



## RESEARCH PAPER

### Behind Closed Gates: Narratives of Exclusion and Inequality of Male Live-in Domestic Workers in the Gated Communities of Lahore

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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative study examines the everyday lived experiences of male live-in domestic workers employed in affluent suburban gated communities in Lahore. Rapid urbanization has led to an increased need for housing, resulting in the emergence of large private suburban housing societies, primarily as gated communities. These affluent residential areas accommodate two separate social groups: homeowners/renters and the working class, including live-in domestic workers. However, there is a lack of equitable power distribution and a disregard for these disparities in the design and management of gated communities. This results in exacerbated disparities, social injustice, and exclusion of the economically disadvantaged working class from public spaces and access to essential resources and services. This leads to multiple challenges for both groups including a high turnover rate. Urban planners must recognize these challenges and establish more equitable neighborhoods.

## KEYWORDS

Gated Communities, Informal Work, Live-In Domestic Workers, Pakistan, Soc Exclusion

## Introduction

Rapid urbanization, rural poverty, and shrinking economic opportunities in rural areas contribute to a significant increase in rural-to-urban migration (Farrell, 2017). A large number of such unskilled migrants move to cities looking for work (Zhao, 2020). Many of them end up in the urban informal sector including domestic work that may include cooking, kitchen help, care, security, or driving. At the same time, the rapid expansion of the urban population is causing a need for mass housing, which in turn is leading to the development of mega-gated housing complexes on the outskirts of the majority of Pakistani cities (Howard, 2020; Bint-e-Waheed & Nadeem, 2019; Lin et. al., 2018). The lack of quality housing and satisfactory security provisions by successive local administrations in many cities has resulted in a significant increase in demand for these services. The private real estate sector has responded to the need by creating gated communities that specifically cater to medium and upper-class buyers. The primary marketing appeal of these gated communities is in their ability to offer residents a secure and prestigious lifestyle, emphasizing safety as a key feature (Romig, 2010). Luxurious lifestyle communities encompass a range of amenities, such as upscale retail districts, recreational spaces, exclusive social clubs, state-of-the-art fitness facilities, and beautifully constructed

golf courses. The security is provided by the gated communities by providing privacy, security, and surveillance (Blakely and Snyder, 1999; Grant and Mittelsteadt, 2004). One common luxury enjoyed by middle and upper-class Pakistanis is keeping live-in domestic help. The homes in these communities, like in other localities, have one or two servant quarters designated specifically for the use of live-in domestic staff. The servant's quarter is often one or two small rooms built for a single occupant that may be occupied by single, double, or multiple people.

This practice of having live-in house help is a common feature of middle and upper-class urban households in Pakistan (Shaharyar, 2020). Therefore, in these wealthy neighborhoods, this results in two groups of people occupying these housing societies: the working class and the owners or renters of the properties. These live-in domestic workers are usually males, rural migrants, poor, and less educated. This population becomes dependent on these housing societies for their socioeconomic, educational, recreational, and health needs as a result of their interaction with the city through these housing societies.

The planning, development, and governance of a city all have an impact on the environmental, social, and economic well-being of its inhabitants (Roitman & Recio, 2020). The housing developments are enclosed by gates and are privately owned. They also have their own set of rules and regulations, as well as private security personnel and equipment. The housing schemes are developed solely with homeowners and renters in mind, without keeping any considerations for the other group, such as those pertaining to education, health, recreation, or transportation, being taken into account at any point in the planning process. This lack of concern in planning is contributing to the social exclusion of members of the working class from public areas and access to resources. Consequently, these circumstances are resulting in heightened inequities, exacerbated manifestations of social inequality, and asymmetrical distribution of power, thereby further distorting the interplay between the two groups. Live-in domestic workers in gated communities face a variety of challenges as a result of this disparity.

