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Exploring Historical Patterns of Urban Migration in Pakistan: Origins and Drivers

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Abstract: This study explores the historical patterns and antecedents of urban migration in Pakistan, focusing on the interaction of demographic, economic, and environmental factors. Economic factors like wage disparities, job opportunities, and service access significantly influence migration. Rapid urbanization and inadequate infrastructure make it difficult to house and integrate migrants, exacerbating existing housing, transportation, and healthcare issues. The study advocates for evidence-based policymaking, utilizing descriptive analysis, focusing on sustainable urban development, migrant welfare, and inclusive growth. This study has identified various economic, demographic, and environmental factors that have contributed to rapid urbanization, such as migration for healthcare, education, and services. Still, low economic growth and rapid population growth lead to higher unemployment, low wages, natural disasters, and political instability. It emphasizes prioritizing rural development, improving urban infrastructure, and increasing disaster resilience. Proposals call for regional cooperation and climate change adaptation strategies to address cross-border migration challenges.

Key Words: Urban Migration, Demographic Factors, Economic Factors, Environmental Factors, Pakistan

Introduction

Urban migration in Pakistan has been a persistent and impactful phenomenon, shaping the country's demographic, social, and economic framework. The gradual migration of individuals from rural regions to urban centers has profoundly transformed urban areas, posing challenges and opportunities for policymakers, planners, and communities (Waseem & Talpur, 2021). Understanding this migration's historical patterns, origins, and driving factors is essential for comprehending its dynamics, developing effective strategies to address the related challenges, and capitalizing on its potential benefits (Shujaat, 2021). Pakistan's transition from predominantly agricultural to increasingly urbanized has coincided with significant population changes. Rural residents are drawn to urban centers for economic opportunities, social advancement, access to essential services, and safety considerations. Similarly, the division of land, the implementation of sophisticated farming methods, and the degradation of the environment have collectively contributed to rural migration (Ajani & van der Geest, 2021).

The global population has shifted from rural to urban areas, with more than two-thirds expected to live in cities by 2050. Europe, Latin America, North America, and West Asia all have urban populations that exceed 68%, with the majority approaching 80%. East Asia is rapidly urbanizing, with cities housing more than 60% of the population. North and West Africa have nearly 50% urban populations, whereas Southern Asia has the lowest level of urbanization, with only 36% of the population living in cities as of 2019. Despite the link between urbanization and economic growth, South Asia remains the world's least urbanized region.

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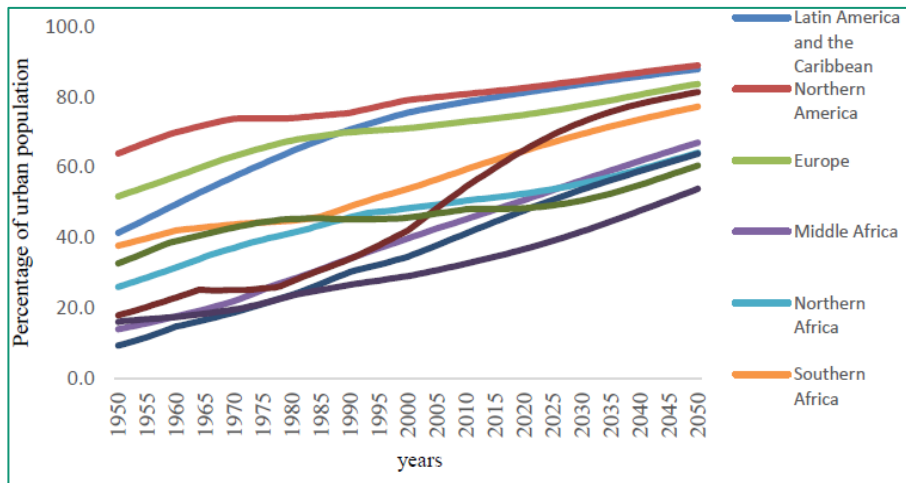
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**Figure 1**

Share of urban population within South Asian countries



Source: United Nations, World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision

Figure 1 depicts the various stages of urbanization in South Asian countries, with rural-urban migration as the primary driver of urbanization. Pakistan, one of the most urbanized countries, is a turning point for research due to its rapid urbanization. Pakistan's urban population increased from 17.05% in 1950 to 36.67% in 2018, driven by limited economic opportunities in rural areas. During the 1950s, urbanization grew by more than 5%. However, urban areas in Pakistan face challenges such as unemployment, traffic congestion, and law enforcement issues. Despite its importance, rural-urban migration has received insufficient attention in Pakistan, making it critical for long-term urban development. Addressing these challenges is critical for long-term urban growth.

