

Conference Proceedings

Population Research Centre Conference 2023

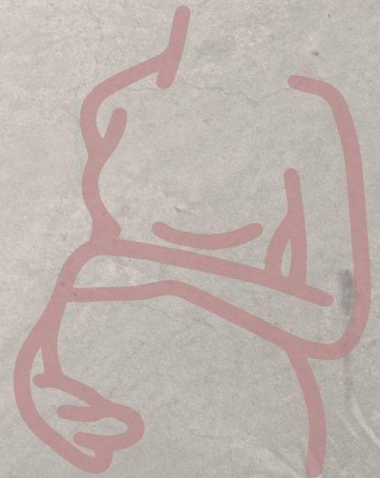
EMERGING DEMOGRAPHIC CHALLENGES



March 20th, 2023



Main Campus IBA



Disclaimer

This document is a result of a conference conducted by the Population Research Centre, SESS – IBA. The opinions expressed by the participants, and this publication does not constitute an endorsement by the IBA Karachi or its partners of the opinions so expressed in them.

Official Website of the Conference

<https://prc.iba.edu.pk/prc-2023.php>

Main Theme:

Emerging Demographic Challenges

Edited by

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Assistant Professor - IBA

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Contributors

Ardeshir Cowasjee Centre for Writing

Foreword

The Population Research Centre (PRC) is a distinguished research institution affiliated with the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) in Karachi, Pakistan. Established in 2021, PRC is dedicated to conducting high-quality research, analysis, and policy development in the areas of demography, population dynamics, and socioeconomic issues. Through its research and evidence-based policy recommendations, PRC aims to contribute to the betterment of society by assisting policymakers, academicians, and other stakeholders in making informed decisions that address the diverse challenges posed by population growth and demographic transitions.

The Centre organized its first research conference Emerging Demographic Challenges, on March 20th, 2023. The event aimed to address the pressing population issues that Pakistan currently faces and explore innovative, sustainable solutions in the context of global and regional developments including advancements in healthcare, education, and technology, as well as shifts in migration patterns and international policies.

Pakistan's demographic challenges pose significant barriers to the country's overall progress and wellbeing. With a rapidly growing population, issues such as poverty, inequality, water scarcity, environmental degradation, food insecurity, and inadequate human development measures continue to persist. This conference provided an opportunity for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners from diverse disciplines to come together and engage in meaningful discussions, share their insights, and propose viable strategies to tackle these critical concerns.

The conference was an assemblage of distinguished speeches, comprehensive research paper presentations, and thought-provoking panel discussions. These sessions delved into the complexities of Pakistan's demographic landscape, exploring the multifaceted dimensions of development and the implications it has on various population groups. Furthermore, a conscious effort was made to promote inclusivity and diversity by encouraging participation from all over Pakistan.

While embarking on this vital journey towards a more inclusive, equitable, and sustainable future for Pakistan, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the delegates and dignitaries for their invaluable input to this crucial dialogue. We hope that the insights and collaborations forged during this conference will pave the way for transformative change in addressing Pakistan's demographic challenges, ultimately contributing to a brighter, more prosperous future.

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Conference Program

Inaugural Session

G&T Auditorium – Main Campus IBA, Karachi

| | |
|----------|---|
| 10:00 am | Registration & Tea |
| 11:15 am | Arrival of Guest of Honor |
| | Ms. Samina Arif Alvi The First Lady of Pakistan |
| 11:20 am | Welcome Remarks Dr. Khadija Malik Bari Director Population Research Centre – IBA |
| 11:30 am | Welcome Remarks UNICEF Representative |
| 11:40 am | Keynote Speech Dr. Sameen Siddiqi Chair & Professor Department of Community Health Sciences Aga Khan University, Karachi, Pakistan |
| 12:10 pm | Guest of Honor Speech |

Conference Program

Panel Discussion

G&T Auditorium – Main Campus IBA, Karachi

The Challenges of Fertility Planning in Pakistan: An Exploration of Societal, Cultural, and Policy Perspectives

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 12:15 pm – 01:30 pm | |
| Moderator | Dr. Lubna Naz Associate Professor, IBA |
| Panelists | Dr. Saima Bashir Head of Social Dynamics Units, PIDE Joint Secretary Population Association of Pakistan Dr. Xaher Gul Sr. SBC & Health Markets Advisor, Pathfinder International; Secretary General, Population Association of Pakistan Dr. Saman Naz Public Health Scientist School of Medicine, Indiana University, USA Dr. Rafi Amir-ud-Din Associate Professor COMSATS University Islamabad |
| 01:30 pm – 03:00 pm | Prayer & Lunch Break Lunch Venue: Event Hall – Students' Centre |

Conference Program

Parallel Technical Session 01 **Community Engagement and Public Policy:** **Addressing Health Challenges in Pakistan** MAV 1, Ground Floor, Adamjee Block

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| 03:00 pm – 04:30 pm | |
| Chair | Dr. Qazi Masood Institute of Business Administration, Karachi |
| Presentations | Community Engagement to Increase Vaccine Uptake: Quasi-Experimental Evidence From Islamabad And Rawalpindi, Pakistan Taimoor Ahmed Research and Development Solutions Public Policy for SDG-2 Food Insecurity, Malnutrition, Maternal and Child Health: Does it Require Revisit? Dr. Asim Bashir Khan Institute of Business Administration, Karachi Impact of Place of Delivery on Neonatal Mortality in Pakistan using PDHS 2017-18 Amna Noor National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS) |
| Discussants | Dr. Amir Jahan Institute of Business Administration, Karachi |
| | Fatima Sadiq Institute of Business Administration, Karachi |