This gendered nature of the segregation of domestic workers within gated communities might result in disproportionate impacts on men. The occurrence in question is frequently impacted by a confluence of elements, encompassing customary gender roles, societal conceptions, and power relations. Male domestic employees may face heightened scrutiny or exclusion as a result of cultural stereotypes and prejudices about poor men. The complex dynamics of limited mobility and segregation are further complicated by this worldview that is motivated by fear (Tandogan & Ilhan, 2016). In many settings, the presence of security concerns frequently influences the manner in which people engage with one another and the perception of certain persons, particularly in relation to gender stereotypes (Phadke, 2007). The apprehension over violence and robbery can result in increased vigilance and regulation of the mobility of males, so exacerbating their seclusion within these communities.

The phenomenon of segregation based on this perception might be seen as a manifestation of wider societal biases and fears. Gated communities, which are intentionally constructed to offer security and exclusivity, might unintentionally perpetuate preexisting preconceptions pertaining to specific demographics, such as men (Chaney & Robertson, 2015; Phadke, 2007). This phenomenon exemplifies the ways in which social norms, biases, and power dynamics can shape the structure and operation of such societies, hence sustaining discriminatory practices rooted in gender. This can potentially foster feelings of resentment or marginalization.

A multifaceted strategy that combats preconceptions, creates neighborhood cohesiveness, and encourages a more inclusive understanding of security is needed to address this issue. By recognizing the harmful impact of such perceptions and working toward more balanced and equitable community dynamics, gated communities can strive to create environments that are safe and inclusive for all residents, regardless of gender.

This research explores how the changing residential patterns in cities act to foster social exclusion and contemporary urban inequality. This study explores how structural oppression in these gated communities is experienced by this group and how the intersection of class, gender, and location (living in these neighborhoods) influences their everyday experiences and life chances. There is a high need for policymakers and urban planners, especially the ones who design the new housing schemes to be aware of the issues of spatial inequality and the issues of marginalized populations in the city and make these issues part of their policy considerations. Efforts are needed to identify strategies that will reduce these inequalities and social exclusion in the cities.

This research contributes to the debates and existing scholarship on spatial inequality, social exclusion, marginalization, gender, and class in the cities. This research raises important questions for the planners and policymakers across the cities of Pakistan. The findings of this study will also contribute to achieving equitable cities as per the global commitments of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) no 10 (Reducing inequalities) and no 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) committed by the Pakistan government.

### **Literature Review**

Gated communities, which are a prevalent feature of modern urban development, have attracted increasing attention from scholars because of their role in intensifying spatial inequality based on socioeconomic class and perpetuating social exclusion. Researchers agree that the spatial inequality that results from the interaction of class and space in gated communities is one of the worst types of inequality and social exclusion (Shaharyar, 2020; Le Goix & Vesselinov, 2015; Vesselinov et al., 2007). This literature review examines the complex dynamics of exclusive residential enclaves characterized by seclusion and homogeneity.

The emergence of gated communities can be attributed to the historical contexts of colonialism and apartheid, both of which established spatial segregation as a formalized practice and have had lasting effects on the configuration of contemporary urban development (Strauss, 2019; Baines, 1990). The enduring impact of these historical processes is apparent in the pronounced spatial inequalities that can be observed within the gated communities that are developed exclusively to cater to middle and upper-class residents alone. Individuals who own residential properties frequently experience advantageous outcomes stemming from a diverse array of services and amenities, such as exclusive public parks and recreational facilities, and dedicated security measures (Shaharyar, 2020). The perpetuation of spatial inequalities within gated communities is facilitated by planning and zoning regulations that enforce social segregation on the basis of social class (Roitman & Recio, 2020).

Class-based social exclusion remains a pressing issue in urban areas of developing countries, significantly affecting the life chances and opportunities of marginalized populations. The layout of cities can either help alleviate class-based social isolation or make it significantly worse. Studies have shown that poor people with low incomes are more likely to be segregated in the cities as a result of urban planning. As a consequence, these people have less access to urban services and fewer prospects for economic

advancement (Grant, 2010, Bird et al., 2010). This geographical barrier contributes to inequalities based on class and limits the life opportunities available to marginalized people. Researchers have found that communities with low incomes are more likely to be socially excluded, marginalized, and denied access to important resources and services than populations with higher incomes.

