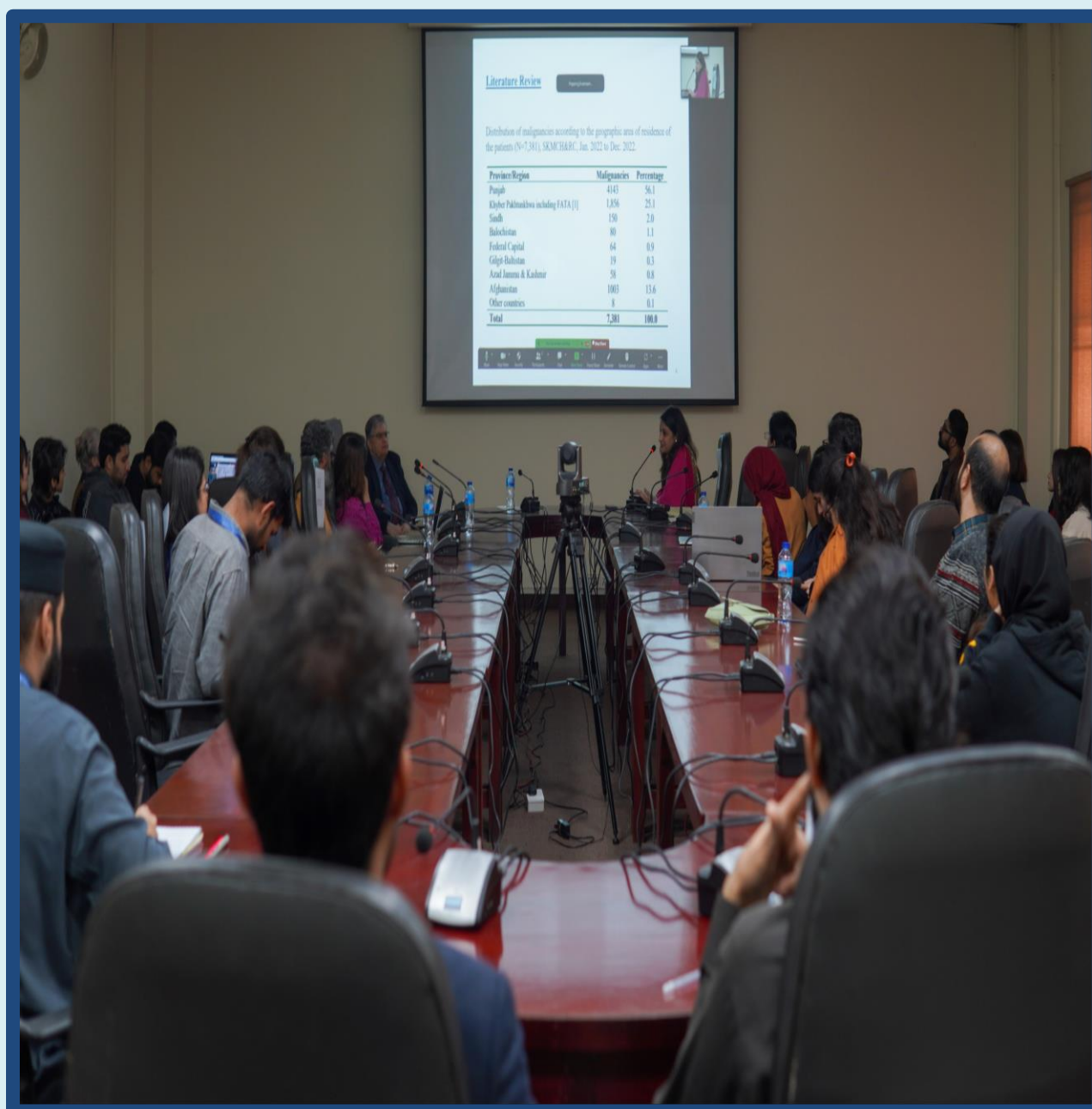




Abstract Booklet for 5th Conference on Marginalized Populations

November 29th, 2023

THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY, FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE (A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)