Furthermore, the rapid expansion of urban areas and insufficient infrastructure development have presented difficulties in accommodating and integrating migrants into cities, exacerbating housing, transportation, sanitation, and healthcare issues (Al-Rashid, Nadeem, Aldosary, Harumain, & Arshad, 2021; Ghafoor & Akbar, 2022; Javed & Farhan, 2020). To address these problems, it is crucial to understand the historical factors and the causes that have contributed to urban migration in Pakistan. First, this study investigates the historical trends of urban migration in Pakistan to identify the underlying factors that have influenced this movement. This study aims to answer the complex correlation between social, economic, and environmental factors that have influenced migration patterns in the country. It will do so by analyzing the origins and drivers of urban migration. Second, this study aims to improve the development of policies and interventions in Pakistan by utilizing strong evidence. The policies and interventions focus on prioritizing sustainable urban development, improving the well-being of migrants, and fostering inclusive growth, which can be accomplished by analyzing historical trends and identifying the key drivers of urban migration. Third, examine migration's underlying causes and contributing factors to devise efficient strategies to maximize its beneficial effects and tackle the associated difficulties.

The phenomenon of urban migration in Pakistan is expected to persist and possibly intensify, which places additional pressure on urban infrastructure and services (Ahmed et al., 2021; Ghafoor, 2023). To effectively address the ongoing trend of people moving from rural to urban areas, engaging in careful and deliberate planning and allocating resources to urban regions is essential to ensure the growing invasion of migrants is appropriately accommodated and sustainable development is promoted.

Review of Literature

The historical urban migration trends in Pakistan can be traced back to the mid-20th century. At first, the migration from rural areas to urban areas was driven by multiple factors (Cohen, 2004). A necessary precursor was the division of British India in 1947, resulting in the displacement of millions and the rise of urban areas as havens and economic prospects. In addition, the Green Revolution during the 1960s and 1970s led to increased migration from rural to urban areas (Niazi, 2004). This was due to the introduction of mechanization in agriculture, which reduced the demand for manual labor and prompted people to move to cities in search of other means of making a living (Ali et al., 2018).

Various studies have examined the patterns and causes of urban migration in Pakistan. Salik, Qaisrani, Umar, and Ali (2017) discovered that migration has played a substantial role in increasing and redistributing the population in Pakistan. Specifically, they found that internal migration to urban areas is linked to improved reproductive and maternal healthcare availability for married Pakistani women aged 15–49. Nevertheless, this correlation was significantly weakened when accounting for sociodemographic disparities, specifically regarding education and wealth. Ahmed et al. (2021) brought attention to the problem of urban sprawl in Pakistan. The study revealed that weak urban development policies have resulted in the uncontrolled expansion of significant cities, frequently extending into valuable agricultural areas. These findings indicate a requirement for policy reform, advocacy for women's rights to improve access to reproductive and maternal care, and effective urban development policies to control unplanned urbanization and safeguard agricultural land (Jahan, Vuckovic, Sara Kabir, Rashid, & Bouey, 2024; Vučković & Adams, 2022).

Multiple studies provide empirical evidence that migration in Pakistan is strongly linked to differences in productivity between rural and urban areas, levels of human development, investments in urban areas, and technological progress (Irfan, 1986; A. H. Khan, Shehnaz, & Ahmed, 2000; Mahmud, Musaddiq, Said, & Sabir, 2010). Studies suggest that multiple factors that encourage migration exist in rural regions of Pakistan. These factors include substantial disparities in society, deeply rooted caste hierarchies, imbalances in power, restricted job prospects, rapid population expansion, insufficient social welfare provisions, and diminishing land ownership accompanied by a decrease in agricultural labor per person (Ghafoor & Akbar, 2022; Nasir, Yasmin, & Safdar, 2021; Yasmin, Nasir, Safdar, & Iqbal, 2021). On the other hand, urban areas significantly influence the attraction of migrants. These include a broad range of benefits, such as increased economic prospects, elevated wages, improved availability of essential resources like clean drinking water, sanitation, transportation, advanced communication infrastructure, enhanced educational opportunities, freedom in choosing a spouse, and improved healthcare and recreational facilities for residents (Farooq & Javed, 2009).