Conference Program

Parallel Technical Session 02

Sustainable Development and Social Equity

MAS 1, First Floor, Adamjee Block

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 03:00 pm – 04:30 pm | |
| Chair | Dr. Junaid Alam Memon Institute of Business Administration, Karachi |
| Presentations | Assessing Rural household's Knowledge About Sustainable Consumed Water: A Case Study of Shaheed Benazirabad Zahid Hussain Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Fieldwork Experiences Of Women; What Is The Female Spatial Experience Of Conducting Fieldwork At An Undergraduate Level In Karachi, Pakistan? Hafsa Saeed Habib University Karachi The Need And Acceptability Of A Personal-Safety Program For Adolescents With Intellectual And Developmental Disabilities In Pakistan Sameen Waseem Habib University Karachi Household Traits and Its Impact on Offspring's Educational Inclusion: Empirical Evidence from Urban and Rural Areas of Pakistan Dr. Abdul Salam Lodhi University College of Zhob, BUITEMS |
| Discussants | Sadia Mehboob Institute of Business Administration, Karachi Arooj Waheed Dar Institute of Business Administration, Karachi |

Conference Program

Parallel Technical Session 03

Climate Change and Population Well-being

MAS 2, First Floor, Adamjee Block

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 03:00 pm – 04:30 pm | |
| Chair | Dr. Heman Das Lohano Institute of Business Administration, Karachi |
| Presentations | Household's perception for better conservation of the natural vegetation: A case study of district Ziarat, Pakistan Dr. Abdul Salam Lodhi University College of Zhob, BUIITEMS Climatic Changes And Their Impacts On The Population: A Case Study Of 2022 Floods In Sindh, Pakistan Irum Kaosar Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad Assessing the Smallholder's Perception of Climate Change at the Household Level: Empirical Insights from Western Karakoram, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan Iftikhar Ali Karakoram International University Climate Change Resulting In Intense Floods in Sindh and the Impact on Population Vidya Kumari Institute of Business Administration, Karachi |
| Discussants | Dr. Zeeshan Atiq Institute of Business Administration, Karachi Sumaira Ghafoor Institute of Business Administration, Karachi |

Conference Program

Parallel Technical Session 04

Improving Maternal and Child Health in Pakistan: Insights from Research

MAV 2, Ground Floor, Adamjee Block

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 03:00 pm – 04:30 pm | |
| Chair | Dr. G.M Arif |
| Presentations | Intimate Partner Violence and Birth Outcomes: Evidence from Pakistan Haseen Shah Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE) Parental Smoking and Respiratory Health of Children Shabana Kishwar World Bank Spatial Analysis of Geographical Heterogeneity in the Level of Short Birth Intervals and Associated Determinants using a Nationally Representative Survey of Pakistan Urooj Khan Lahore College for Women University, Lahore |
| Discussants | Nadeem Sarwar Institute of Business Administration, Karachi Shagufta Shabbar Institute of Business Administration, Karachi |

Conference Program

Panel Discussion

G&T Auditorium – Main Campus IBA, Karachi MAS 2, First

Addressing Maternal and Child Health Issues in Pakistan: Challenges and Opportunities

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| 05:00 pm – 06:15 pm | |
| Moderator | Aliya Iqbal Naqvi Faculty, IBA |
| Panelists | Dr. Talib Lashari Technical Advisor & Focal Person CIP Dr. Syed Aziz ur Rab CEO Greenstar Social Marketing Dr. Saba Shuja ECD Development Manager Nutrition Section, UNICEF. Dr. Sadiyah Ahsan Pal Consultant ObGyn Sheena Hadi Director, Ahung |
| 06:15 pm – 06:30 pm | Concluding Remarks Dr. G.M Arif |
| 6:30 pm – 07:00 pm | Dinner Talk with Dr. Arfa Sayeda Zehra Paver Area, Near Fauji Building, Main Campus IBA |
| 07:00 pm | Dinner The entry for the dinner event is by invitation only |

Message from the Director

Dear Colleagues and Friends,

I am pleased to reflect on the success of the Population Research Centre's (PRC) first-ever research conference, "**Emerging Demographic Challenges**." Our event brought together experts, researchers, and policymakers to discuss pressing demographic challenges such as population well-being, climate change, fertility planning, maternal and child health, etc.



I would like to express my gratitude to UNICEF's Social Policy Unit for partnering with us in this endeavor. Their collaboration was invaluable in making this conference a success.

As you explore the Conference Proceedings, you will find thought-provoking presentations and discussions that inspire innovative solutions and foster research collaboration. We aim to improve the lives of people across Pakistan especially the poor and marginalized communities through interdisciplinary research and partnerships.

We look forward to hosting future conferences and continuing our collective work towards understanding and addressing emerging demographic challenges.

Warm regards,
Khadija Malik Bari

Population Research Centre - Conference 2023

Introduction

Theme for the Population Research Conference 2023: **“Emerging Demographic Challenges”**

Sub-themes

- (i) Fertility Behaviour and Family Planning,
- (ii) Maternal and Child Health,
- (iii) Addressing Food Insecurity,
- (iv) Climate Change and Population Dynamics,
- (v) Identity, Ethnicity, and Social Inclusion: The Path to Integration.

Conference Objectives

Pakistan’s population and development program has not kept pace with global advancements. A comparative analysis of available data reveals that Pakistan lags behind other developing nations in key social and developmental indicators, with its inability to curtail rapid population growth serving as a significant contributing factor.

The country faces numerous population-related challenges, including persistent high levels of poverty and inequality, water scarcity, environmental degradation, food insecurity, maternal, infant, and child mortality, insufficient human development, gender inequality, youth unemployment, increased vulnerability of marginalized populations, and overarching health concerns.