Conference Patron: Dr. Sikandar Hayat, Distinguished Professor of History and Public Policy and Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Forman Christian College (A Chartered University)

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Ms. Sana Shahid
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| <i>Conference Themes</i> | <i>Speakers</i> |
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| I Religious Minorities and Exclusion: The Christians, Hindus, and Hazara Shias of Pakistan | |
| The Christian Community of Jaranwala and Barriers to Recovery and Reconstruction | Dr. Ayra Inderias Assistant Professor Department of Political Science, FCCU |
| From Representation to Resilience: Literary Vignettes of Dalit Identity | Dr. Fatima Syeda Professor and Chair, Department of English, FCCU |
| The problems facing the Hazara Shias living in Gated Communities | Shezad Ali FCCU Alumni Researcher and Activist |
| Doubly Marginalized Christian Female Characters in Pakistani Anglophone Fiction: Policy Implications for the Safety of Religious Minority Women | Dr. Qurratulaen Liaqat Associate Professor, Department of English, FCCU |
| A Study Exploring the Status of Major Hindu Temples in Lahore | Dr. Shahid Rasheed Assistant Professor Department of Sociology, FCCU |
| II Health-seeking Barriers and Patient Safety: Low status healthcare providers, refugee patients, and aging women of Pakistan | |
| Marginalization of Operating Department Practitioners preventing Patient Safety Practices in Public Hospitals of Pakistan | Dr Ain ul Momina Assistant Professor (Visiting, Public Health), School of Life Sciences, FCCU |
| Challenges faced by Afghan Cancer Patients' Attendants in Pakistan | Ms. Tehniyat Fatima Lecturer Department of Sociology, FCCU |
| Aging Women from Urban Slums and their Environmental Challenges: Lessons for improving Primary Healthcare Support | Dr. Anum Muzammil Assistant Professor Department of Mass Communications, FCCU |
| Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Challenges of Waste Workers during COVID-19 | Dr. Shazia Ilyas Assistant Professor Department of Environmental Sciences |
| III Agency in the Political and Informal Sectors: Stories from Gilgit Baltistan, Kashmir, and Home-based women entrepreneurs | |
| Women of Gilgit-Baltistan Transforming Society through Protest | Haider Ali FCCU Alumni Researcher and Activist |
| The Challenges Faced by Home Based Women Entrepreneurs and Future Directions for Improved Support | Dr. Bushra Usman Associate Professor Department of Business, FCCU |
| Gilgit-Baltistan: A Fault line in the Kashmir Dispute | Dr. Julie Flowerday Professor Department of Sociology, FCCU |

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Conference Patron's Message

I am pleased to share a note for the Abstract booklet of the 5th Conference on Marginalized populations, organized, as before, by the Sociology department, and Chaired by Dr. Sara Rizvi Jafree. We hold conferences at FCCU on a host of subjects year-round, but this happens to be a very special conference for it deals with a rare subject- 'marginalized populations'. We wait for it every year with much anticipation, hopes, and expectations.

But then what are 'marginalized populations', so to speak. There is no one definition as far as I understand. It has been defined both in terms of inclusion and exclusion. In term of inclusion, it would include groups such as women, minorities, both religious and racial, people physically or mentally challenged, even senior citizens, homeless, destitute. This is based mostly on characteristics, grounds such as, gender, religion or beliefs, race, ethnicity, disabilities, age, socio-economic status etc.

In a similar vein, in terms of exclusion, it would exclude certain populations due to gender, religion, race, even language, gender identity, physical, mental abilities, age, social status, economic resources etc. In both definitions, of inclusion and exclusion of groups constituting marginalized populations, one thing is for sure. These are powerless, voiceless groups, historically and ever. They are ignored, discriminated against, are vulnerable, harassed, belittled, even oppressed, and exploited, at times even disposed of lands, livelihoods, or their socio-economic support.