The migration patterns of individuals are greatly influenced by their educational attainment, as highly educated individuals are more inclined to migrate than those with low literacy levels (Barnum & Sabot, 1977; Busso, Chauvin, & Herrera, 2021). The study classified individuals' literacy status as either literate or illiterate based on the criteria established by the Labor Force Survey (LFS). According to the LFS, literacy is the capability of individuals ten years and older to read and write in any language with comprehension. To conduct analysis, individuals who were proficient in reading and writing and had different levels of education were further categorized into four groups: primary and below, matric, intermediate, and graduation and above. Over the years, there has been a significant rise in the percentage of educated immigrants while the percentage of uneducated immigrants has decreased (A. Khan, Tippu, Ur Rehman, & Ali, 2021). The increasing pattern observed among various educational levels indicates a preference among highly educated young individuals to relocate to urban regions (Shah, Amjad, Hameed, & Shahzad, 2020).

Regarding gender disparities, the literacy rates of males exceed those of females. Nevertheless, the percentage of educated females relocating to urban areas has risen due to higher education, primarily motivated by matrimonial considerations within educated households (Goodburn, 2020). On the other hand, the extent of female migration driven by economic reasons is still restricted. This study corroborates prior research suggesting that the educated younger workforce residing in rural areas is progressively attracted to urban centers through migration, potentially leading to a decline in rural productivity (Williamson, 1988). Furthermore, it strengthens the evidence of a positive relationship between higher education and the tendency to migrate, as found in previous research (Busso et al., 2021).

Umair and Naz (2019) investigate the relationship between marital status and migration in developing economies. In these economies, traditional values and social norms frequently emphasize marriage as a critical factor in migrating people from rural to urban areas. This trend is less prevalent in developed nations (Thadani & Todaro, 2019). The marital status of migrants was classified into three distinct categories: individuals who have never been married, those who are currently married, and individuals who are widowed or divorced. An examination of migration patterns over time indicates a rise in the percentage of married migrants, while other marital statuses have experienced a decrease. Migrants who are highly educated and have higher incomes may choose to move to urban areas with their families,



expecting to find favorable opportunities. Married men usually either relocate with their wives or leave them behind with other households while still sending money to support their families. Marriages linked to migration from rural regions help reduce income uncertainties and enable the smoothing of consumption patterns (Dercon, [2002](#); Kaczan & Orgill-Meyer, [2020](#)).

Rural-urban migrants typically find employment in three primary sectors: agriculture, industry, and services. Although the agricultural sector in Pakistan employs a substantial portion of the country's labor force, it has limited participation from migrants. Most migrants secure jobs in the industrial and services sectors, with occupations in agriculture and industry demonstrating favorable patterns. Conversely, rural-urban migrants show a decline in the services sector. In rural areas of Pakistan, females are primarily employed as unpaid workers. Simultaneously, males dominate the workforce of the industrial and services sectors, which necessitates specialized training and skills. This can be attributed to males' greater access to education and training opportunities. The majority of rural-urban migrants exhibit a preference for establishing residence in major urban hubs, such as Lahore, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, and Karachi. Male participation rates among rural-urban migrants significantly surpass those of females (Salik, [2023](#); Waseem & Talpur, [2021](#)).

Historical Patterns of Human Migration

Pakistan has historically been defined by its predominantly rural topography, with most of its population living in rural areas where important industries flourish and political power is concentrated. Nevertheless, this permanent custom is being questioned due to the country's swift urbanization, surpassing other South Asian nations with an annual urbanization rate of 3% (Planning Commission, 2013). 20% of the urban growth can be attributed to rural-to-urban migration, as Hasan and Raza ([2009](#)) indicated a notable change in settlement patterns.

