

Open Access 

Socio-Economic Factors Contributing to Human Trafficking in Pakistan

Munawwar Sultana ¹

Abstract: *The nature and causes of human trafficking in Pakistan are multifaceted and are closely linked with the socio-economy context. Literacy, any form of the disease, illness, joblessness, and inequality makes people develop weakness and easily are forced to be traffickers or become victims of trafficking. These cover economic demand and poverty that force people to look for a way to survive, cultural inclinations that encourage gender discrimination and caste discrimination that exposes certain groups of society to human trafficking. These conditions make the environment favourable for traffickers to exploit people for labour or sexual purposes and continue the cycle of poverty and pain. This calls for multi-sectorial interventions alongside the legislation to fight human trafficking in Pakistan, where besides the causes that create the market for trafficking are the traffickers themselves. This paper aims to explore the socio-economic factors that prevail in human trafficking in Pakistan and put forward advisory steps for the appropriate response. Through the elimination of poverty, expansion of educational access, eradication of discriminative social and cultural, enhancement of law and order, and provision of numberless victim support services, Pakistan will be able to eradicate this heinous crime on human rights.*

Key Words: Human Trafficking, Pakistan, Socio-economic Factors, Poverty, Education, Social Inequality, Vulnerability, Exploitation, Prevention

Introduction

The problem under consideration is a complex one that refers to the most various forms of human trafficking in Pakistan, including forced marriages, bonded labor and, finally, organ trafficking. Knowledge regarding the socio-economic antecedent of this prevalent problem is vital in designing respanning interventions and policies. The poor relationship between poverty, unemployment, and social instability means that more people, especially women and children, become sacrifices for the international trafficking networks. This vulnerability is made worse when trusting the criminal justice systems in the world because they do not adequately address the issue of human trafficking and victims' security (Baig, [2024](#); Khan et al., [2022](#)).

The socio-economic change in Pakistan highly affects human trafficking. Starkist surveys suggest that people are forced into trafficking due to economic vulnerability since many are attracted to dreams of employment and improved livelihood (Joiya & Quddus, [2022](#); Nadeem, [2024](#)). A survey done in Punjab pointed out the fact that demographic factors like marital state and economic state significantly define the vulnerability of a person to human trafficking (Joiya & Quddus, [2022](#)). Moreover, the low level of education and the high unemployment really do not allow the start of a cycle of poverty that makes people easier to being exploited (Nadeem, [2024](#)). As seen from above, there is a positive association between socio-economic status and trafficking; this shows that there is a need for deep socio-economic changes in order to address the socio-economic factors that continue to encourage trafficking.

Furthermore, Pakistan is considered to be encouraging human trafficking as critics complain about the weakness of the criminal justice system in this country. Baig points out that This system has a complex approach towards trafficking. However, the regulations in place are not always implemented effectively, and there is impunity for the traffickers (Baig, [2024](#)). This, together with the poor record-keeping on

¹ PhD Scholar, Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto University of Law, Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan.

trafficking cases, makes it difficult to develop programmes to address this problem, as it is harder to institute specific measures when data is scarce (Munir, 2015; Schmidt, 2020). The factors of socioeconomic nature and the inefficiency of the criminal justice system collectively make fighting against human trafficking in Pakistan complicated.

Another type of human trafficking in Pakistan is organ trafficking. The demand for human organs, both legal and black market, is growing continuously in Pakistan. Yousaf and Purkayastha note that Pakistan is one of the main markets in the black market for organs since poor people are deceived into donating their organs (Yousaf & Purkayastha, 2015). This exploitation is made easier by the lack of proper rules governing the country's medical facilities and the oppression of the poor by the BNP. This form of trafficking does not only involve human rights but also provokes serious health consequences among the victims engaged in such a process (Yousaf & Purkayastha, 2015; Budiani-Saberi & Columb, 2013). From the aforementioned discussion, it is equally clear that the socio-economic vulnerability of individuals and the general absence and/or inefficiency of relevant legislation contribute to the development of organ trafficking.

Similar to the cases of women and girls forced into marriage through human trafficking, one can elucidate the socio-economic aspect of human trafficking in Pakistan. Kakar et al. give information on how such people live and the health vulnerability and abuse that they endure (Kakar et al., 2020). This work also establishes that women and girls are trafficked into Pakistan from countries like Afghanistan for forced marriages in which the woman and girl encounter severe violence associated with marital relations. These causes are also associated with socioeconomic factors because some families may venture into trafficking due to economic complications (Kakar et al., 2020; Yousaf, 2017). Gender, class as well as cultural attitudes are key determinates of these forms of exploitation.