In case of Pakistan, in our recent faculty book, Pakistan Studies: A book of Readings, published by Sang-e-Meel Publications this year, in 2023, Dr. Sara, our host today, in her Chapter (8), has ably covered several marginalized groups of our population including women, minorities, both religious and ethnic minorities, refugees and internally displaced people, transgender community, and special needs people. This may be the first time that this often-ignored subject has been made part of a Pakistan Studies book prepared for our undergraduate students here and country-wide.

This conference, obviously, goes much beyond that in terms of its scope and spread. It covers a host of subjects ranging from religious minorities such as, the Christians, Hindus, and Hazara Shias to low healthcare providers to refugee patients to aging women of Pakistan and even presents stories of women from Gilgit Baltistan, Kashmir, and home-based women entrepreneurs. Presenters of this conference themes, of course, are our own colleagues, and if I may name them in the sequence of their presentations - Dr. Ayra Indrias (Political Science), Dr. Fatima Syeda (English), Dr. Shahid Rasheed (Sociology), Dr. Ain ul Momina (Visiting, School of Life Sciences), Ms. Tehniyat Fatima (Sociology), Dr. Anum Muzammil (Mass Communication), Dr. Bushra Usman (Business), and, of course, Dr. Julie Flowerday (Sociology), followed by our student alumni, Shezad Ali and Haider Ali.

It can't get better than that! Thank you all for your contribution, with all your time, efforts, and dedication to the cause of marginalized populations. But before I conclude, let me thank, most sincerely the organizers of this conference. The organizers, you may know already, are: Dr. Sara Rizvi Jafree, Conference Chair; Dr. Shamaila Athar, Conference Coordinator; Ms Shermeen Bano, Conference Moderator, and Ms. Sana Shahid, Conference Secretary. Finally, I thank and appreciate the participation of all of you and, and particularly, our students. I hope they will learn that their teachers can, with confidence and authority, talk about something outside their course outlines, and indeed for a good cause.

Thanks, and God bless!

Dr. Sikandar Hayat

Distinguished Professor of History and Public Policy

Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences.

Department Chairperson's Message

As always and in past years our efforts in hosting and organizing this conference is to motivate our students and inspire them to continue research for marginalised groups of Pakistan, with the broader aim of improving protective policy. It would be unrealistic not to acknowledge that we are living in difficult times with unrest in the middle east, post covid recovery issues which have impacted SDG goal attainments, and global climatic change and environmental crisis. Within Pakistan in recent months there has not been much good news, especially in consideration of the minorities with issues of political instability, the Jaranwala crisis, Afghanistan Refugee policy, almost 150 attacks by TTP, mostly in the northwest region, critical economic and debt issues, and inflationary pressures.

All these issues unfortunately impact the marginalized groups much more, and contribute to perpetuating inequality, exclusion and critically reducing purchasing power. However, a light in the dark tunnel is that the Department of Sociology and FCCU faculty are contributing to make a difference through pursuing research and disseminating it at our conference to raise awareness and ideas for improved protection of marginalised groups. I'm proud and happy to share that our worthy colleagues from FCCU presented their research at the conference this year, representing several departments and faculties including the Department of Sociology, Mass Communications, Business, Environmental Sciences, English, Life Sciences, and Political Science. The fact that so many researchers at FCCU alone are committed to researching marginalised populations is a beacon of hope for Pakistan.

The conference themes this year covered three broad areas including: 1. Religious Minorities, 2. Health sector issues, and 3. Political exclusion and Economic informal sector challenges. The specific groups covered under the religious minorities included the Christians, Hindus, Dalit community, and the Hazara Shias. The marginalized groups covered under the health sector theme included aging women, operating department practitioners, waste workers, and Afghan refugees seeking cancer treatment. The groups covered under the third and last theme included women of Gilgit Baltistan and home-based informal women workers. I am also sharing with great pride that two of our alumni students presented at the conference. Haider Ali presented his findings from a published book chapter and Shezad Ali shared his preliminary findings about residents forced to live in gated communities of Quetta. In coming years I look forward to many more of our alumni participating at the conference and presenting their research on marginalized groups.