In the 1960s, implementing "Green Revolution" technologies in rural Pakistan brought about a notable transition from subsistence agriculture to a farming system that required more capital investment. This transformation resulted in a demand for currency that surpassed the financial capabilities of numerous rural economies, especially those in poor villages (Ali et al., [2018](#); Niazi, [2004](#)). Simultaneously, the increase in the need for low-skilled workers due to industrialization in cities accelerated the movement of people from rural areas to urban areas. The constraints imposed by population growth on scarce land resources, coupled with the escalating expenses and declining profitability of agricultural endeavors, forced small landholders to pursue alternative means of earning income, such as engaging in daily wage labor or seasonal employment. Urban areas have become appealing destinations due to their superior economic opportunities (Goodburn, [2020](#); Hasan & Raza, [2009](#)). Recent statistics reveal that 8% of Pakistan's population has undergone relocation from their initial place of residence, with the majority (64%) opting for internal migration within the country, specifically towards urban regions. An observable pattern is a substantial increase in the number of migrants relocating to major metropolitan areas, with approximately 25% choosing to settle in the four primary urban hubs, specifically Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, and Rawalpindi (Ejaz & Mallawaarachchi, [2023](#)).

The occurrence of internal migration within Pakistan is not a recent phenomenon. Currently, individuals are motivated to migrate from rural to urban areas due to various factors, including the pursuit of better job prospects, the desire to access improved social services, and the need to escape conflicts, insecurity, and natural disasters. The increasing population growth highlights the continuing shift towards urbanization. Nevertheless, internal migration has changed in scale and characteristics over time, significantly affecting migrant households (Rafiq, Saeed, & Israr, [2022](#)). Projections indicate that by 2050, more than 50% of Pakistan's population will live in urban areas. The demographic transition has made internal migration a significant policy concern. It is recognized for its dual function as a catalyst for economic growth and modernization and contributes to urban poverty and the decline of traditional rural ways of life.

Table 1

Migration destinations in Pakistan

Place of Present Residence	Place of Previous Residence
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	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total	Total
Both Sexes	100	22.2	60.89	11.61	2.71	2.06	0.53
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	13.99	13.2	0.52	0.11	0.04	0.09	0.03
Punjab	68.69	6.53	57.8	1.46	0.67	1.9	0.33
Sindh	15.51	2.45	2.49	10	0.33	0.07	0.17
Balochistan	1.81	0.02	0.08	0.04	1.67	0.01	-
Male	38.09	10.33	20.77	4.37	1.4	0.97	0.26
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	5.97	5.6	0.23	0.07	0.02	0.04	0.01
Punjab	24.93	3.51	19.37	0.64	0.36	0.89	0.16
Sindh	6.24	1.21	1.12	3.63	0.15	0.04	0.09
Balochistan	0.95	0.01	0.05	0.02	0.87	-	-
Female	61.91	11.87	40.12	7.24	1.31	1.09	0.27
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	8.01	7.6	0.29	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.02
Punjab	43.76	3.02	38.43	0.81	0.31	1.01	0.18
Sindh	9.27	1.24	1.37	6.37	0.18	0.03	0.08
Balochistan	0.86	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.8	-	-

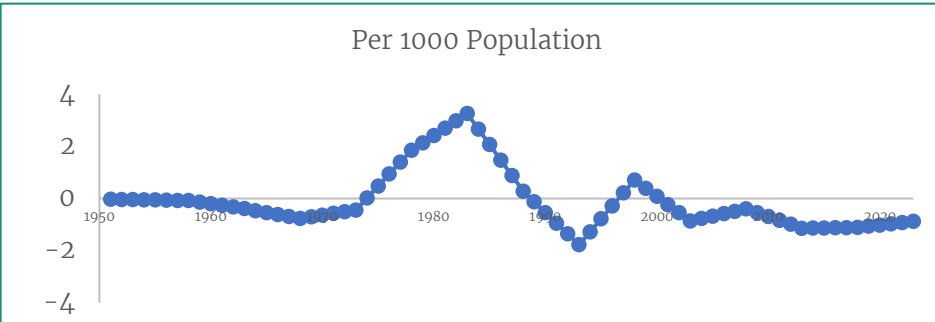
Source: Pakistan Labour Force Survey, 2020-21

Note: all the values are for ten years of age and over

Current trends in Pakistan indicate a notable shift in population dynamics, as depicted in Table 31.1, with urban areas experiencing significant growth. Projections suggest that by 2050, over half of Pakistan's population will reside in urban areas. This demographic transition has elevated internal migration to a prominent policy concern, acknowledged for its dual role as a driver of economic growth and modernization, as well as a contributor to urban deprivation and the erosion of traditional rural lifestyles.