However, there is also concern with the issues that may be indirectly related to socio-economic; for example, the problems of drugs, irregular migration, etc, are also contributing to the trafficking of women in Pakistan. This study demonstrates that socioeconomic issues are currently causing increased drug dependency, implicitly triggering the growth of cartels that victimize other people (Nadeem, 2024). The fact that such problems are cyclical justifies further consideration of the multifaceted approaches to human trafficking and its manifestations in connection with other social and economic factors affecting the susceptibility of people to trafficking.

Moreover, the impact of forced migration on the increase in human trafficking cannot be challenged. Yousaf furnishes her assertion by dividing the forced migrants into different categories and claims that such persons are more vulnerable to trafficking since they are forced to live in terrible conditions and situations whereby they can easily be exploited (Yousaf, 2017). In many cases, this separation of rhetoric and implementation means that migrants are not only vulnerable to trafficking networks within societies. This goes a long way in supporting policy change that aims to enhance human security and find out the cause of forced migration.

Human trafficking is not simply an issue that affects the victim only but breaks up families and multiple communities. The socio-economic costs of diaspora on families left behind in Pakistan can themselves offer other forms of risks as families depend on remittances from those engage in trafficking or forced migratory movement (Ullah, 2022). Such reliance may create reliance and make victims continue to experience poverty and exploitation thus the need for policy makers should take time to look at the socio economic factor when addressing human trafficking issue.

Sexual exploitation and human trafficking in Pakistan involve various aspects of socio-economic problems set in the South Asian Nation. Poverty and unemployment, coupled with other problems in corrections, trials, and sentencing mechanisms, make the vulnerable easy to exploit. To this extent, the solution to this problem will involve socio-economic reforms, which strengthen legal frameworks and uphold the rights and dignity of vulnerable groups. This paper argues that only by analysing the socio-economic factors that underlie human trafficking can suitable countermeasures be designed to address this blatant disregard for human rights.

It is significant to understand that socio-economic factors are a great influence towards human trafficking in Pakistan. Poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment make a population an easy target for human



traffic dealers. The need to seek a better job and higher-paid job, made worse by social factors like discrimination against women and girls and the caste system, makes some groups more vulnerable and susceptible to human trafficking. These factors provide an environment for traffickers to thrive and enslave people for forced labor or purposes of sexual exploitation, keeping them in a cycle of poverty and abuse.

Socio-Economic Factors

Poverty

Sanchez (2005) defines poverty as the lack of social capital as well as economic capital and, therefore, the lack of a support network. Poverty is described in several forms in Pakistan; namely, absolute poverty, which ensues on a bare minimum requirement for human existence and relative poverty, which compares the poverty status of the individual household to other households. According to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics the population living below the poverty line was recorded to be as few as 9.4 percent in the last census conducted in 2017 though it could have risen due to various problems that Pakistan had economically and virus outbreak inclusive being COVID 19. The MDPI gives an even clearer view of the compound nature of poverty in Pakistan – a staggering 48% of the population in some regions, including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, are deprived in at least two or more indicators ranging from education to health.

The population of Pakistan is one of the most impoverished in the world, especially female, juvenile, and impoverished rural persons. This paper explores how, due to structural factors, women – who make up almost half the population – are locked out of meaningful economic activity and how this perpetuates and deepens poverty among households. It is more culture-bound for women to be brought up in homes and be expected not to go to school or get a job (Zakar et al., 2012). Such non-empowerment not only has a tendency to establish poverty within households but also hinders new economic growth at the national level. In addition, children from poor families cannot go to school, and the cycle of poverty remains for generations (Kurosaki, 2022). Poverty affects this vulnerable group in very many ways. They are more prone to sickness, especially malnutrition, health complications and other physiological-related diseases, and this just adds to the already disadvantaged group (Khan & Yahong, 2021).

This paper discusses the factors that have contributed to the poverty level in Pakistan, particularly with a focus on economic disparities. The Division between the Haves and Haves-not has deepened, bringing to a large extent a situation where the chances of moving up the social ladder are extremely limited. The social differences in economics are taken advantage of by the traffickers because they find their targets, especially women and children (Shakoor, 2022). Political instability intermingled with corruption and scarce economic opportunities makes such countries vulnerable to exploitation, including human trafficking (Shakeel & Hayat, 2020). Management policies that could address inequality and support the vulnerable to avoid situations that make them easily exploitable have not been implemented as expected by the government (Anwar, 2022).

