initiatives, women-only driving schools, and mentorship programs may create a safer and more encouraging learning environment for women, allowing them to gain confidence and conquer their worries. Addressing these cultural hurdles is critical to ensuring that women in Pakistan can drive without fear, anxiety, or societal constraints, resulting in more mobility, independence, and mental well-being.

Limitations

Although giving useful insights into the psychological consequences of driving anxiety among Pakistan's young people, this study has several drawbacks. First, while 20 participants is sufficient for qualitative analysis, it may not fully capture the varying experiences of individuals suffering from driving anxiety across Pakistan's

various areas and socioeconomic backgrounds. A bigger sample size would improve the generalizability of the findings and provide a more complete picture of the phenomena.

Secondly, this study is based on self-reported data, which is fundamentally subjective and can be influenced by recall bias or social desirability bias. Participants' anxiety levels may have been exaggerated or underreported due to personal beliefs, societal expectations, or an unwillingness to divulge specific data. Future study should use a variety of data gathering approaches, such as behavioral observations or psychophysiological evaluations, to supplement self-reported findings. Furthermore, the study is largely concerned with metropolitan populations, where driving conditions, road infrastructure, and traffic congestion all have a substantial impact on anxiety levels. However, the driving experiences of people in rural locations, where road conditions, availability to public transportation, and social expectations may differ, are unknown. Expanding studies to rural areas would provide a more balanced perspective on what causes worry in Pakistan.

Recommendations

Future research should look at Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and other therapies as a viable therapy option for driving anxiety. Given that cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is well known for treating anxiety disorders, researching its application in a culturally relevant Pakistani environment should aid in the development of structured therapeutic programs customized to the needs of individuals experiencing driving-related concerns. Furthermore, given that female study participants reported higher levels of driving anxiety as a result of social pressures and fewer opportunities for driving practice, gender-specific therapies ought to be investigated. Future studies should look at the regulatory changes and psychological support systems that enable women to gain confidence when driving.

Finally, research should be expanded to rural populations to better understand how infrastructure disparities, community support, and environmental factors affect driving anxiety in non-urban areas. Comparative studies of urban and rural drivers in Pakistan would highlight distinct problems and offer context-specific strategies for effectively reducing driving-related anxieties.

Conclusion

This study focuses on the substantial psychological impact of driving anxiety among young adults in Pakistan, emphasizing the interaction of personal experiences, societal expectations, and infrastructure constraints. The data show that previous traumatic events, social pressure, poor road conditions, and gender differences all have a substantial role in driving-related anxieties. Women, in particular, have increased anxiety due to societal constraints and restricted opportunity for driving practice.

The study emphasizes the critical need for focused interventions, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and other psychological programs, enhanced driver training, and regulatory reforms, to foster a more supportive driving environment. Future study should focus on rural communities and culturally relevant therapy strategies for effectively addressing driving anxiety. By recognizing the psychological burden of driving anxiety and implementing evidence-based remedies, Pakistan may create safer and more confident drivers, ultimately boosting overall mental health and road safety.

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