Figure 2

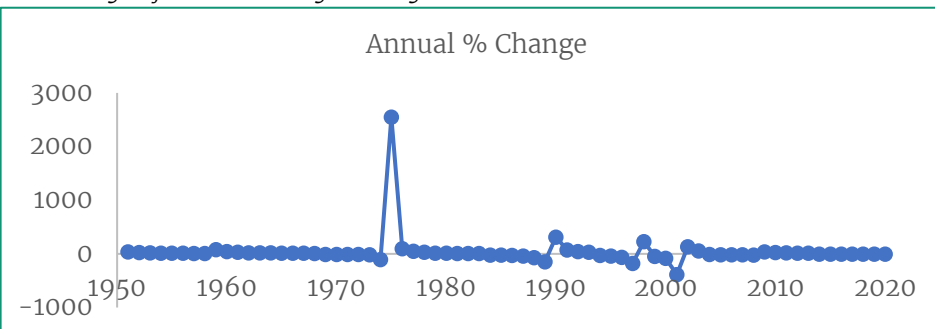
Migration trend per 1000 population in Pakistan



Source: World Bank (2023)

Figure 3

Percentage of annual change in migration in Pakistan



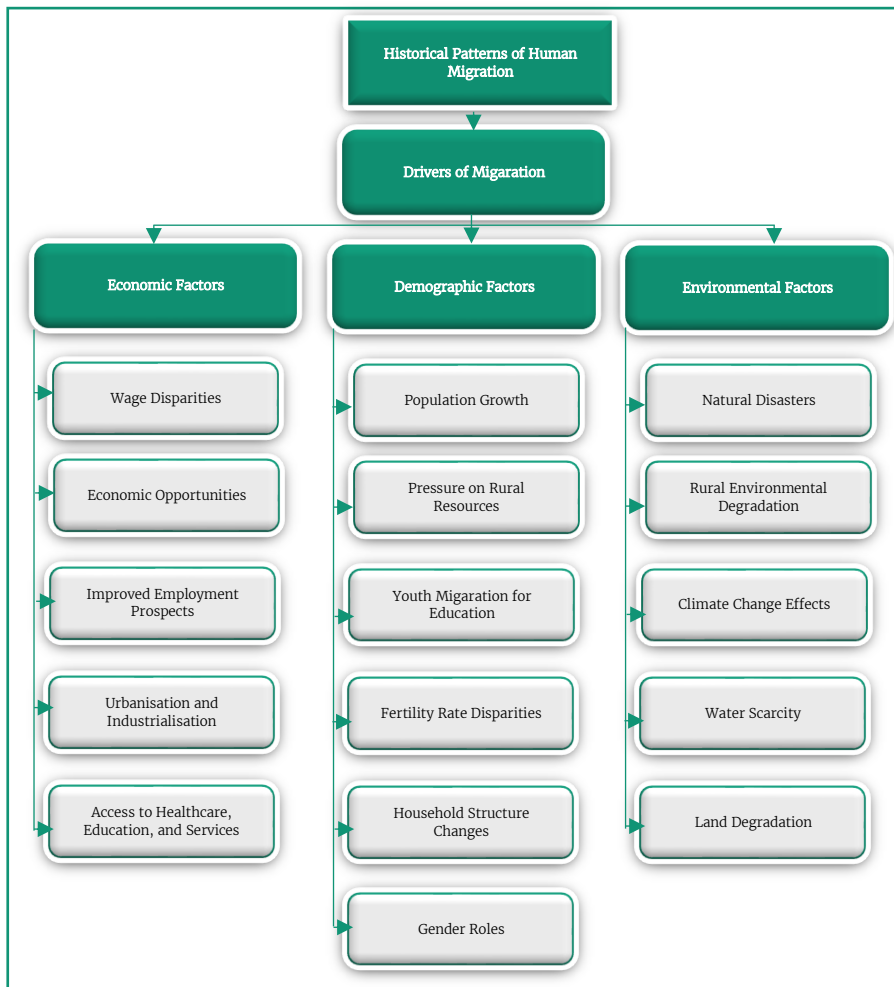
Source: World Bank (2023)

Drivers of Migration



Various factors have consistently contributed to the ongoing urban migration in Pakistan. The scarcity of employment opportunities and the prevalence of low wages in rural regions have been significant economic drivers, as depicted in Figure 4.