Gated communities were popular features in most major urban centers worldwide throughout the later part of the 1990s (Turok, 2021; Tallon, 2020). The emergence and popularity of the phenomenon can be attributed to a combination of micro and macro factors. These include socioeconomic inequities within metropolitan areas, inadequate provision of housing and security by the government, urban decay, increasing crime, a desire for a higher standard of living, exclusivity, and the public display of wealth as well as its related lifestyle. (Roitman & Recio, 2020; Zhu, 2010; Landman & Schönreich, 2002).

Gated communities are purposefully occupied by a socially homogenous populace, where security measures successfully transform public spaces into private domains (Wu & Li, 2020; Blakely, & Snyder, 1997). Gated communities were initially conceived as residential neighborhoods that were fenced and designed with the primary intention of ensuring the safety and security of inhabitants, as well as limiting the entry of individuals who are not residents. The housing units have been strategically planned to meet the needs of individuals belonging to the middle and upper socioeconomic classes. These inhabitants are offered a diverse selection of high-quality services and facilities (Nielsen & Jenkins, 2021; Thuillier, 2013). However, the residents are obligated to cover maintenance expenses and adhere to restrictions on their behavior.

Gated communities possess a comprehensive infrastructure, personnel, and regulations in place to guarantee the safety, exclusivity, and opulence of their inhabitants. This also encompasses the physical segregation of individuals who reside within a particular area and others who do not. Multiple studies have underscored the perpetuation of social stratification and the introduction of spatial stratification by gated communities, resulting in the exacerbation of social inequality and spatial segregation (Grundström & Lelévrier, 2023).

Scholars suggest that there exists a reciprocal relationship between inequality and gating, wherein these two phenomena interact and reinforce one another (Vesselinov, 2008). Spatial poverty trap theory suggests that individuals residing in close proximity tend to encounter similar risks and vulnerabilities, as well as comparable opportunities and economic circumstances (Bird, 2019). Grant (2010) posits that there is evidence of urban spatial poverty traps in developing countries, which coexist with the phenomena of rapid urbanization and increasing urban poverty.

This study looks at informal domestic workers who live and work within the homes of employers in affluent gated communities. These communities may boast abundant resources and amenities, but an intricate web of spatial, social, and economic factors creates a distinct form of social exclusion that these workers experience. For example, despite being residents they are not treated like one and are excluded directly and indirectly. Thus, to understand the experiences of this particular group, it is imperative to move beyond mere geographical proximity and instead direct attention toward the fundamental aspects of inclusion and exclusion, as well as the power dynamics that influence individuals' access to employment opportunities, markets, and services.

## Material and Methods

The current study uses a qualitative research approach to get an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of the live-in male domestic workers in the gated communities in Lahore's suburbs. Participants were selected from three suburban gated communities in Lahore city. Twenty-eight live-in male domestic workers were made part of the study. The inclusion criteria were adult males who have worked as live-in domestic workers in gated communities for at least a year. Convenience and snowball sampling were used to select the participants. The researchers initially contacted the participants through their local connections. Participants were contacted via phone call, where rapport was established and questions about the study's aims and methodology were clarified.

In-depth interviews were conducted for the purpose of data collection. The participants were asked to provide their preferred place and time for the interview. The interviews were conducted in the participants and their friends' homes and nearby parks. However, two telephone interviews were conducted at the request of the participants. In addition, data were collected from five security personnel employed by the administration of the gated communities for a minimum of one year. These interviews were conducted in the neighborhood park and the Guard rooms. The interviews were conducted in Urdu and Punjabi to accommodate the participants' linguistic preferences. All interviews were recorded with the participants' consent, with the exception of those with security personnel. Detailed notes were taken to supplement the transcripts and capture nonverbal cues during the interviews.