The Population Research Conference 2023 aimed to convene researchers, policymakers, and practitioners on a unified platform to engage in a comprehensive dialogue on Pakistan’s population issues and seek evidence-based solutions that address the nation’s pressing demographic concerns.

Guest of Honor Speech

Begum Samina Arif Alvi - The First Lady of Pakistan

The Honorable First Lady, in her address at the Population Research Conference, underscored the multifaceted challenges presented by the burgeoning population in Pakistan. She emphasized the gravity of the demographic conundrum, which has led to significant stress on urban locales, sporadic expansion, and an alarming dearth of essential amenities, particularly medical facilities.

She advocated for pragmatic, on-the-ground solutions and a sweeping augmentation of public awareness at the grassroots level. She added that the Pakistani government is actively addressing a broad spectrum of issues, including mental health, intending to eradicate the associated societal taboos and stigmas.

The First Lady projected a troubling forecast for the nation's population, predicting it to swell to 360 million by 2050. She drew attention to Pakistan's fertility rate, which currently exceeds the average for South Asia. Alarmingly, a high percentage of pregnancies are unplanned, and contraceptive utilization rates remain disconcertingly low, contributing to a cycle of maternal health issues.

Rural regions, she highlighted, are disproportionately disadvantaged relative to their urban counterparts. She underscored the imperative to concentrate on women's health and to advocate for a more responsible approach to family planning. She recommended leveraging the experiences of neighboring South Asian nations, such as India and Bangladesh, who have made commendable strides in the fields of fertility control and maternal health.

She also highlighted Pakistan's disturbingly high infant mortality rate, underscoring the necessity of prioritizing maternal and child health. Commending initiatives such as the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and the Sehat Sahulat Card, she expressed optimism that these efforts would yield positive results.

The First Lady articulated her hope that the conference would catalyze efficacious policy recommendations. She was heartened to see the theme of social inclusion integrated into the conference's agenda. She articulated a vision for a more inclusive society that encourages the full participation of women and individuals with disabilities.

Highlighting the transformative power of digital technology and financial inclusion, she advocated for their potential to empower all sectors of society. She noted the rise of mobile banking and the proliferation of online courses and eLearning platforms as positive steps toward female empowerment. She also emphasized the potential of digital tools, such as mobile health applications, to facilitate better access to health services, particularly in the realm of mental health.

She shared ongoing endeavors, in collaboration with the president's office, to bolster the number of qualified mental health professionals in the country and the establishment of global partnerships with specialists in the field. These measures aim to extend mental health counseling services to underserved rural areas.

She called for public-private partnerships to bridge the digital divide, ensuring universal access to digital technologies, including for women and differently-abled individuals. She stressed the need for infrastructural development and targeted initiatives for these groups, emphasizing a holistic and inclusive approach to tackling the challenges of Pakistan's population dynamics.

Keynote Speech

Universal Health Coverage: Can Pakistan Make it by 2030?

Dr. Sameen Siddiqui

Professor & Chair Department of Community Health Sciences AKUH

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) has been globally recognized as an essential component of sustainable development and a key factor in reducing health disparities. While Pakistan has made progress in improving its healthcare system, achieving UHC by 2030 remains a significant challenge. The country faces numerous obstacles, including inadequate healthcare infrastructure, insufficient funding, and a lack of healthcare professionals. Additionally, disparities in healthcare access between urban and rural populations persist, further hindering the realization of UHC.

Dr. Siddiqui began by providing context on the current state of health care in Pakistan, highlighting the disparities in access and quality of care among various segments of the population. He emphasized the importance of achieving universal health coverage as a means of improving the overall health of the nation and reducing inequity. He then discussed the key components of universal health coverage, which include ensuring financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services, and access to safe, effective, and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all. Dr. Siddiqui explored these components within the context of Pakistan's unique challenges, such as limited resources, a large rural population, and a lack of adequate infrastructure.

Drawing on examples from other low and middle-income countries, Dr. Siddiqui highlighted successful strategies that have improved health systems and could potentially be adapted for Pakistan. His speech also highlighted the fact that an average Bangladeshi lives 5-7 years longer than a Pakistani, primarily due to better population control and lower infant, child, and neonatal mortality rates.

Dr. Siddiqui identified that Pakistan spends only \$40 per person per year on healthcare, compared to Iran's \$300 per capita and the United States' \$13,000 per capita. The government allocates a mere 12-13 dollars per person, indicating a significant challenge in financing healthcare. Roughly 4% of households face catastrophic health expenditures, meaning they spend 10% or more of their income on healthcare. Furthermore, many people forgo care because they cannot afford it, highlighting the importance of addressing both costs and services to achieve UHC.

Dr. Siddiqui also discussed the importance of increasing fiscal space for health in order to achieve UHC. He highlighted several ways to achieve this:

- Creating conducive macro-fiscal conditions, such as sustained high economic growth, which would allow for more investment in health.
- Expanding the tax base, which could provide additional revenue for healthcare.
- Improving the efficiency of existing expenditures, such as reallocating funds from hospitals to primary care and public health.
- Reprioritizing the share of health in government budgets and raising or earmarking sector-specific resources (e.g., taxing tobacco, fizzy drinks, and fast food, and allocating those funds to health).

- Exploring external borrowing from international development institutions (e.g., World Bank, Asian Development Bank, KfW).

He urged policymakers to ponder several critical questions and ideas as they work towards achieving UHC in Pakistan such as:

- Eligibility vs. Entitlement vs. Coverage: While everyone is eligible for healthcare, determining who is entitled and who is actually covered is essential to ensure effective implementation of UHC.
- More Money for Health: There is a need for increased financial investment in the health sector to achieve UHC but there is also a need for 'More Health' for the money that is being spent. Dr. Siddiqi highlighted that in order to make the most of the available funds for health care, efficient resource management, and strategic service purchasing are crucial.