Figure 4
Percentage of annual change in migration in Pakistan



Moreover, the attraction of high-quality education, healthcare facilities, and well-developed infrastructure in urban regions has also had a significant impact. Furthermore, the migration antecedents are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1
Migration antecedents of migration, sex, and area

Main Reason for Migration	All Areas			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total	100.0	40.0	60.0	45.9	17.2	28.7	54.1	22.8	31.3
Job transfer	1.1	1.1	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.8	0.8	0.1
Found a Job	4.3	4.2	0.1	1.4	1.3	0.1	2.9	2.8	0.1
Searching for a Job	6.5	6.3	0.2	2.0	1.9	0.1	4.5	4.4	0.1
Searching for a better agricultural land	1.0	1.0	0.1	0.9	0.9	0.1	0.1	0.1	-
Education	1.3	1.0	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.0	1.0	0.8	0.2
Business	2.0	1.9	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.0	1.4	1.4	0.0
Health	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	-
Marriage	38.2	0.3	37.9	20.3	0.1	20.2	17.9	0.2	17.7
With parents	19.9	12.6	7.3	7.4	4.7	2.7	12.5	7.9	4.6

Main Reason for Migration	All Areas			Rural			Urban		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
With spouse	9.9	0.2	9.7	3.4	0.1	3.3	6.5	0.1	6.5
With son/daughter	1.2	0.4	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.6
Change of Residence	4.9	3.6	1.3	1.8	1.3	0.5	3.0	2.2	0.8
He returned to his home	5.8	5.0	0.7	4.8	4.2	0.6	0.9	0.9	0.1
Security/Law & order situation	2.0	1.3	0.7	1.2	0.7	0.5	0.8	0.6	0.2
Natural disaster	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Other	1.7	0.9	0.7	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.8	0.3	0.5

Source: Pakistan Labour Force Survey, 2020–21

Note: all the values are for ten years of age and over

Economic Factors

The significant influence of economic factors on migration, specifically in the context of urban migration in Pakistan, has been widely recognized. The factors above are pivotal in shaping individuals' decisions to migrate from rural to urban areas for improved economic opportunities and lifestyles. To understand the historical trends of urban migration in Pakistan, it is essential to conduct a comprehensive examination of the economic factors that have influenced migration patterns over the years.

The migration in Pakistan is predominantly motivated by economic factors, including wage disparities between rural and urban regions, economic opportunities, and the aspiration for improved employment prospects (Ejaz & Mallawaarachchi, 2023; Ghafoor & Akbar, 2022; Shujaat, 2021). The migration decision is often motivated by dire economic conditions and domestic and international labor market challenges. Moreover, the rapid urbanization in Pakistan results from migration driven by the perception that urban areas provide enhanced access to healthcare, education, and essential services. Moreover, the process of urbanization and industrialization has been acknowledged as influential factors that affect the migration patterns within the country. An investigation conducted in Pakistan analyzed the disentanglement of economic activity from its environmental repercussions. The study highlighted the impact of urbanization and industrialization in facilitating economic progress while recognizing the negative consequences on environmental conditions (Ejaz & Mallawaarachchi, 2023).

Moreover, the wage discrepancies between rural and urban regions and economic opportunities are recognized as significant factors driving internal migration in Pakistan. This is accompanied by enhancing employment and business prospects (Barnum & Sabot, 1977; Nasir et al., 2021). The economic factors discussed here are pivotal in driving the significant migration from rural to urban areas in Pakistan, thereby shaping the country's urbanization patterns. The economic factors mentioned significantly impact both internal and international migration patterns in Pakistan, thus shaping the country's demographic and urbanization trends. The availability of employment opportunities in urban areas significantly incentivizes individuals to relocate from rural to urban areas. Historically, the urban areas of Pakistan have attracted individuals from rural regions by offering employment opportunities in a wide range of industries, such as manufacturing, construction, trade, and services. Economic restructuring, industrialization, and urbanization have led to the concentration of economic activities in urban areas, creating a demand for a workforce and attracting individuals searching for job prospects. Urban areas provide a conducive environment for entrepreneurship and business ventures, offering opportunities to access markets, networks, and resources that can facilitate the establishment and growth of businesses. Urban areas strongly appeal to many migrants because of their opportunities to start businesses or engage in informal economic activities (Marotzke, Semmann, & Milinski, 2020). They actively exploit urban markets and networks to pursue economic opportunities and generate income (Salik et al., 2017).