The interviews that were recorded were meticulously transcribed and translated into English. The transcriptions and field notes were read multiple times in order to identify recurring patterns, emerging themes, and underlying narratives within the responses of the participants (Yin, 2015). This enabled the researchers to uncover the multidimensional layers that define the experiences of the participants and reveal the broader socio-spatial dynamics within these enclosed neighborhoods.

## Results and Discussion

The sample characteristics are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Sample characteristics of live-in domestic workers in gated communities of Lahore**

Sociodemographic	N=28	%
<b>Nature of Work</b>		
Cook/Kitchen help	18	64.3 %
Guard	05	17.9 %
Driver	04	14.3 %
Elderly care	01	3.6 %
<b>Years of Work in Gated Community</b>		
1-2	11	39.3 %
3-5	08	28.6 %
6-10	05	17.9 %
10 and above		
<b>Age</b>		
18-20	05	17.9 %
21-30	09	32.1 %
31-40	11	39.3 %

40 and above	03	10.7 %
<b>Education</b>		
No education	11	39.3 %
Primary	09	32.1 %
Secondary	05	17.9 %
Higher	03	10.7 %
<b>Residential status</b>		
Local	08	28.6 %
Migrant	20	71.4 %

This study finds answers to two research questions. First, how male live-in domestic workers are excluded from public spaces within privately owned gated communities through design and governance? and, second, how does the interaction of space, class, and gender in gated communities affect the residents' day-to-day lives and their life chances? The findings are structured around the themes that emerged from the data analysis: (1) Fractured mobilities; (2) Heightened surveillance and policing; and (3) Restricted access to public spaces and communal resources.

### Fractured Mobilities

The live-in male domestic workers experience limitations and constraints on their movement within the gated communities, due to the size, design, bylaws, and power dynamics of the gated communities. Their mobility is hindered, fragmented, or broken due to barriers or restrictions in their ability to move freely within a given space or across different locations within or from the gated communities. These restrictions may limit their access to resources, opportunities, and services, leading to unequal and marginalized mobility patterns.

The findings reveal that all the participants experienced constrained mobility. Restricted mobility includes entry into the gated community and movement within the gated community. Gated communities are enclosed by high walls with guarded entrances with security apparatus like cameras and automated barriers. However, the findings show that the implementation of the security protocols is highly classist and biased towards the poor working class. As a participant shared:

"I know it is the job of the guards at the entrance to check everyone that enters through the gates. However, I have witnessed many times that if a person comes in a big car, they would let them pass without any documents while they create problems for us even when we have papers."

Similarly, another participant stated:

" I have no problem with getting checked when we enter but most of the time their behavior is rude and disrespectful. We are made to stand for hours sometimes for no reason"

The lack of public transport, particularly bus service, was identified by the majority of participants as a significant mobility barrier. The majority of these sprawling suburban gated communities are located far from the city center and span vast distances with nonexistent or extremely limited public transportation. Individuals with access to their own private mode of transportation struggled with the burden of high petroleum prices. A participant stated, "It is a very difficult task for those who do not own their own motorcycles." While a second participant with his own motorbike shared. "I have a

motorbike, but the exorbitant price of petrol makes riding it very difficult. I have been unable to use it during the second half of the month for many months due to a lack of petrol funds. Therefore, gated communities make it difficult for everyone to travel within and to them.

In the absence of bus service, the other available private transportation options primarily consist of app-based private taxis and motorbike services. However, this reliance on expensive technology excludes individuals without smartphones connected to Wi-Fi, effectively marginalizing the economically disadvantaged and illiterate population. Participants shared:

"The family for whom I work calls a taxi from their phone. You can also call a motorbike. Sadly, poor people like me do not have the expensive phones required for this. Occasionally, I request my employers to call me a bike. It is not that costly, but I cannot keep having to ask them."