However, the prevalence of poverty, economic inequality, and vulnerability are even more intertwined with disasters and climate change risks that affect the Pakistani poor population. The country is highly vulnerable to a range of natural risks like floods and earthquakes, which easily endanger livelihoods and worsen poverty levels (Piracha & Chaudhary, 2015). The social vulnerability of the poor to such disasters is attributed to their inability to reverse their misfortune when disasters strike because they cannot afford to reconstruct their lives as members of a rich society (Soharwardi et al., 2021). Hence, the states of poverty reproduce the other by perpetuating poor susceptibilities to disasters that make them poorer still and regiment them in squalor.

This paper postulates that poverty eradication in Pakistan can only be done by deploying a coordinated framework that will address the various aspects of poverty. To support such approaches, women's rights to education and access to healthcare as the key to poverty alleviation should become benchmarks as well (Sarwar & Chaudhry, 2021). Further, the government pursues policies to reduce inequality and increase productivity in the economy, like investment in infrastructure and social security nets for persons in need (Shakeel & Hayat, 2020). Only when education, healthcare, and economic opportunities have been made accessible to everyone as a basic right in Pakistan will the causes of poverty be solved.

Poverty and Economic disparity in Pakistan are social problems which are multifaceted and demand combined efforts to solve. Because of poverty, vulnerability and inequality, which are inevitable in today's world – it becomes very difficult for many people, especially women and children. To tackle the above challenges, it is thus important to address policies meant to address the problem among vulnerable groups and support economic growth, which addresses the above problem. For poverty alleviation and a better and prosperous future for all citizens of Pakistan, the said picture can only come true if all work collectively.

Lack Of Education

It is considered that the illiterate people of Pakistan had no awareness of human trafficking, and the issue was so connected to socio-economic factors, gender and other inequalities. Education plays an important role in keeping people aware and prepared to mitigate and defeat human trafficking. Thus, the role of awareness in this case cannot be overemphasized; apart from creating awareness that will discourage the practice, education empowers the most vulnerable populace, beginning with the girl child and female.

A study shows that failure to educate is one of the causes of human trafficking. Lack of work experience, low literacy, or no education at all may make a person easily manipulated, and often, they do not even know that they can turn to someone for help or appeal against injustice (Spire, 2021). This vulnerability is well known for women and girls in Pakistan as cultural and social barriers deprive them of the opportunity to receive education. Education is scarce for such categories of people; hence, they end up being poor and helpless, thus easily vulnerable to the traffickers since they have no hope in life (Barner et al., 2014). In addition, pertinent learning programs that concern the issue of human trafficking aid in prevention since the at-risk populace is made aware of the techniques employed by traffickers and also of available support (Stanescu et al., 2023).

Campaigns focusing on high-risk groups are considered to be reliable strategies to prevent trafficking in persons. For instance, the utilization of interprofessional learning in various professional areas like healthcare and law enforcement can help these professionals improve their capacity to identify and support trafficking victims (Awerbuch et al., 2020). Healthcare worker awareness training may be needed because the primary focus of victims interacting with traffickers is healthcare workers, and it is common for victims to be exploited and undetected because of a lack of understanding (Klabbers, 2023). Also, mainstreaming anti-trafficking education into school-based programmes can engage youths with sound knowledge about their rights as well as the risks involved in human trafficking hence a culture of no tolerance to the vice in society can easily be institutionalize (Zhu et al., 2020).

Besides, the socio-economic facts of the country of origin – Pakistan, make the problem of human trafficking even more critical. There is a correlation between high levels of poverty and social inequalities and traffic in persons. Due to pervasive economic vulnerability, families are able to make quite questionable decisions, including exposing their children to collaboration where they may be exploited (Barner et al., 2014). This is important because educational endeavours to combat poverty and empower girls will help people find jobs and avoid being prey to traffickers (Bain, 2017). However, it is possible not only to eliminate trafficking but also to concentrate on its causes during education and fight for broader changes in society.

However, there is a lack of awareness of the relationship between education and combating human trafficking, thus creating a gap. Various people who might come across possible victims and who might potentially assist the victims are often unaware of the definition of human trafficking and its impacts (Bryant & Landman, 2020). This can lead to missed opportunities for prevention and prevention because people become unaware or indoctrinated; they might not even know who are victims of trafficking or have misconceptions about who can be (Cole & Sprang, 2015). Campaigns should educate the population to prevent human trafficking and make society aware of the problem and its effects on the victims, after which increased awareness of the public concerning suspicious activities (Stanescu et al., 2023).