Moreover, the discrepancies in income between rural and urban areas have served as a substantial catalyst for migration. Rural communities often face limited economic prospects, low wages, and intermittent unemployment, which prompt individuals and families to move to urban areas for higher incomes and better living standards. The allure of higher pay and the potential for upward social mobility has prompted many individuals to relocate to urban areas for economic improvement (Guhl & Ramírez,



[2021](#)). Due to the high incidence of poverty and the absence of a reliable source of income in rural areas, many individuals and families have been compelled to migrate to urban areas to escape financial hardships. Rural communities experience poverty due to limited land availability, challenges in agricultural output, and vulnerability to environmental disturbances such as droughts and floods (Tacoli, [2009](#)).

As a result, people are forced to move to cities to find better economic opportunities and obtain more stable income sources and livelihood choices. Urban areas often offer better access to essential services such as education, healthcare, sanitation, and transportation, which are vital for improving people's lives and promoting economic well-being. The discrepancy in the accessibility of these services between urban and rural areas compels individuals and families to relocate in search of improved living standards and opportunities for economic advancement, as well as access to amenities that can enhance their overall welfare (Salik, [2023](#)).

Demographic Factors

Demographic factors substantially influence migration patterns and trends when analyzing the reasons behind migration. Demographic factors have significantly influenced the migration of people from rural areas to urban centers in Pakistan's urbanization process. Pakistan has experienced significant growth over the past century, leading to increased pressure on rural resources and prospects for livelihood. As rural populations expand, people naturally tend to move to urban areas for better economic prospects, jobs, and improved quality of life. The demographic makeup of rural and urban populations can influence migration patterns (Nisar, Akram, & Hussain, [2013](#)). Younger individuals, particularly those seeking enhanced educational, occupational, and marital prospects, typically migrate to urban regions where these opportunities are more abundant. Conversely, the existence of elderly individuals in rural regions may lead to a decline in population as younger individuals relocate in pursuit of more favorable prospects (Goodburn, [2020](#)).

Urbanization significantly impacts migration patterns. Urban areas undergo a rise in population and economic significance, enticing individuals from rural regions in search of employment prospects in diverse sectors, such as manufacturing, services, and informal labor. Migration is further encouraged by the concentration of economic activities and infrastructure in urban areas. Changes in fertility rates can influence migration patterns by altering the dynamics of population growth and the makeup of households (Farah, Zafar, & Nawaz, [2012](#)). The disparity in fertility rates between urban and rural areas can lead to migration, as families choose to have fewer children and seek better access to education and healthcare for their children in urban settings. Furthermore, changes in household structures, such as the prevalence of nuclear families rather than extended families, can impact decisions regarding migration. For example, young adults may independently move from rural households to urban areas to find jobs.

On the other hand, older individuals may move to another place because they want to be with their family members again or because they have responsibilities to care for someone. Moreover, gender plays a significant role in shaping migration patterns, as demonstrated by the differences in the reasons and experiences of male and female migrants. In male-dominated societies like Pakistan, it is customary for men to engage in labor migration. Simultaneously, matrimony, education, or familial reunification frequently shapes women's migration.

Environmental Factors

Environmental factors play a significant role in shaping migration patterns when analyzing Pakistan's historical urban migration trends. Environmental factors and modifications can significantly influence individuals' decisions to migrate from rural to urban areas. Pakistan is prone to various natural disasters, such as floods, earthquakes, and droughts. Throughout history, these disasters have displaced communities, prompting many individuals to relocate to urban areas perceived as safer or more resilient. For example, when there are catastrophic floods in rural areas, people often move in large numbers to urban areas, where the effects of these disasters may be less severe (Priovashini & Mallick, [2022](#)). Rural areas may undergo degradation due to soil erosion, deforestation, and water scarcity, resulting in reduced agricultural productivity and limited livelihood prospects. Therefore, rural populations may move to urban areas to access alternative job prospects and enhance their quality of life (Ahmad & Afzal, [2020](#)). Climate

change exacerbates environmental challenges in Pakistan, including modified precipitation patterns, heightened temperatures, and increasingly frequent extreme weather events. The modifications can disrupt traditional livelihoods and agricultural practices, forcing rural inhabitants to move to urban areas that provide more excellent economic stability and opportunities.