Key areas for protection for each marginalised group were presented and then discussed for feasibility in the Q&A session. Overall, it was a productive and valuable conference for our students, researchers, and policy makers. This abstract booklet and the recording link of the conference pasted below is an effort to continue dissemination and raise awareness for marginalised groups in the country and to make Pakistan a more inclusive nation. Finally I would

like to thank my conference committee and department faculty for organizing and hosting this conference!

Conference Recording: <https://youtu.be/1w4Jb3eLsfo?feature=shared>



Can Peaceful Co-existence become a Reality in Jaranwala?

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Abstract

A series of mob attacks against the local Christian community has destroyed and desecrated at least 24 churches and several dozen smaller chapels, scores of houses in Jaranwala, and torched and looted houses on 16th August 2023¹. This pattern of mob violence against the Christian community following the alleged accusation of blasphemy against a Christian individual has been witnessed in previous incidents, such as Shanti Nagar in 1997, Sangla Hill in 2005, Gojra in 2009, Kot Radha Kishan-Kasur in 2014 and Joseph Colony in 2012. In the Jaranwala incident, the response of the local and provincial governments has been quite prompt in terms of doling out cash grants to the victims, whose houses were destroyed and looted, and renovating churches. NGOs irrespective of their religious affiliations, responded to the immediate concerns of the poor community. However, the question remains- will there ever be a stop to this kind of mob-driven vigilante justice? Does material support towards Christians also enable the construction of socio-religious harmony among the local communities and bridge the divides between Christians and Muslims in Jaranwala? What are the challenges in paving the way for rehabilitation and reconstruction of not only the infrastructure but also the social and cultural linkages and communal harmony? My study aims to deliberate on the causes and concerns stemming from the perceptions of the minority community and devise policy actions and measures for State and civil society to counter the narrative of hate and intolerance and ensure the protection and safety of minority citizens in Pakistan. This study is positioned in a qualitative domain and employs narrative research as an approach to find explanatory factors from the vantage points of the participants.

¹ An Human Rights Commission of Pakistan fact-finding report-- Mob-led destruction of churches in Jaranwala, Punjab. https://hrqp-web.org/hrqpweb/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Incident-report_Mob-led-destruction-of-churches-in-Jaranwala.pdf

From Representation to Resilience: Literary Vignettes of Dalit Identity

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Abstract

Literature has always been viewed as an aesthetic dimension of the social discourses both prevalent and proximate. Literary discourses exist in a direct relation to the social processes, social interaction and social formations. These objective social relations further lead to the creation of the subjective selves of human beings. Since the literature of antiquity, literary texts have been engaged in not just interpreting but also improving upon this primordial primitive self. An integration of oneself may lead to the integration of society in general. A logical relationship between one's self and the social structures and principles of the natural world helps one to avoid inconsistent meanings and lop-sided interpretations which may prove to be more repressive than liberating in nature. This paper emphasizes the idea that although imaginative in spirit, literary discourses raise questions about man's nature and place in the scheme of things by giving a social reality and a human form to his/her ideological and emotional beliefs. This paper aims to focus upon different representations of Dalit community in selective literary texts to highlight not only the challenges that these minorities have to face¹, but also the ways in which they respond to such challenges. The varied forms of resilience in the representation of the Dalit community also reiterate the transformative agency of literature in creating an awareness for the need of social activism.

¹ Asif, G. (2020). Jogendranath Mandal and the politics of Dalit recognition in Pakistan. *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 43(1), 119-135.

The Problems facing Hazara Shias living in Gated Communities of Quetta

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Abstract

The Hazara Shias have a long history of persecution in Quetta, Pakistan. Hundreds of Hazara Shias have been killed, with exact statistics uncertain, and the living Hazara Shias suffer from isolation and multiple deprivations¹. One major consequence of the Hazara Shia killings in Quetta, is the that the community must live in gated communities, which causes them to suffer from social isolation, economic hardships, and ultimately forces them to migrate². The living conditions of the gated communities are of severe inadequate housing- characteristic of insufficient drainage and garbage disposal; unsatisfactory public amenities such as security, healthcare, and schooling; and scarce water, electricity, and gas supply. I have been a research assistant on several projects about the Hazara Shia community, and currently I am interviewing members of the community about their vulnerable living conditions, which forces them to migrate.