Dr. Siddiqi suggested that, to address these challenges, the government should prioritize healthcare as a fundamental right and invest in strengthening health systems. Lessons from other countries that have achieved UHC were discussed:

- No country gets to UHC via voluntary health insurance – mandatory insurance with subsidies for the poor is essential.
- All countries with universal coverage rely on general government budget revenues (in whole or in part). The larger the informal sector, the greater the need for government involvement in healthcare financing.
- Efficient resource management and strategic purchasing of services are crucial to achieving UHC.
- Even though broad UHC goals are shared by all, the path to UHC has to be homegrown and tailored to each country's unique context.

In conclusion, Dr. Siddiqi emphasized that achieving UHC in Pakistan by 2030 is a challenging yet attainable goal. By prioritizing health sector reforms, increasing investments in healthcare, and collaborating with international organizations, Pakistan can work towards creating a robust and equitable health system that benefits all its citizens.

The Challenges of Fertility Planning in Pakistan: An Exploration of Societal, Cultural, and Policy Perspectives

This panel discussion delved into the multifaceted challenges faced by Pakistani couples, particularly women, when navigating the complexities of fertility behavior and family planning. The conversation covered a broad range of interconnected issues, shedding light on the societal expectations and cultural norms that shape fertility choices. The panel also examined the existing policy and infrastructure obstacles that hinder access to family planning services and information.

Panelists

Dr. Saima Bashir

Head of Social Dynamics Units, PIDE
Joint Secretary Population Association of Pakistan

Dr. Saman Naz

Public Health Scientist
School of Medicine, Indiana University, USA

Dr. Rafi Amir-ud-Din

Associate Professor
COMSATS University Islamabad

The session was Moderated by **Dr. Lubna Naz**, Associate Professor, IBA.

Experts convened to explore the complex factors contributing to the country's high fertility rate of 3.9. The discussion highlighted that although economic development typically leads to a demographic transition, South Asia has not followed this pattern. Instead, successful family planning programs, such as those implemented in India and Bangladesh, have driven down fertility rates through a comprehensive, holistic approach that involves religious leaders, promotes women's education and employment, and ensures easy access to services.

Pakistan experienced a similar decline in fertility rates from 6 to 3.8 between the 1990s and 2006, thanks largely to the successful Lady Health Worker Program. However, this progress has stagnated since then. Contraceptive prevalence declined in the past five years. The panelists identified several contributing factors, including a lack of strong political will, overburdened health workers, and insufficient capacity at the provincial level to carry the family planning agenda forward after devolution.

The experts stressed the need for a comprehensive and holistic approach that addresses health issues, such as high infant and neonatal mortality rates, which contribute to the high fertility rate in Pakistan. The country's performance in this area is notably poor compared to regional partners. In addition to limited access to family planning tools and inadequate education, cultural and religious influences also play a significant role in sustaining the high fertility rate.

Moreover, the panelists discussed how side effects from contraceptive methods are sometimes not adequately addressed, which may deter individuals from using them. Pakistan's heterogeneous population adds another layer of complexity to the implementation of family planning programs, as a one-size-fits-all approach may not be effective across various communities.

The discussion also touched upon the theories of Garry Becker, who explored the relationship between the quantity and quality of children. In Pakistan, families seem to prioritize quantity over quality, leading to intellectual degradation and financial dilution. The role of government and social security networks is crucial in helping people make rational choices about family size, as children are often viewed as future custodians in the absence of adequate social safety nets. Additionally, a strong preference for sons plays a significant role in driving the desire for larger families, even among educated women.

In conclusion, addressing the challenges of fertility planning in Pakistan requires a multifaceted approach that combines strong political commitment, an effective and well-supported health workforce, and tailored strategies for the country's diverse population. By tackling issues such as high infant and neonatal mortality rates, limited access to family planning tools, and cultural and religious influences, Pakistan can work towards reducing its fertility rate and improving the well-being of its citizens.

Addressing Maternal and Child Health Issues in Pakistan: Challenges and Opportunities

This panel discussion aimed to dissect a myriad of challenges that hinder the improvement of maternal and child health in Pakistan, while simultaneously identifying potential avenues for progress. Bringing together a diverse group of experts in public health, policy, and community development, the panel provided a platform for constructive dialogue on how to tackle these pressing issues and promote better health outcomes for both mothers and children.

Panelists

Dr. Talib Lashari

Technical Advisor & Focal Person CIP

Dr. Syed Aziz ur Rab

CEO Greenstar Social Marketing

Dr. Saba Shuja

ECD Development Manager Nutrition Section, UNICEF.

Dr. Sadiya Ahsan Pal

Consultant ObGyn

Sheena Hadi

Director, Ahung

The session was moderated by **Aliya Iqbal Naqvi**, Faculty, IBA.

In a thought-provoking panel discussion titled “Addressing Maternal and Child Health Issues in Pakistan: Challenges and Opportunities,” experts convened to explore the pressing issues surrounding maternal health and access to family planning tools in the country. The discussion sought to understand the various factors contributing to the current state of maternal and child health in Pakistan and identify potential opportunities to improve outcomes for mothers and children.

The panelists began by emphasizing the importance of maternal health as a crucial factor, influencing not only the well-being of mothers but also the health and development of their children. They highlighted that inadequate access to family planning tools and limited reproductive health services significantly contribute to Pakistan’s high maternal mortality rate, which remains alarmingly high compared to its regional counterparts.