The issue of water scarcity is a pressing concern in multiple regions of Pakistan, particularly in rural areas that rely heavily on agriculture. Population growth, inefficient irrigation techniques, and climate change can deplete water resources, compelling rural inhabitants to migrate to urban regions with relatively more reliable water availability (Ahmad & Afzal, 2021). Land degradation from overgrazing, soil erosion, and inadequate land management practices can lead to declining agricultural productivity over time. This phenomenon can lead to rural-urban migration as farmers seek better opportunities in urban areas, where they have the potential to secure employment in non-agricultural sectors (Fahad & Wang, 2020).

Conclusion and Policy Recommendation

The migration in Pakistan is predominantly motivated by economic factors, including wage disparities between rural and urban regions, economic prospects, and the aspiration to secure improved employment. Severe economic circumstances and difficulties in the job market, both within the country and abroad, frequently drive the choice to migrate. The swift urbanization in Pakistan results from migration driven by the perception of enhanced accessibility to healthcare, education, and essential services in urban areas. The emigration from Pakistan is mainly driven by sluggish economic growth and rapid population growth, resulting in higher rates of unemployment, low wages, natural calamities, and political instability.

The primary factors influencing internal migration in Pakistan are the wage disparities between rural and urban regions, the potential for economic advancement, and the aspiration to secure improved employment and business opportunities. The country's migration patterns have been significantly impacted by urbanization and industrialization. The income disparities between rural and urban areas have been a significant driver for migration, as rural communities frequently encounter restricted economic opportunities, meager wages, and seasonal joblessness. The attraction of increased salaries and the possibility of upward social mobility have motivated numerous individuals to move to urban areas for economic success. Urban areas often offer better access to essential services such as education, healthcare, sanitation, and transportation, which are vital for improving quality of life and promoting economic well-being. The economic factors discussed here have a pivotal influence on both domestic and international migration patterns in Pakistan, significantly affecting the country's demographic and urbanization trends. Demographic factors such as population growth, age distribution, urbanization, fertility rates, household structures, and gender significantly influence migration patterns in Pakistan. The rapid increase in population has led to increased pressure on rural resources and limited livelihood opportunities. As a result, people are migrating for better economic prospects, employment, and improved living conditions. Urban areas exert a strong pull on younger individuals, particularly those seeking opportunities for education, employment, and marriage. Urbanization attracts migrants from rural areas seeking employment opportunities in diverse industries. Changes also impact migration decisions regarding fertility rates, household structures, and gender. Environmental factors significantly impact migration. Pakistan is prone to natural disasters, which cause people to be displaced and force many individuals to seek refuge in urban areas. Rural areas may be degraded due to soil erosion, deforestation, and water scarcity. This degradation can result in reduced agricultural productivity and livelihood opportunities. The consequences of climate change, including modified precipitation patterns, elevated temperatures, and increased occurrence of severe weather phenomena, can disrupt traditional livelihoods and agricultural practices, prompting rural inhabitants to migrate to urban areas for economic stability and improved opportunities.

This study emphasizes prioritizing rural development, improving urban infrastructure, strengthening disaster preparedness and resilience, and addressing wage disparities and limited economic opportunities in rural areas by making targeted investments in agriculture, infrastructure, and small-scale businesses. Improving healthcare facilities, educational institutions, sanitation, and transportation networks might address these challenges. Improving disaster preparedness and response mechanisms, such as early



warning systems and infrastructure resilience projects, can help reduce natural disasters' impact on migration. Climate change adaptation strategies, such as sustainable agriculture and watershed management, can help rural communities build resilience. Regional cooperation is also proposed through bilateral and multilateral agreements to address cross-border migration issues such as labor migration, refugee flows, and environmental displacement.

This study utilizes descriptive analysis as its basis; however, future research could utilize quantitative data analysis to measure the impact of each identified factor accurately. By using existing cross-sectional data in Pakistan, future studies can better measure patterns in these variables, which will improve our understanding of migration dynamics. Furthermore, although this research specifically concentrates on Pakistan, it can expand to other Asian nations and even have a global impact.

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