The preliminary findings from in-depth interviews with Hazara Shias currently residing in gated communities of Quetta, reveal the following: (i) Fencing of Hazara Shia areas has significantly affected their socio-economic positions and ability to run their businesses in the main city areas; (ii) From 2008 to 2018 the Hazara Shia business owners have been forced to close down their business and sell out their properties at below markets rates; consequently losing money and also their livelihood; (iii) Hazara Shia businessmen face exploitation from the middleman who they have to pay for transport of their goods; (iv) The area within the gated communities is limited and the houses are very small, thus compromising the basic requirement

¹ Husain, W., 2015. 'Simmering Shia Genocide in Pakistan: Early Warning and Action'. Human Rights and Globalization L Rev 6, 3.

² Rizvi Jafree, S., Malik, N., & Khawar, A. (2023). Pakistani Hazara Shia victims: challenges, survival techniques, and protective needs. Conflict, Security & Development, 23(1), 67-92.

of decent living. Some spaces which could have been used for recreation are being used by the Pakistan military for drills; (v) The congested living condition influences Hazara Shia mental health negatively and prevents them from forgetting the past experiences of conflict, violence, and loss of loved ones due to genocide; (vi) When Hazara Shias interact with non-Hazaras outside the gated communities, they experience hostility and aggression. It is common for them to be asked when they are leaving Pakistan; (vii) Students from poor families cannot go out of their areas for higher education and they are known to become victims of drug addiction. Critical policy recommendations based include: (2) The Hazaras of Quetta need special seats in the National Assembly where they can advocate for their rights and safety; and (ii) Until security is not an issue anymore, the gated communities need government investment for adequate housing, community-level counseling, entrepreneurial subsidies and support for business development, and online schooling and teaching options.

Doubly Marginalized Christian Female Characters in Pakistani Anglophone Fiction: Policy Implications for the Safety of Religious Minority Women

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Abstract

In a research report published by *The Coalition for Religious Equality and Inclusive Development*¹ on the issue of religious inequalities and gender, it has been found that “poor minority Christian women and girls face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in addition to those faced by an average Pakistani female. There is a recent shift to study literature in relation to literary activism² and as an agent for raising Human Rights awareness³. This study not only raises awareness about the real-life infringement of Christian women's rights but also implies essential policy implications for safeguarding the rights and protection of females belonging to minority groups. By applying the theoretical framework of Literary Activism, this paper conducts a hermeneutic textual analysis of the two novels to highlight the policy implications of the literary texts for the real world. *The Golden Legend* (2017) by Nadeem Aslam and *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti* (2011) by Mohammad Hanif both present Christian women being sexually harassed, raped, and socially excluded. These literary works offer a poignant portrayal of the precarious conditions under which Christian women navigate their lives in Pakistan. For example, *The Golden Legend* introduces us to Margret, who, to escape daily discrimination, feigns conversion to Islam, adopting the name Nargis. Meanwhile, *Our Lady of Alice Bhatti* presents Alice's courageous resistance against sexual harassment and socioeconomic marginalization. Hence. These novels not only shed light on the safety concerns of women from minority religious backgrounds but also underscore the urgency of implementing policies to ensure the well-being and protection of these marginalized individuals.

¹ Suleman, Noumana. (2020). Violence and Discrimination against Women of Religious Minority Backgrounds in Pakistan edited by Tadros, M. Coalition for Religious Equality and Inclusive Development (CREID), Institute of Development Studies (IDS)

² Liaqat, Q., & Raza, A. (2022). Literary Activism against Drones: Aesthetics of Clarity, Confusion, and Empathy in Mohsin Hamid's Fiction. *The International Journal of Literary Humanities*, 20(2), 151.

³ Kanwal, A., & Aslam, S. (Eds.). (2018). *Routledge Companion to Pakistani Anglophone Writing*. Routledge.