The experts identified several key challenges that must be addressed to improve maternal and child health outcomes in Pakistan. These include inadequate healthcare infrastructure, insufficiently trained healthcare professionals, and a lack of awareness about the importance of antenatal and postnatal care among women, particularly in rural areas. Moreover, cultural and religious factors often create barriers to accessing family planning tools, further exacerbating the issue.

The panelists also discussed the opportunities that exist for addressing these challenges. They highlighted the importance of strong political commitment and investment in healthcare infrastructure, as well as the need for targeted interventions designed to improve access to quality maternal and child health services. By training and equipping healthcare professionals with the necessary skills and resources, the quality of care provided to mothers and children can be significantly improved.

In addition, the experts emphasized the critical role of community engagement and education in promoting maternal and child health. Efforts to raise awareness about the importance of antenatal and postnatal care, as well as the benefits of family planning, should be tailored to the cultural and religious context in which they are delivered. This approach will help to ensure that these messages resonate with the target audience and ultimately lead to increased uptake of services.

The panelists also highlighted the potential for public-private partnerships to play a pivotal role in addressing maternal and child health issues in Pakistan. By harnessing the resources and expertise of both sectors, innovative solutions can be developed and scaled to improve healthcare provision and access for mothers and children across the country.

In conclusion, the panel discussion on “Addressing Maternal and Child Health Issues in Pakistan: Challenges and Opportunities” underscored the urgent need for a multifaceted approach to improving maternal and child health outcomes in the country. By investing in healthcare infrastructure, training healthcare professionals, raising awareness, and fostering public-private partnerships, Pakistan can make significant strides towards ensuring the well-being of its mothers and children, ultimately leading to a healthier, more prosperous society.

Concluding remarks by GM Arif

In his concluding speech, Dr. Arif appreciated the insightful discussions and thought-provoking ideas shared at the Population Research Conference 2023. He emphasized that the conference provided a crucial platform for researchers, policymakers, and practitioners to collaborate and deliberate on Pakistan's pressing population issues.

Dr. Arif concluded the various discussions, and highlighted the importance of universal health coverage, women's empowerment and girls' education, investing in children, women, and youth, and the critical link between population and climate change. He acknowledged the role of the PRC and IBA in organizing this event and expressed hope that the knowledge acquired and connections forged would prove invaluable in collective efforts to address the demographic challenges facing Pakistan.

He encouraged everyone to carry forward the momentum and inspiration gained from the conference and to continue the conversation, share their knowledge, and work tirelessly to overcome the complex demographic challenges that lie ahead.

In closing, Dr. Arif congratulated PRC for fostering such a rich and productive discussion and eagerly anticipated the contributions PRC would make as a leading centre for research. He expressed hope that this conference would be just the beginning of many more fruitful collaborations and groundbreaking initiatives.

Dr. Arif thanked all participants for their involvement and wished them great success in their endeavours to create a brighter future for Pakistan's population.

Abstracts

Community Engagement to Increase Vaccine Uptake: Quasi-Experimental Evidence From Islamabad And Rawalpindi, Pakistan

Taimoor Ahmed

Research and Development Solutions

Developing countries have been facing difficulties in reaching out to low-income and underserved communities for COVID-19 vaccination coverage. The rapidity of vaccine development caused a mistrust among certain subgroups of the population, and hence innovative approaches were taken to reach out to such populations. Using a sample of 1760 respondents in five low-income, informal localities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Pakistan, we evaluated a set of interventions involving community engagement by addressing demand and access barriers. We used multi-level mixed effects models to estimate average treatment effects across treatment areas. We found that our interventions increased COVID-19 vaccine willingness in two treatment areas that are furthest from city centers by 7.6% and 6.6% respectively, while vaccine uptake increased in one of the treatment areas by 17.1%, compared to the control area. Our results suggest that personalized information campaigns such as community mobilization help to increase COVID-19 vaccine willingness. Increasing uptake however, requires improving access to the vaccination services. Both information and access may be different for various communities and therefore a “one-size-fits-all” approach may need to be better localized. Such underserved and marginalized communities are better served if vaccination efforts are contextualized.

Public Policy for SDG-2 Food Insecurity, Malnutrition, Maternal and Child Health: Does it Require Revisit?

Dr. Asim Bashir Khan

Institute of Business Administration, Karachi

Sindh is second largest province of Pakistan in terms of population and third largest in area after Balochistan and Punjab. The average inter-census population growth rates between 1998 to 2017 is 2.40 per cent per annum. It is important to note that Sindh is the only province with more than 50 per cent of population lives in urban centres. The total population of Sindh is 47.85 million as of Census 2017 and is expected to be 66.12 million by 2030. Population of women of reproductive age (WRAs) from 15 to 49 years in Sindh is 11.23 million as of 2017, and every year around 4 per cent women become pregnant from the cohort of WRAs. The Population of children under five is 6.45 million as of 2017. The population pyramid of Sindh is very symmetric, characterized by a very large base and persistent high growth rates. The median age in Sindh is 18.5 years, compared to the national median age of 21 years. Not only high growth rates, but the very large base of population pyramid contributes to substantial annual increase in population. The large base of younger population has been conventionally claimed to generate demographic dividend, however, with low literacy rates, and poor health facilities, low investment in education and health will lead to demographic disaster in future. To assess and evaluate the situation of malnutrition in Sindh there are two important source of nutrition-related indicators and variables: (i) the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey; and (ii) the National Nutrition Survey. As of now, the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey has been conducted twice, in 2014 and 2019, and the National Nutrition Survey three