The most common reason for human trafficking In Pakistan is illiteracy and unawareness of the vice. When investing in educational processes that raise awareness, endorse the empowered position of endangered groups, or focus on the socio-economic differences of a nation, Pakistan is making essential progress in struggling with this problematic area. Besides, prevention education also works as a tool for prevention



and main reinforcement, as well as building up the spirit of vulnerable women. Therefore, it is imperative that there should be a multi-tiered approach in terms of implementing anti-trafficking training both in institutions formal and non-formal like schools, hospitals, community centres, etc, to make a response to human trafficking in Pakistan efficient.

Social and Cultural Factors

There is massive prejudice that invades the social and cultural setting of Pakistan, such as gender roles, untouchability, and the social status of victims of human trafficking. All of these factors play their part in negating women and other marginalised groups and produce a web of issues which can't be solved easily to attain the goal of empowering women.

The conventional sex roles in Pakistan are rigid and rooted in the patrifocal social organization, which allows prejudice against women or girls. Women are expected to stay at home and perform housewife duties; thus, very few women receive education or employment opportunities. Such a culture of gender prejudice is observable in different fields; this cuts across the workplace culture where women are subjected to discrimination in areas like employment remuneration discrimination, promotions discrimination and sexual harassment. Both books show that these gender-specific concerns are heightened by family chores, which in turn limit women's employment opportunities (Ali et al., [2022](#); Cheema & Jamal, [2022](#)). In addition, the fraternity's collective negligence of women's rights aggravates the continuation of these traditional roles because people, including men and women, remain ignorant of gender equality based on informed Islamic teachings (Ali et al., [2022](#)).

The Effects of these traditional gender roles are a consequence not only In the section of economic activity but also in the health of women. For example, women in Pakistan are usually confined less to avail medical attendance in the health care centres as their male counterparts are mostly given precedence in their societies (Mumtaz et al., [2022](#)). Such a situation is explained by the fact that women lack access to information on their rights and timely assistance due to social prejudice related to such a request, resulting in worse female health. Additionally, the issues of gender and caste compound these vulnerabilities because women from lower castes do not have the same levels of access to basic services and opportunities (Mumtaz et al., [2022](#); Safdar et al., [2021](#)). As a result, the accumulation of these factors leads to an increased vulnerability of women provided with no essential means by which to pursue their rights.

The long-standing problem of caste-based discrimination in Pakistan also plays into the latter and adds to the exclusion of certain communities, most often belonging to the lower castes. The factors of castes predominate across sectors like education, employment, and social services. Different literature reviews indicate that caste-based stigma reduces the ability to access educational institutions and equals social mobility (Mumtaz et al., [2022](#); Safdar et al., [2021](#)). Thus, caste pressure curves social relations back into an endogamous channel, and the lower castes continue to marry only within their so-called 'low' or 'backward' castes, which maintains the go-round of poverty and marginalization (Safdar et al., [2021](#); Safdar et al., [2021](#)). This discrimination extends to every individual, but of course, it extends to the overall development of the community since caste barriers often lead to conflicts.

Further, when the cast issues are combined with gender issues, the aggregated effect poses even more significant challenges to women from lower casts. These women are usually triply- disadvantaged, which puts them in a disadvantaged position regarding the availability of resources as well as exposure to opportunities. For instance, women from the lower caste feel both the brunt of the feminine as well as the lower caste status, find it harder to be hired, and if hired, are more likely to experience underemployment when compared to the higher caste women (Cheema & Jamal, [2022](#); Safdar et al., [2021](#)). This double oppression is not only with regards to their employment rank but also to their social class within their societies; they are hence bound to continue being vulnerable.

Yet another important factor which increases women's vulnerability is the disgrace associated with the victims of human trafficking in Pakistan. Socially, the end victims of the trade are discriminatorially restricted from their societies upon their release, with high levels of stigmatization. This is so because culture entails the belief systems that put the blame on the bad situations that people get on their backs, thus making it impossible for them to be reintegrated into society (Ahmad et al., [2020](#)). Hence, the number

of those who never report a case of abuse or seek help is high, having been threatened to be further shunned. This societal reaction not only slows their healing process but the survivors are easily forced to go back to their traffickers because they are not seeking assistance or funds to help them (Ahmad et al., [2020](#)).