A Study Exploring the Status of Major Hindu Temples in Lahore

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Abstract

There are two functional Hindu temples in Lahore at the moment- Krishna Mandir and Valmiki Mandir or Neela Gumbad Mandir. The latter is a 1,200 year old temple that was recently opened to the public after it was reclaimed from a Christian family following a lengthy court battle and illegal occupation. This is just one example of the exclusion and marginalization faced by Hindu community and devotees who wish to worship and practice their religions by visiting their places of worship¹. This discussion will involve sharing research from observational data and also sharing pictorial evidence of the challenges facing Hindu temples, and subsequently the Hindu community including temple administration and devotees.

Some of the challenges that the Hindu community face in preventing their temples from receiving support and security include: (i) general exclusion and violence against the community, (ii) common eviction from the land they occupy and forced relocated to distant places, (iii) being forced to work without due compensation, (iv) false criminal cases being filed against them and misuse of blasphemy laws, and (v) molestation and violence against their women, including instances of forced conversion and forced marriages. As a result, administration and temple devotees receive very little support from the federal or local government for management of Hindu temples. The discussion explores some areas that can support the Hindu temples and overall interfaith harmony and inclusivity in Pakistan.

¹ Schaflechner, J. (2020). Hinglaj Devi: Solidifying Hindu Identity at a Hindu Temple in Pakistan. *American Anthropologist*, 122(3), 528-539.

Marginalization of Operating Department Practitioners preventing Patient Safety Practices in Public Hospitals of Pakistan

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Abstract

This discussion is based on the neglected and marginalized human resource group providing healthcare services within the surgical unit- Operating Department Practitioners (ODPs). Despite being instrumental practitioners in the surgical team and being responsible for patient safety, ODPs face marginalization and exclusion at the workplace. Not only are they considered inferior team members and allocated low professional status, but subsequently they also receive low pay, employment benefits, and support for professional development. There is very little research globally about ODPs¹ and almost none in Pakistan. Data from a larger study, using qualitative inquiry and in-depth interviews with ODPs², been extracted for this discussion.

The data is based on 33 interviews from ODPs belonging to different public sector hospitals of Punjab, Pakistan. The aim is to: (i) identify the problems faced by ODPs which prevent patient safety and job satisfaction and to (ii) recommend improved employment policy. Ultimately, ODPs are key agents in supporting the surgical setup, and when equal opportunities for remuneration, training, professional development, and resources are available to them, there is less likelihood of risk to patients and surgical team efficiencies. The recommendations discussed in the presentation will address different stakeholders such as hospital administration, provincial and federal health ministries, the healthcare sector regulatory and licensing bodies, and the health education sector. These have implications for other marginalized healthcare practitioners in Pakistan, including Lady Health Workers, Nurses, Paramedical staff, and other Allied Health Professionals.

¹ Rowe N. A. (2007). discussion on research and appraisal within comparative perioperative professions: the potential contribution to ODP professional development. *Technic*, 3(11): 16–19.

² Jafree, S. R., Momina, A. U., Malik, N., Naqi, S. A., & Fischer, F. (2021). Challenges in providing surgical procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic: Qualitative study among Operating Department Practitioners in Pakistan. *Science Progress*, 104(2), 00368504211023282.

Challenges faced by Afghan Cancer Patients' Attendants in Pakistan

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Abstract

Capitalizing on the inter-border mobility of health seekers has given rise to the promising market of medical tourism. At the heart of this market are the patients and their family attendants who travel to foreign countries for care and treatment. Pakistan has been providing treatment opportunities to the cancer patients of conflict-stricken Afghanistan for many decades. One of the most trusted names in cancer treatment in Pakistan is the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital & Research Centre which receives a great number of Afghan patients every year¹. The present study explores the challenges that the attendants of Afghan cancer patients (who require long-term treatment) face in accommodation, social adjustment, and navigating different social structures. The study utilizes a qualitative approach using in-depth interviews with 20 attendants of Afghan patients utilizing purposive sampling to gather primary data. The preliminary findings from this study have been analyzed using thematic analysis and help to understand how medical tourists of different socioeconomic statuses adjust in the host country. Of special interest are the challenges faced by Afghan patients and their family attendants who come from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The discussion will highlight the unique challenges they face in affording appropriate accommodation and the problems they face while using temporary settlements. Relevant policy recommendations are made in the discussion to support Afghan cancer patients and their family attendants specifically, and at a larger level to support marginalized health-seekers and to promote safe and effective medical tourism in Pakistan.