Similarly, another participant described a growing reliance on employers:

"I do not have personal transport so I have to walk for miles to reach public transport. Sometimes I am forced to ask my employees to drop me at a bus stop but returning is very difficult. I have to walk for miles."

These experiences may be made more difficult for participants with health issues. According to one participant, "I am 55 years old and suffer from heart disease. My brother, who suffers from polio-related leg weakness, has it even harder. There is no transit and the distances are arduous. As these regions are in the process of development, the markets are also at a distance, In Lahore's stifling humidity, we must walk or ride our bicycles several times a day to purchase even the smallest of groceries." Similarly, another participant stated:

"Within the gated community, I feel lonely and isolated, and it is difficult to move around. Even on my days off, I avoid going to the city to see my friends and family because it is so expensive and exhausting."

Another participant also shared his frustration:

"My biggest issue is inaccessible and expensive public transportation. Whenever we have to go or return from the city, most rickshaws and taxis refuse to take us so far. They are concerned that they will not get return customers. Those that agree demand outrageous, unaffordable fees."

In conclusion, live-in male domestic workers in gated communities face limitations and constraints in their movement due to the size, design, bylaws, and power dynamics of the gated communities. These restrictions limit their access to resources, opportunities, and services, leading to unequal and marginalized mobility patterns. The majority of participants experienced constrained mobility, including entry into the gated community and movement within it. The security protocols in gated communities are highly classist and biased towards the poor working class.

### **Heightened surveillance and policing**

In Pakistan, successive local administrations have not been able to adequately provide security in the face of rising crime rates or housing in the face of rising demand for homes. As a direct consequence of this, a sizable private real estate development

emphasizes safety. The investigation of the promotional materials (brochures and billboards) of a significant number of new gated communities reveals that the top three marketing gimmicks used by these establishments are to emphasize the community's sense of safety, exclusivity, and elegance.

Therefore, in order to sell safety, it is necessary to generate feelings of insecurity, and who better than these people living in poverty, particularly the men. This results in negative stigmatization and stereotyping of one community by members of the other community, as well as a sense of anxiety, mistrust, and an unfavorable impression of the first community held by the men, in particular. Thus, gated communities are frequently planned with an emphasis on security. The gated community has a mechanism of surveillance and policing as it is one of the bases of the existence of a community like that. However, poor male residents may experience heightened surveillance and policing because of their class and gender. This can become a significant hurdle in their everyday life affecting their mobility and life chances. All the participants discussed this in their narratives, for example, a participant shared:

“It often feels as though we are always viewed with suspicion, almost as if being economically disadvantaged automatically makes us potential troublemakers or thieves.”

The security personnel's increased attention towards this group leads to unnecessary questioning and checks, creating an atmosphere of constant scrutiny and feeling of being harassed. This ongoing surveillance not only fosters a feeling of exclusion but also contributes to the stigmatization of this group, perpetuating harmful stereotypes that affect them on a daily basis. As one participant shared:

“It is quite common that we are sitting outside our house doing nothing and security petrol will stop and start asking me why are you sitting here. You might say what is the harm in it as they are doing their duty but how come only a poor-looking person is questioned.”

The findings indicate that the administration of gated communities employs the discourses of disorder and danger in order to legitimize the discriminatory bylaws, policies, and behaviors that they implement within their communities. The unfavorable stereotyping and stigmatization of the working class, particularly the men, as deviants, harassers, criminals, and robbers by the management and support institutions also influence the perceptions of the general public, as well as the perceptions of the government institutions, as well as the residents of the gated communities.