Besides, the limited solution found in the legal building of Pakistan and the availability of legal aid and shelter for trafficked persons augments the challenge. As much as there are regulative measures against trafficking, implementation is still a major challenge, and victims do not receive legal aid and recovery services (Memon, [2020](#)). This lack of support not only exposes the victims to the risk of being trafficked again but also informs potential traffickers that they can act almost in anarchy. The other challenge is the high level of victim blaming, which makes recovering from trafficking difficult, as societies will not welcome and support survivors due to prejudice (Ahmad et al., [2020](#)).

Gender roles, caste discrimination and special prejudices concerning trafficking aggravate the situation of vulnerability and risks for women and minorities in Pakistan. These questions thus call for a multi-faceted approach: education, legal remodelling and community mobilization to change the status quo and empower women. Therefore, by promoting a discussion and knowledge of these social and cultural factors, this knowledge can be applied towards the formation of an even society that enhances the ability of everyone, regardless of their gender or caste.

Political Factor

The traditional roles assigned to women in Pakistan again pose a major threat, which ensures a continuous subjection of these ladies. The dominant sociopolitical gender relations in society are defined within the framework of the male role and the subordinate female role. This process of 'gender socialisation' is engrained in the culture in which the male is expected to perform the role of the provider, while the female is The aspect of cultural gendering results in imbalance and prejudice in different domains of life – education, health and employment (Khalid, 2023; Inam et al., 2020). The effectiveness of these traditional roles is equally profound because, in addition to denying women the opportunity to access resources, they are also vulnerable to one form of violence or the other and discriminated against. For instance, it has been revealed that, in part, whenever women fail to adhere to such expectations, they are beaten, and this is viewed as an acceptable means of violence control (Ali et al., [2011](#); Hadi, [2017](#)).

Furthermore, the cross-tabulation of Gender and Caste also puts Pakistani women in more disadvantaged positions. Social discrimination, particularly based on the caste system, persists in hindering the right of people to relevant services such as education and other/basic health care. Studies show how low-caste girls face significant barriers to education owing to social exclusion and the norms that privilege boys' education over girls (Mumtaz et al., [2022](#)). This kind of structural inequality not only shaves off anticipated upward social mobility for personal and professional development but also maintains structural violence of poverty and marginality in society. The combination of two aspects, gender and cast, put extra challenges for women, especially in rural areas where all such aspects are rigid (Ali et al., [2021](#)).

Another issue examined in relation to Pakistani women is the social status that the victims of traffic in persons possess, which exacerbates the women's situation in the country. It is very common for victims to suffer severe social stigma, which makes them reuse their status in their efforts to seek help, as well as fail to reintegrate into society. This is because the culture of trafficking is pegged on cultural beliefs of honor and shame; therefore, after being trafficked, it is nearly impossible to regain an honorable life (Ali et al., [2022](#)). The attitude on the part of society also contributes to the continuous victimization process and strongly negatively influences the struggle against trafficking and the integration of victims. Ignorance and illiteracy on the part of women and girls, lack of education on their rights and the plight of trafficking also fuel the culture of denial, and contributing factors entail that victims are blamed rather than supported (Malik et al., [2023](#)).

Moreover, concern is to be made about social and cultural factors or media representation of gender roles. TV plays or other forms of media productions bring forward traditional gender roles; women are portrayed as homemakers and are depicted as vulnerable to men's figures (Ashraf, [2024](#)). By portraying



this representation, women's competence only in performing prearranged roles perpetuates gender inequality in society. That is all; the effects of such media representations are felt there because they inform and influence public opinion and attitude towards women's rights and their place in society to the detriment of such progress (Martins et al., 2022).

Interlinking of patriarchal roles of women, oppression of the caste system and social modelling place the women of Pakistan in a very dilemma. Such factors not only affect women and girls' susceptibility to one form of abuse or the other but also make it difficult for women in different aspects of life to receive the support and encouragement they deserve.

Conclusion

Sex trafficking in Pakistan is really an extensive matter that has variety and diverse roots. They identified poverty, poor education and social injustice as the main socio-economic causes contributing to this terrible crime. These challenges make it easy for the victims to be exploited by human traffickers, leading to forced labor and sexual exploitation, hence earning the name cycles of suffering and poverty. Combating human trafficking cannot be done by one method but by a complex method that includes both the factors and the traffickers.