¹ Mahmood, S., Khawaja, S. N., & Yusuf, M. A. (2023). Cancer care in times of conflict: Treatment of patients from Afghanistan, in Pakistan. *Frontiers in Oncology*, 13, 1110709.

Aging Women from Urban Slums and their Environmental Challenges: Lessons for improving Primary Healthcare Support

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Abstract

According to a careful estimation of the total population of the country almost 36.9 % are living in urban slums and the percentage is expected to reach 50.2 % by 2050¹. A significant amount of data is available to testify the absence of necessary amenities for the population living in urban slums. The vulnerabilities due to lack of water, sanitation and safety when coupled with markers of gender and age leaves the population of elderly women at a higher risk in the healthcare system. The current study assesses the community needs and environmental challenges of elderly women population in 6 underserved areas of Lahore.

A qualitative approach was adopted to record the responses of the selected population regarding key environmental challenges including poor housing quality and sanitation; inadequate food supply; scarce poverty alleviation efforts; and inadequate health services. The study proposes strong individual and group interventions that are carefully designed for the elderly women population (keeping their level of literacy and rate of adoption in consideration) to improve their access to health services; to inculcate health-information seeking behavior; and to effectively communicate with health care practitioners regarding the health issues.

¹ UNICEF, 2020. CHIP report of coverage survey in slums/underserved areas of 10 largest cities of Pakistan Punjab (Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan, Gujranwala, Faisalabad), Sindh (Karachi & Hyderabad), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Peshawar), Balochistan (Quetta), Federal Capital (Islamabad)

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Challenges of Waste Workers during COVID-19

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Abstract

COVID-19 is known to be the worst pandemic in history and by the end of 2019 it had brought drastic changes to the entire world. Due to the nature of their work (collection, transfer, and disposal of municipal and hospital waste on daily basis) waste workers were exposed the most during the pandemic¹. However, in a developing country like Pakistan, not much attention was paid to the waste workers and their families. The aim of this study was to understand the occupational health and safety (OHS) challenges being faced by the waste workers and to identify the gap in the Government Policies for protection of the waste workers during the pandemic. This study was conducted in the city of Lahore, the second mega city of Pakistan using a qualitative survey. The study found that waste workers in Pakistan suffered during the pandemic in the following ways: (i) they faced lack of provision or shortage of personal protective equipment (PPEs), (ii) they had lack of training and awareness on correct use of PPEs, (iii) they were not given priority for COVID-19 vaccination, and (iv) there was little effort to register them in the citizen's database (NADRA), which contributed to their overall vulnerability and lack of provision for vaccination. The findings have implications for the Government of Pakistan to develop an inclusive policy to deal with such pandemics or situations in future, especially in consideration of waste workers, and other marginalized groups. Moreover, the Government of Pakistan should ensure that every person in the country is registered in the NADRA database so that in future disparities are avoided, and vulnerable groups are identified and supported during national emergencies or disasters.

¹ Haque, M. R., Khan, M. M. A., Rahman, M. M., Rahman, M. S., & Begum, S. A. (2022). Mental health status of informal waste workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh. Plos one, 17(1), e0262141.