This finding was reinforced by data collected from the guards and administration of the gated communities. All the participants made sweeping statements about poor male service providers living in or outside the gated communities as thieves, harassers, and troublemakers. One participant opined, "They are all thieves" and another participant stated that "They come here to cause problems." and other such statements. According to the assessment of one of the Security Guards, "These individuals (young men) are a bunch of liars. Although most of them were unable to give any evidence to back up their charges, a few of them were able to identify specific incidences to support their claims. One of the participants said:



“We are aware of their (security officers') opinions of us. The truth is that they are incompetent and unable to do anything when a crime occurs. Consequently, to conceal their incompetence, we are the easiest targets.”

One of the participants stated that they feel as though they are continually being called derogatory names, but that they are powerless because "they have the ability to condemn us." They believed that the security had taken this action because they were the most vulnerable targets. As one of the participants stated:

“They employ a large number of guards and then charge the community exorbitant fees for their services. Despite their efforts, they have failed to reduce the crime rate. We make the greatest scapegoats due to our convenience. When the guardians are held accountable for their actions by their superiors, they put the blame on us. If any of us were found guilty, I would like to see some proof.”

Another young participant echoed his sense of helplessness and shared:

“When younger guards see poor younger men walking at night, they frequently detain us without justification. They search us under the false assumption that we must be transporting drugs or scouting a residence for a robbery. Many times, they take our money or cigarettes and threaten us with police.”

Examining the ways in which working-class domestic employees are socially excluded in gated communities as a result of status, resource, and power discrepancies with the homeowners and tenants there. This theme underscores the power dynamics and social hierarchies within these enclosed spaces, where the working class often experiences intrusive scrutiny and surveillance that reinforces their marginalized status.

In conclusion, the provision of security is typically the defining characteristic of gated communities. Poor working-class males are typically viewed with suspicion, resulting in their negative stigmatization and stereotyping as potential troublemakers, harassers, and thieves. They are also used as scapegoats when guards are held responsible for a neighborhood disturbance or crime. The development of gated communities in the majority of Pakistani cities has resulted in increased surveillance and policing, impacting the lives of low-income male residents and limiting their mobility and life opportunities.

### **Restricted access to public spaces and Communal Resources**

Live-in domestic workers occupy a lower social stratum within the hierarchical structure of the gated community. Their duties as service providers result in social isolation and stigmatization, impeding their integration into their neighborhood. This exclusion restricts their access to communal spaces, social events, and interactions, thereby perpetuating their marginalization. The contrast between the availability of resources and their inability to access them is stark. Even though live-in domestic workers are surrounded by luxurious residences, recreational facilities, and advanced infrastructure, economic constraints prevent them from taking advantage of these resources.

Inadvertently restricting the accessibility of low-income domestic employees who reside within gated communities is an unintended consequence of the construction of gated communities with a focus on exclusivity. These individuals are restricted in their access to locations, resources, and services due to a combination of direct and indirect causes. Explicit rules and bylaws, such as those that impose membership requirements for access to specific locations such as sports grounds, clubs, or gyms, can have a direct impact on the

mobility and participation of individuals. In contrast, market forces exert an indirect influence by primarily offering high-priced alternatives, such as luxury retail and dining establishments, that are inaccessible to socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals. Utilizing both direct and indirect barriers is an effective means of marginalizing individuals with lower socioeconomic status, preventing them from accessing the full range of benefits that the gated community provides to its affluent residents.

Gated communities frequently boast of their expensive amenities, such as swimming pools, golf courses, and other recreational spots inaccessible to those with a lower socioeconomic status. This lack of access fosters a sense of exclusion and diminishes the quality of life for those who reside in the same enclave. According to one participant, "I live and work here, but I don't feel like I belong." The limited access of live-in male domestic workers to resources, opportunities, and services that are frequently utilized by other residents has disparate effects. The lack of access not only affects an individual's overall well-being but also hinders their ability to interact with community members and utilize services that could potentially foster their personal development. As a young participant shared:

"Football is one of my favorite sports, and I'm very good at it. A football club is situated in the neighborhood. I sit outside the ground and see the boys my age playing. It is incomprehensible to contemplate playing there. I am well aware that no one will let me play there and that I do not belong there."