There are high incidences of poverty in Pakistan, and this has remained one of the leading causes of human trafficking. Persons in vulnerable economic positions must turn to criminal activities to earn income and would be easy targets for traffickers. Eradicating human trafficking is also about education; therefore, education is an important factor in combating human trafficking. If people get educated and skilled, then they can empower themselves more economically or avoid being trapped in aberrant work. Also, education can spread information on human trafficking and its outcomes, and people may have more skills to prevent possible risks.

Besides, structural factors that result in human trafficking in Pakistan include social and cultural factors as well. Discrimination of gender or caste discriminates some groups, hence making them prone to be exploited. Prescribed gender roles may deny women economic activity and confine them to their homes, making them vulnerable to trafficking. These social and cultural factors can only be met by changing the culture of any society or country that is involved.

Lastly, political instabilities and corruption act as enablers of human trafficking. Corruption within the state's authority and weak governance also make it easier for the trafficking rings to conduct themselves. Solving these problems presupposes the enhancement of law enforcement activities and increasing the efficiency of governmental organizations' activity supervision.

Recommendations

In order to counter human trafficking in Pakistan thoroughly, it is necessary to use a complex approach. Here are some recommendations:

- **Poverty Reduction:** Human trafficking is a symptom of poverty, the government should introduce special poverty reduction policies to help eradicate this phenomenon. This consist of putting resources in education, health and physical development in the affected regions.
- **Education and Awareness:** Increase educational opportunities, especially for females, supporting the provision of employment opportunities and giving education regarding human trafficking. Conduct an awareness creation programme in order to popularize the dangers of human trafficking and avail of the available facilities for the victims.
- **Social and Cultural Change:** Support and foster equal rights of the two genders and combat social and cultural practices that fuel human trafficking. Promote women's and girls' rights' causes and campaign against performers' perceptual prejudice.
- **Strengthened Law Enforcement:** Improve the ability of the police organisations involved in combating human trafficking to investigate and being able to prosecute the cases. Providing training and equipment to the personnel of law enforcement departments.
- **Victim Protection:** Create a strong human trafficking protection that aims at offering adequate facilities in the area of shelter, medical care, legal help and rehabilitation to trafficking victims.

- **International Cooperation:** Enhance the exchange of data with countries in the worldwide fight against human trafficking as well as cooperation. Provide support to victims and enhance the role of law enforcement agents.
- **Civil Society Engagement:** The role of civil society organizations must be encouraged to increase awareness of the issue, provide service provisions to victims, and promote policy change.

References

- Ahmad, N., Ahmad, M., & Masood, R. (2020). Socio-psychological implications of public harassment for women in the capital city of Islamabad. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 27(1), 77-100. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971521519891480>
- Ahmad, N., Iqbal, J., & Haq, Z. (2022). Region-wise comparative analysis of multi-dimensional poverty in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Journal of Law & Social Studies*, 4(2), 262-278. <https://doi.org/10.52279/jlss.04.02.262278>
- Ali, G., Shah, S., & Khan, S. (2021). Impact of financial constraints and gender disparities on female's higher education (a case study of district Swabi, kpk, Pakistan). *Pakistan Journal of Social Research*, 03(04), 198-207. <https://doi.org/10.52567/pjsr.v3i4.288>
- Ali, T., Ali, S., Nadeem, S., Memon, Z., Soofi, S., Madhani, F., ... & Bhutta, Z. (2022). Perpetuation of gender discrimination in pakistani society: results from a scoping review and qualitative study conducted in three provinces of pakistan. *BMC Women S Health*, 22(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12905-022-02011-6>
- Ali, T., Krantz, G., Gul, R., Asad, N., Johansson, E., & Mogren, I. (2011). Gender roles and their influence on life prospects for women in urban Karachi, pakoistan: a qualitative study. *Global Health Action*, 4(1), 7448. <https://doi.org/10.3402/gha.v4i0.7448>
- Anwar, T. (2022). Prevalence of relative poverty in Pakistan. *The Pakistan Development Review*, 1111-1131. <https://doi.org/10.30541/v44i4.iipp.1111-1131>
- Ashraf, C. (2024). An analytical study of assessment of gender role attitude through tv dramas among the people of pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 12(1), 735-741. <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2024.v12i1.2100>
- Awerbuch, A., Gunaratne, N., Jain, J., & Caralis, P. (2020). Raising awareness of human trafficking in key professional fields via a multidisciplinary educational approach. *International Journal of Human Rights in Healthcare*, 13(2), 159-169. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijhrh-07-2019-0053>
- Baig, K. (2024). Exploring the role of the criminal justice system in combating human trafficking in Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences*, 12(1), 340-347. <https://doi.org/10.52131/pjhss.2024.v12i1.2062>
- Bain, C. (2017). Entrepreneurship and innovation in the fight against human trafficking. *Social Inclusion*, 5(2), 81-84. <https://doi.org/10.17645/si.v5i2.924>
- Barner, J., Okech, D., & Camp, M. (2014). Socio-economic inequality, human trafficking, and the global slave trade. *Societies*, 4(2), 148-160. <https://doi.org/10.3390/soc4020148>
- Bryant, K. and Landman, T. (2020). Combatting human trafficking since palermo: what do we know about what works?. *Journal of Human Trafficking*, 6(2), 119-140. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23322705.2020.1690097>
- Budiani-Saberi, D. and Columb, S. (2013). A human rights approach to human trafficking for organ removal. *Medicine Health Care and Philosophy*, 16(4), 897-914. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11019-013-9488-y>
- Cheema, S. and Jamal, W. (2022). An empirical study on gender based discrimination at pakistani workplaces: determination of the causes of gender based discrimination in pakistan's private service sector workplaces. *Sustainable Business and Society in Emerging Economies*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.26710/sbsee.v4i2.2272>
- Cole, J. and Sprang, G. (2015). Sex trafficking of minors in metropolitan, micropolitan, and rural communities. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 40, 113-123. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2014.07.015>
- Hadi, A. (2017). Patriarchy and gender-based violence in Pakistan. *European Journal of Social Sciences Education and Research*, 10(2), 297. <https://doi.org/10.26417/ejser.v10i2.p297-304>