Women of Gilgit-Baltistan Transforming Society through Protest

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Abstract

This paper highlights the political struggles of women of Gilgit-Baltistan to create a space for themselves in public politics. It documents their challenging of barriers to their political participation in protests and movements around issues related to land and political suppression as well as around harassment and violence against women. It points towards questions for further research. Women of Gilgit-Baltistan simultaneously battle with patriarchy and economic hardship. In the past they have been entirely excluded from public political space, but in recent years there is increased participation in women protesting due to¹: 1) a general increase in protest movements throughout the region, 2) formation of networks of women around women rights issues and 3) a greater exposure to women led movements around the world via social media. Forms and degrees of participation vary across issues and according to regional differences. The discussion in this conference is based on qualitative interviews from several women participants of protest movements. Public statements available on electronic and social media have also been analysed. However, there are still barriers to political participation in the form of (i) threats and acts of backlash ranging from family pressure and facing domestic violence, (ii) shame-trolling on social media, (iii) no observable role of political parties in facilitation of women's participation, and (iv) extreme resistance from community when they ask for rights in share of land and property. Two key areas can help women of Gilgit Baltistan to safely engage in protests for their rights and equality: (i) improved legislation and implementation for reporting on cases of harassment and violence against women activists, and (ii) mandating political parties to have significant numbers of registered women members to qualify for elections.

¹ Bansal, A. (2008). Gilgit–Baltistan: The roots of political alienation. *Strategic Analysis*, 32(1), 81-101.

The Challenges Faced by Home Based Women Entrepreneurs and Future Directions for Improved Support

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Abstract

This research investigates the challenges faced by home-based women entrepreneurs in Pakistan and proposes actionable solutions to enhance their potential leading to success. The study employs a mixed-methods research design to comprehensively explore the multifaceted barriers inhibiting the entrepreneurial potential of women in this context. Quantitative data has been gathered through structured surveys distributed among a diverse sample of home-based women entrepreneurs in various regions of Pakistan; whereas the qualitative data has been obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with women entrepreneurs, policymakers, and representatives from relevant organizations.

The identified challenges facing home-based women entrepreneurs encompass financial constrictions, societal expectations, limited education, knowledge and skills, market access difficulties, regulatory hurdles, technological barriers, and the striking balance required between entrepreneurial pursuits and family duties. To address the identified challenges, the study proposes a set of targeted interventions. The collaborative efforts of the government, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector are needed in fostering an environment conducive to the growth of women entrepreneurs. The findings contribute valuable insights and recommendations for unlocking the untapped potential of home-based women entrepreneurs in Pakistan, which is imperative to foster economic empowerment and social progress in the region¹.

¹ Roberts, A., & Mir Zulfiqar, G. (2019). The political economy of women's entrepreneurship initiatives in Pakistan: reflections on gender, class, and "development". *Review of International Political Economy*, 26(3), 410-435.

Gilgit-Baltistan: A Fault line in the Kashmir Dispute

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Abstract

In contributing to the Sociology Conference on Marginalized Populations, I explore a pre-Partition stalemate over a territory that Britain called Hunza and that China knew as Kanjut and ask if it has a place in the ongoing irresolution of the Kashmir dispute between Pakistan and India¹. Russia was always at the forefront of Britain's colonial endeavors, but China not Russia lay at the heart of the Kashmir dilemma. The Hunza-Kanjut matter belonged to a geo-political complex involving Britain's construction of the Kashmir State and China's planned Xinjiang (Sinkiang) Province, but not to both. In the following discussion, I look at three irregularities connected to the signing of Kashmir's Sanad XVI (Hindi, agreement) on the installation of the new ruler of Hunza in September 1892. The event followed Britain's successful *1891 Hunza-Nagar Campaign*. Two Chinese officials were present. The irregularities were: 1) the absence of a Kashmiri representative at the formal signing event; 2) the ambiguous portrayal of a sovereign and a confederation chief; and 3) the vague distinction underlying the colonial construction of suzerainty and sovereignty. The nonattendance of a Kashmiri official was the only outwardly visible irregularity. Invisible to those unversed were the altered legal ranking of the Kashmir State under the British Union; Maharaja Pratap Singh's mock position as a sovereign; and, lastly, the maharaja's restricted suzerainty over the Gilgit Agency. Unaddressed was China's linkage to Hunza.

¹ Flowerday, J. (2019). Identity matters: Hunza and the hidden text of Britain and China. *South Asian History and Culture*, 10(1), 46-63.