Similarly, another participant had comparable experiences:

"The children of homeowners are only permitted to play in the parks. If we gather in a park, the guards yell at us and drive us away, claiming that servants are not permitted there. They say that the residents also complain if we sit there. They even occasionally hit or push us. It makes me both angry and sad."

Similarly, the opinion of another participant with a son who has left school:

"I so wanted to send my son to school, but there is no reasonably priced school in the vicinity. My then five-year-old son and I used to walk two to three kilometers to reach a low-fee public school located outside the gated community. However, it conflicted with my responsibility to prepare breakfast, so I had to remove him from school."

In addition to education, access to health services was also cited as a significant obstacle. Many participants reported that if they become ill, they must travel a considerable distance to obtain affordable services such as doctor's appointments and diagnostic tests. This, coupled with mobility difficulties, creates heightened difficulties. According to one participant, "I fell and was seriously injured last year." My employer's family was not in town. I called a relative with considerable difficulty to take me to the hospital. It took him two hours to arrive at this location and an additional hour to reach the hospital. There are numerous private clinics and a hospital in this gated community, but they are prohibitively expensive, so none of us can afford to visit them. I believe they would not let us in if they knew we could not pay their expenses."

In addition to being cost-effective, the "residents only" policy of many gated communities makes it impossible for residents to purchase additional services, even if they have sufficient financial resources. As a consequence of the widespread privatization that has occurred in these communities, access to public facilities and services has become

difficult, if not impossible, for a significant number of residents. Individuals experience sentiments of relative deprivation and lack of community as a result.

In conclusion, live-in domestic workers in gated communities face social isolation and stigmatization, hindering their integration into their neighborhoods. This exclusion restricts their access to communal spaces, social events, and interactions, perpetuating their marginalization. The construction of gated communities with exclusivity unintentionally restricts the accessibility of low-income domestic employees due to explicit rules, bylaws, and market forces offering high-priced alternatives. Gated communities often offer expensive amenities, such as swimming pools and golf courses, which are inaccessible to those with lower socioeconomic status. Access to affordable schools and health services is also a significant obstacle, as residents must travel far to obtain affordable services.

## **Discussion**

In the majority of Pakistani cities, gated communities have become the predominant form of new residential development. In addition to being a symbol of prestige living, the developers of this suburban megadevelopment are selling the concepts of exclusivity, safety, comfort, and luxury. Therefore, they must ensure that they provide these amenities and eliminate anything incompatible. Intriguingly, live-in domestic workers are required as a luxury amenity for wealthy residents/renters, but they do not belong within the exclusivity framework. The solution is to allow them to reside in the gated community but render them invisible by restricting their access to public areas to the houses where they labor.

These individuals' absence is accomplished both directly and indirectly. Directly through ordinances and policies, and indirectly through market forces that make daily necessities and housing prohibitive. The restriction of mobility faced by economically disadvantaged male domestic workers in gated communities dominated by middle-upper classes exemplifies a theme of segregation that significantly diminishes their life chances. This study illuminates the complex obstacles encountered by the poor, who are physically confined within an environment that perpetuates social divisions and restricts their access to opportunities. This can translate into restricted accessibility for community-based employees.

This is accomplished by limiting their mobility. Despite being dispersed across tens of thousands of acres, none of these communities provide affordable public transport, such as buses. This can translate into restricted accessibility for community-based employees. Wi-fi-enabled taxi and motorcycle services like Uber, which are phone-operated, are the most common form of public transportation. Many low-income domestic employees who lack these phones are unable to access these services. Consequently, their mobility becomes more contingent on their employers. In these confined spaces, the economic disparities between the affluent and the poor are exacerbated. The inability of the impoverished to afford the privileges and luxuries provided by the gated community further segregates and marginalizes them.