- Inam, H., Janjua, M., Martins, R., Zahid, N., Khan, S., Sattar, A., ... & Malik, M. (2020). Cultural barriers for women in surgery: how thick is the glass ceiling? An analysis from a low-middle-income country. *World Journal of Surgery*, 44(9), 2870–2878. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00268-020-05544-9>
- Joiya, S. and Quddus, M. (2022). Social and economic determinants of human trafficking: a role of forced labour in Punjab, Pakistan. *Irasd Journal of Economics*, 4(3), 429–438. <https://doi.org/10.52131/joe.2022.0403.0090>
- Kakar, M., Yousaf, F., & Draiwesh, A. (2020). Irregular migration, trafficking into a forced marriage, and health insecurity. *Global Regional Review*, V(1), 262–268. [https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2020\(v-i\).29](https://doi.org/10.31703/grr.2020(v-i).29)
- Khalid, A. (2023). Personal meanings and reality of gendered socialization in Pakistan. *Comparative Sociology*, 22(6), 765–784. <https://doi.org/10.1163/15691330-bja10095>
- Khan, A., Iqbal, N., & Ahmad, I. (2022). Human trafficking in Pakistan: a qualitative analysis. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, 2(3), 257–268. <https://doi.org/10.54183/jssr.v2i3.136>
- Khan, S. and Yahong, W. (2021). Symmetric and asymmetric impact of poverty, income inequality, and population on carbon emission in Pakistan: new evidence from ardl and nardl co-integration. *Frontiers in Environmental Science*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fenvs.2021.666362>
- Klabbers, R. (2023). Human trafficking risk factors, health impacts, and opportunities for intervention in Uganda: a qualitative analysis. *Global Health Research and Policy*, 8(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s41256-023-00332-z>
- Kurosaki, T. (2022). Targeting the vulnerable and the choice of vulnerability measures: review and application to Pakistan. *The Pakistan Development Review*, 49(2), 87–103. <https://doi.org/10.30541/v49i2pp.87-103>
- Malik, M., Hussain, A., Hashmi, A., Saeed, H., Azhar, H., & Abbasi, A. (2023). Barriers to gender equity for female healthcare academicians and researchers in Pakistan: is it still an issue? *Frontiers in Public Health*, 10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2022.981178>
- Martins, R., Gillani, M., Jawaid, S., Zaidi, S., & Malik, M. (2022). Societal preferences for gender of surgeons: a cross-sectional study in the general population of Pakistan. *World Journal of Surgery*, 46(4), 757–766. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00268-021-06418-4>
- Memon, F. (2020). Climate change and violence against women: a study of a flood-affected population in the rural area of Sindh, Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of Women S Studies Alam-E-Niswan*, 27(1), 65–85. <https://doi.org/10.46521/pjws.027.01.0039>
- Mumtaz, Z., Jhangri, G., Bhatti, A., & Ellison, G. (2022). Caste in Muslim Pakistan: a structural determinant of inequities in the uptake of maternal health services. *Sexual and Reproductive Health Matters*, 29(2). <https://doi.org/10.1080/26410397.2022.2035516>
- Munir, M. (2015). Trafficking in persons: Faulty regulations and flawed policing in Pakistan. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2613913>
- Nadeem, M. A., Nawaz, T., & Ashraf, S. (2024). Socio-economic catalysts and trafficking trends: Mapping drug addiction in Pakistan. *Contemporary Issues in Social Sciences and Management Practices*, 3(1), 14–26. <https://doi.org/10.61503/cissmp.v3i1.96>
- Piracha, A. and Chaudhary, M. (2015). Better awareness for better natural hazards preparedness in Pakistan. *International Journal of Built Environment and Sustainability*, 2(4). <https://doi.org/10.11113/ijbes.v2.n4.92>
- Safdar, M., Akram, M., Sher, F., & Rahman, A. (2021). Socioeconomic determinants of caste-based endogamy: a qualitative study. *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies*, 8(2), 39–54. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejecs/697>
- Safdar, M., Nasar, A., Akram, M., & Yousaf, F. (2021). An assessment of the structural relationship between determinants and implications of caste-based endogamy in Pakistan. *International Social Science Journal*, 72(243), 29–45. <https://doi.org/10.1111/issj.12296>
- Sarwar, A. and Chaudhry, M. (2021). The role of women empowerment towards household poverty reduction: evidence from Punjab, Pakistan. *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews*, 9(3), 384–397. <https://doi.org/10.18510/hssr.2021.9339>
- Schmidt, A. (2020). Human trafficking – between punishable human rights violations and decriminalization. *European Criminal Law Review*, 10(3), 272–292. <https://doi.org/10.5771/2193-5505-2020-3-272>