times, in 2001, 2011, and 2018. The percentage of both moderately and severely stunted children in Sindh has increased from 48.0 per cent in 2014 to 50.2 in 2019. However, comparative data of NNS of 2011 and 2018 shows that instance of chronic malnutrition has decreased from 49.8 per cent to 45.3 percentage, whereas trend of acute malnutrition is almost constant i.e. 40.5 per cent (2011) and 40.4 per cent (2018). On the other hand, the same comparative comparison shows a sharp increase in severe acute malnutrition from 17.5 per cent (2011) to 23.2 per cent (2018). Due to the difference of results between the two surveys, a comparative sensitivity analysis of samples of MICS and NNS shows that prima facia the credibility of MICS is more than the NNS. This study aims to provide scientific estimate of potential public investments from 2023 to 2030 require to meet the targets of Sustainable Development Goal “SDG-2 Zero Hunger”. Based on available data of five targets of SDG-2, their indicators and sub-indicators, the intertemporal menu of public investments is geographically mapped at district level with number of target beneficiaries. This is first extensive study which provides a costing model geographically mapped at district level with segregation of SGD-2 targets, indicator, and subindicators. The costing model shows that a total sum of Rs 296.8 billion up to 2030 is required to invest in multiple interventions to deal with problems of food insecurity and malnutrition in Sindh. The public finance, g of nutrition programs lacks conventional wisdom of a die down curve, that is starting from a high level of investment to a gradual reduction corresponding to the situation, that is why the present cycle of malnutrition is persistent.

Impact of Place of Delivery on Neonatal Mortality in Pakistan using PDHS 2017-18

Amna Noor

National Institute of Population Studies (NIPS)

The current study provides information regarding the impact of place of delivery on neonatal deaths. Factors affecting neonatal mortality have rarely considered the effect of place of delivery on neonatal death in Pakistan. We analyze data from Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (PDHS) 2017-18. The logistic regression model assesses the association between neonatal mortality and place of delivery. The explanatory variables are the place of delivery, mother’s employment status, child sex, birth order, maternal age, maternal education, residence, region, and size of child. From the results, it has been found that most neonatal deaths during deliveries are among outside health facilities in Pakistan. The study also found that the place of delivery is a significant predictor of neonatal mortality. Government should formulate policies to educate pregnant women regarding antenatal care.

Assessing Rural Household’s Knowledge About Sustainable Consumed Water: A Case Study of Shaheed Benazirabad

Zahid Hussain

Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University

Sustainable water means a nation has enough water to encounter multiple needs, from agriculture to community and industry. In 2015, 195 nations agreed on 17 Global Sustainable Development Goals aimed to create a better world by 2030, where the 6th goal is to ensure availability and sustainable water management and sanitation for all. It also describes achieving universal and impartial access to safe and affordable drinking water for all. Water plays a critical role in body regulation; thus, water quality is critical for proper body system operation. Moreover, knowledge about sustainable consumed water is essential for understanding and choosing the quality of available water. In (Shaheed Benazirabad) Sindh, this study evaluates rural households’ knowledge concerning several aspects of water quality. With the help of a structured interview and questionnaire, primary data will collect from 100 rural families using

a purposeful sampling technique. The percentages, frequency count, mean, and Pearson's product-moment correlation will use to examine the data. Subject to the findings, it can expect that women head rural families. It is expected that a small proportion of the population has the secondary education and the majority is married. A considerable population drinks water from streams and community boreholes and does not understand pure water as devoid of germs, colourless and odorless. The participants' understanding of the parameters affecting water quality for drinking will highly demonstrate by their total knowledge score. The results will also highlight the consuming trend of boiling and alum to purify their water. According to the study's findings, it can expect that the rural households in the survey area have a low level of knowledge about water quality, which showed in their water filtration methods. It is advised that purified water be checked before consumption. In policy discourse, there will be a need for an awareness campaign regarding pure water in the concerned areas of the Sindh.

Fieldwork Experiences Of Women; What Is The Female Spatial Experience Of Conducting Fieldwork At An Undergraduate Level In Karachi, Pakistan?

Hafsa Saeed

Habib University Karachi

Lack of mobility and the limited access women have to public spaces are one of the most severe challenges faced in the domain of gender inequality, in the context of Pakistan. Though literature largely discusses the challenges faced by women in public spaces and the lack of control they possess in the public sphere, little has been written about how this affects women's experiences during fieldwork. In light of that, this study seeks to explore how gender affects field experiences and the gender specific issues that arise in the field, in terms of urban mobility and access to public spaces in Karachi. Moreover, the study also tries to understand how the issues women face in the field affect their fieldwork experience and their research process, through employing a feminist standpoint lens as the framework that helps to situate female experiences at the forefront and hence aids in understanding the problems women face in the field. Lastly, this qualitative research paper will make use of an exploratory approach methodology to explore the fieldwork experiences of women through in-depth individual interviews and further thematic analysis. The findings of the study highlight the extra measures women have to take and the various aspects they have to navigate through simply to carry out field research in Karachi. From familial obstacles to transport issues, women found their research being affected by factors that otherwise did not influence the research processes of their male colleagues. Hence, this study aims to address the gaps in literature regarding fieldwork experiences of women in Karachi, which has significant policy implications for urban mobility practices, field training of women and the tenets of feminist research. In doing so, it provides key insights for policymakers and calls for further research on the issue at hand as it uncovers the relation between female mobility practices and the issues they encounter in the field with fieldwork experience and the process of research.