Enhanced surveillance and policing is another essential characteristic of gated communities. This is done for those entering and residing within the gated community. These gated communities feature high walls, gates, and security as a standard. However, even within gated communities, mobility is impeded by guardians and mobile security vehicles stationed at frequent checkpoints. This security staff has the authority to conduct random inspections, refuse entry, make informal arrests, etc. This demonstrates how the working class in gated communities is subject to increased surveillance and control. These

accounts demonstrate how the working class is confined not only by physical boundaries but also by the pervasive gaze of homeowners and the administration of the gated communities, perpetuating a sense of otherness and reinforcing social hierarchies. Nonetheless, this procedure is sexist and elitist, and it focuses on vulnerable groups including the live-in domestic workers. These gated communities lack affordable recreational, educational, and health facilities for their low-income inhabitants. In a nutshell, each subtheme of this study emphasizes the intricate power, control, and social norms dynamics that contribute to the overall sense of restriction and marginalization.

There have been studies into how the privatization of public spaces diminishes their public nature by limiting social interaction, access, and movement, as well as by excluding "objectionable" individuals or communities. Extreme class distinctions, which restrict access to the most essential resources, indirectly contribute to limited mobility, which is caused by the high cost of conveyance and ordinances that restrict access to residents only. The newly arrived city residents are unable to access the gated neighborhoods' premium markets, educational facilities, and medical and recreational amenities such as hospitals, clubs, colleges, sports fields, jogging tracks, and running tracks.

The limited mobility and segregation in gated communities have a direct effect on the life prospects of the poor residents. Their lack of access to networks, employment opportunities, and educational resources within the community hinders their upward mobility. In conclusion, a connection between restricted mobility, segregation, and diminished life opportunities for economically disadvantaged male domestic workers in gated communities of the wealthy. In addition to physical obstacles, these individuals face psychological and socioeconomic limitations that impede their potential for social advancement and the development of their circumstances.

In Pakistan and other developing nations where class differences are pronounced, the phenomenon of restricted mobility among live-in male domestic workers in gated communities reveals broader issues of social inequality and exclusion. In addition to restricting physical movement, these restrictions perpetuate unequal power dynamics and access to opportunities. This topic necessitates a comprehensive approach, including a reevaluation of community design, the promotion of inclusive norms, and the empowerment of domestic workers to surmount these mobility obstacles and enjoy a more equitable urban existence.

It is necessary to investigate how the management of gated communities perceives these residents. These affluent housing developments promote their communities as being exclusive, luxurious, and safe for marketing purposes. The working class is viewed as a commodity, as opposed to a population of equals due to the fact that they are a source of low-cost labor, which is a luxury afforded to the residents of large cities.

Studies have shown that privately owned public spaces diminish the public nature of public space by limiting social interaction, access, and movement, and by excluding undesirable populations. Access to the most vital resources is impeded indirectly by mobility restrictions as well as by extreme class distinctions. The city's most vulnerable citizens lack access to upscale markets, education, health, and recreational facilities, such as clubs, schools, sports fields, jogging tracks, and hospitals. In addition, the "residents only" restriction denies access to these services to even those residents who could afford to pay for them. This excessive privatization of public services and public spaces makes life difficult, if not impossible, for a great number of residents of these communities. This

results in a sense of relative deprivation, which contributes to a dearth of neighborhood affiliation.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, gated communities designed and administered without regard for their impoverished residents, the live-in male domestic workers, result in social exclusion, imbalances of power, disparities in access to public spaces and resources, and a widening of social inequality. As a consequence, there is a reduction in opportunities and a high turnover. It is imperative for policymakers and urban planners to move towards more inclusive policies that effectively consider the interests and rights of all citizens, irrespective of their social status or profession. This may necessitate changing the way gated communities are designed, planned, and governed in order to promote equitable and inclusive public spaces, resources, and services, as well as to cultivate social unity and cohesiveness. The comprehension and alleviation of class-based social exclusion are imperative in the pursuit of creating sustainable and equitable urban futures, particularly in the context of ongoing urban development and urbanization.

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