

Ageing in Two Worlds: Policy and Culture in Pakistan and Hungary

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Background and Purpose

Pakistan and Hungary are at different stages of population ageing, yet both face challenges in balancing family caregiving and formal support. This study explores how national ageing policies and cultural attitudes shape elder care in these contexts.

Methods

A comparative review of policy documents, official statistics, and peer-reviewed literature from 2014 – 2025 was conducted. Key indicators included the proportion of older adults (65+), long-term care (LTC) provision, care practices, and societal perceptions of ageing.

Results

Hungary is an “aged” society ($\approx 21\%$ aged 65+ in 2024), while Pakistan’s population is younger ($\approx 4.3\%$ aged 65+) but ageing rapidly. In Hungary, most older adults receive care at home ($\approx 75\%$), yet LTC funding ($\approx 0.7\%$ of GDP) and workforce limitations restrict services.

Pakistan’s support system is fragmented, relying primarily on families, with limited national infrastructure despite provincial Senior Citizens Acts. Culturally, caregiving in Pakistan is strongly influenced by kinship, whereas in Hungary, ageism and mixed societal attitudes affect care outcomes.

Conclusions

Differences between policy and cultural expectations influence elder-care quality. Strengthening formal LTC in Pakistan and addressing ageism and resource gaps in Hungary could improve older adults’ well-being. Aligning cultural values with supportive policies is essential for sustainable ageing in both countries