The Need And Acceptability Of A Personal-Safety Program For Adolescents With Intellectual And Developmental Disabilities In Pakistan

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Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) like Down syndrome and Autism Spectrum Disorder have low levels of knowledge regarding sexuality in Pakistan, which leads to limited

social and sexual development. This is because there is a stigma attached to sexuality knowledge, which is perpetuated through stereotypes like individuals with IDD are asexual and information on sexual behaviors would only make them engage in inappropriate behaviors. Hence, caretakers are reluctant to offer education on aspects like thoughts, feelings, emotions, relationships, health and hygiene, and abuse prevention. All of this makes adolescents with IDD particularly high-risk, in the face of sexual abuse, due to their increased vulnerability, as compared to their typically developing peers. Thus, the purpose of this qualitative research study is to explore, via in-depth interviews with stakeholders like parents and service providers, the need and acceptability of a personal safety program for adolescents with intellectual and developmental disabilities, especially within the Pakistani context. Results have been coded using thematic analysis and are reported using the Behavioural Ecological Model (BEM). Research findings indicate that the stakeholders do recognize the importance and need for a personal-safety program but its acceptability is complex, it needs the involvement of institutions and individuals from all levels of society. Government has a crucial role to play here and can enhance the acceptability of a program through policy/law-making. Moreover, stranger danger, safe and unsafe people, appropriate and inappropriate behaviors, and differences between public versus private behaviors were some acceptable concepts to stakeholders. Social stories and visuals like flashcards are identified as key methods to teach about personal-safety, and they could be effectively incorporated into any future program developed and implemented in the Pakistani context.

Household Traits and Its Impact on Offspring's Educational Inclusion: Empirical Evidence from Urban and Rural Areas of Pakistan

Dr. Abdul Salam Lodhi

University College of Zhob, BUITEMS

This study uses household income and expenditure, parental perception, believes in tribal norms and voice of mother in the decision making as independent variable to their impact on child's schooling decision compared with its alternate available activities. In this study, we used a unique data set collected from various districts of Pakistan for a child labor and education project. The observed relation between income inequality and parental education and the schooling of their children is calculated through a simultaneous equation model. The results reveal that along with the income and education of parents their perception and the role of the mother in decision making have a positive impact on the offspring's schooling. However, belief in tribal norms has a negative significant influence on the schooling of the offspring.

Intimate Partner Violence and Birth Outcomes: Evidence from Pakistan

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In this study, we examine the association of intimate partner violence in lifetime & during pregnancy with birth outcomes in Pakistan. The birth outcomes include child size at birth, miscarriage, and stillbirth. Secondary objective of the study is about the investigation of the association between two main dimensions namely physical violence and emotional violence and birth outcomes. To study the above-mentioned association, the data from the last two surveys is utilized. To investigate the association between domestic violence on birth outcomes, Linear Probability Model is used. The results indicate that exposure to intimate partner violence whether in lifetime or during pregnancy, both are significantly associated with miscarriage and small birth size, while, the study does not find any association between exposure to intimate partner violence and stillbirth. The results of the study also indicate that women residing in rural areas, from lower socioeconomic status, and less educated mothers may be affected significantly by the intimate partner violence they are exposed to in lifetime as well as during pregnancy.

Parental Smoking and Respiratory Health of Children

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World Bank

Exposure of children to environmental tobacco smoke has been a concern for more than 30 years due to the harmful effects of tobacco smoke on children's health. Pakistan has one of the world's highest tobacco user populations with nearly 22 million adults aged 18 and up smoking cigarettes, water pipes, or other tobacco products. Almost one-third of males (32.4%) and 5.7% of women smoke tobacco on a daily basis. Acute respiratory infection is the major cause of death in Pakistani children under the age of five, accounting for 20-30% of all child deaths. Parental smoking is one of the risk factors for child respiratory health. This study aims to assess the effects of parental smoking on the respiratory health of children. We used the data from Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (2017-18) carried out by Pakistan Institute of Population Studies. Logistic regression was used to examine the effect of parental tobacco use on the respiratory infection among the children under five years of age. It is found that prevalence of respiratory infection among the children is 15.2% for tobacco user mothers compared to 14.1% prevalence of respiratory infection among the children of non-tobacco user mothers. However, in urban area higher prevalence of respiratory infections among the children of tobacco user parents than rural areas. In the lowest quintiles the prevalence of respiratory infection is 22% compared to 0.3% in the top most quintile, if the mother is a tobacco user. The likelihood of children to have respiratory infection is 12% higher with respect to those children whose mothers did not smoke tobacco. Maternal smoking has a greater influence compared to paternal smoking on the respiratory infection of children. There is a significant association between parental tobacco use and respiratory infections among the children. Effective policies should be formulated to prevent smoking amongst parents and to protect the children from the negative effect of exposure to a smokey environment.

Spatial Analysis of Geographical Heterogeneity in the Level of Short Birth Intervals and Associated Determinants using a Nationally Representative Survey of Pakistan

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World health organization recommended that an optimal birth interval for healthy pregnancy is at least two years (24 months). Short Birth Interval (<24 months) is one of the main hurdles to attain Sustainable Development Goal 3.1, 3.2, 3.7. Short birth spacing has also negative effect on efforts to reduce fertility in the highly populated countries. Pakistan is facing both problems i.e., high fertility rate and high infant mortality. Objective of current research is to study the geographical heterogeneity of short birth interval (SBI) of ever married women in Pakistan. Data from Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey (2017-18) was used for analysis. Sample comprised of women of child bearing age (15-49) who had non-first birth in the last five years preceding the survey. Spatial analysis is done using ArcGIS 10.7, SaTScan software and GWR 4 software. The spatial distribution of SBI was clustered all over Pakistan. The high prevalence of SBI was observed in Punjab. The primary clusters of short birth interval were found in Lahore, Faisalabad, Multan, Sahiwal, Bahawalpur, Okara, Khanewal, Jhang, and Muzaffargarh. Mother's age at first birth and mother's age were determined as the significant predictors of SBI. Provision of reproductive health care services in the hot spots areas may be prioritized instead of the existing homogenous policy across the country.