- Shakeel, M. and Hayat, A. (2020). Impact of economic reforms on social sector of Pakistan: an empirical analysis. *Review of Economics and Development Studies*, 6(2), 423-437. <https://doi.org/10.47067/reads.v6i2.210>
- Shakoor, A. (2022). Political unsteadiness and economic retardation in Pakistan. *Journal of Research in Economics and Finance Management*, 1(1), 39-51. <https://doi.org/10.56596/jrefm.v1i1.11>
- Soharwardi, M., Firdous, A., & Gill, A. (2021). Are environment, informal sector and poverty interrelated?. *International Journal of Agricultural Extension*, 9(2). <https://doi.org/10.33687/ijae.009.02.3579>
- Spires, B. (2021). Intersections between human trafficking and education: toward new research agendas. *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education*, 16(2), 84-99. <https://doi.org/10.20355/jcie29464>
- Stanescu, N., Dan, A., & Taseñte, T. (2023). Human trafficking – the boomerang of a decadent society (social perception of human trafficking in dobrogea / constanta). *Technium Social Sciences Journal*, 44, 985-1001. <https://doi.org/10.47577/tssj.v44i1.9036>
- Sultan, M., Zafar, H., & Mahesar, S. (2022). Perceived effect of covid-19 on increase of poverty in Pakistan: empirical analysis through opinion of leading economists. *Journal of Marketing Strategies*, 4(2), 365-381. <https://doi.org/10.52633/jms.v4i2.220>
- Ullah, S. (2022). The socio-economic effects of diaspora on the Pakistani families left behind. *Journal of Regional Studies Review*, 1(1), 27-35. <https://doi.org/10.62843/jrsr/2022.39909>
- Yousaf, F. (2017). Forced migration, human trafficking, and human security. *Current Sociology*, 66(2), 209-225. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011392117736309>
- Yousaf, F. and Purkayastha, B. (2015). 'I am only half alive': organ trafficking in Pakistan amid interlocking oppressions. *International Sociology*, 30(6), 637-653. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580915605648>
- Zakar, R., Zakar, M., & Krämer, A. (2012). Voices of strength and struggle. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 27(16), 3268-3298. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260512441257>
- Zhu, T., Crenshaw, C., & Scott, L. (2020). Curriculum in action: teaching students to combat human trafficking. *Education and Urban Society*, 52(9), 1351-1371. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124520911909>