Household's perception for better conservation of the natural vegetation: A case study of district Ziarat, Pakistan.

Dr. Abdul Salam Lodhi

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Pakistan suffers far more severe forest scarcity than most of the other south Asian countries. Pakistan poses about 4.8% covered by vegetation which is equivalent to more than 4.2 million hectares of the total land area. In district Ziarat about 100 000 hectares are covered by Juniper Forest a total forest area of 150 000 hectares. Surface temperature and monsoon precipitation significantly affect the distribution of natural vegetation. Besides this lack of awareness and coordination, low investment, unorganized tourism, and lack of experimental research especially on the nursery rising, inadequate reforestation and seed germination are the main problems. The objective of the study is to assess people's perception about vegetation conservation in a changing climate and based on finding suggest policy recommendations. The survey was conducted from 265 households using the Binary Logistic regression model. Results of this study revealed that interaction with the environment is much needed to develop awareness among the communities, promote affordable energy and require better techniques for reforestation and afforestation. Through such measures population will have the knowledge, attitude, skill, motivation, and commitment to work collectively and individually towards the solutions.

Climatic Changes And Their Impacts On The Population: A Case Study Of 2022 Floods In Sindh, Pakistan

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Quaid-e-Azam University Islamabad

The research paper aims to investigate the psycho-social impacts on families during the 2022 floods in Sindh, Pakistan. The research methodology is based on qualitative methods, using in-depth interviews and focused group discussions with 100 internally displaced community members. The study also includes secondary data from books, articles, journals, and social media platforms to understand the impacts of climate change on the region. The research findings highlight the destructive impact of floods on the social and emotional distress caused by losing homes and possessions. The study also explores the frustration and insecurity (embodied experiences) faced by the affected population and the lack of adequate measures taken by the government to address the issues of sanitation and water management. The paper highlights the need for further research on the embodied experiences of individuals affected by natural disasters.

Assessing the Smallholder's Perception of Climate Change at the Household Level: Empirical Insights from Western Karakoram, Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan

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The contemporary demographic challenge, climate change is the most noticeable phenomenon in the high mountains of Pakistan. This study was intended to assess the smallholder's perceptions of climate change and its impacts on land-based livelihoods in the Nagar district located in western Karakoram of Pakistan. This study employed a mixed method approach where primary data were collected through a combination of structured household surveys, targeted in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs). Descriptive results revealed that the majority (88.6%) of smallholders in the study area have perceived changes in climatic conditions over the past 20 years. The major perceived changes in the climatic conditions reported by smallholders were decrease in snowfall, increase in temperature, erratic rainfall and increase in the melting of glaciers. Results further revealed that about 88% of respondents reported that climate change has adversely affected their land-based livelihoods. While qualitative results show that smallholders perceived some positive impacts of climate change. The Chi-square results show that there is a significant association between age ($P=0.032$), education ($P=0.000$), farming experience ($P=0.029$), landholding ($P=0.037$), cropping zones ($P=0.000$) and climate change perception of smallholder's. The findings suggest designing locally context-specific climate adaptation strategies that would enable smallholders to strengthen their resilience to cope with climate change.

Climate Change Resulting In Intense Floods in Sindh and the Impact on Population

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Climate change is a major global challenge, with significant impacts on natural systems and human communities around the world. Climate change and rising flood threats together provide new problems and concerns. (PRIEMUS & RIETVELD, 2009)¹ One notable example is the increase in extreme weather events, including floods, which can have devastating consequences for communities and infrastructure. In Sindh, the second largest province of Pakistan, floods have had a particularly significant impact, with numerous reported instances of loss of life, damage to homes and businesses, and disruption to critical services in 2021 alone. Prior to this, the deadly flooding was witnessed in Sindh back in 2010 (Kazi, 2013)². Given the significant impact of floods on the people and communities of Sindh recently, it is important to understand the factors contributing to these events and to identify potential strategies for mitigating their impact. To address this research question, we will rely on a combination of secondary research and an online Google survey. Our secondary research will consist of a review of relevant literature on the topic, including peer-reviewed articles and reports from reputable organizations. Our online survey will be conducted using Google Forms and will target individuals living in Sindh who have experienced

floods. Through our research, we hope to answer the following questions: • How has the frequency and severity of floods in Sindh changed over the past several decades? • What role has climate change played in the observed changes in flood frequency and severity in Sindh? • What impact have these floods had on the economic and social well-being of communities in Sindh? 1 PRIEMUS, H., & RIETVELD, P. (2009). Climate Change, Flood Risk and Spatial Planning. *Built Environment* (1978-), 35(4), 424–431. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23289996> 2 Kazi, A. (2013). A review of the assessment and mitigation of floods in Sindh, Pakistan. *Natural Hazards*, 70(1), 839–864. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11069-013-0850-4> Page 4 of 23 •

What measures have been taken to mitigate the impacts of floods in Sindh, and how effective have these measures been? To answer these questions, we will first review the existing literature on the relationship between climate change and floods in Sindh. This literature may include peer-reviewed articles and reports from reputable organizations such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). We will also consider the experiences of other countries and regions that have faced similar challenges in order to identify the best practices and potential strategies for mitigating the impacts of floods. In addition to our literature review, we will conduct an online survey using Google Forms to gather data from individuals living in Sindh who have experienced floods. This survey will aim to capture the personal experiences and perceptions of these individuals regarding the frequency and severity of floods in the region, as well as the impact of these events on their economic and social well-being. The survey will also seek to gather information on the measures that have been taken to mitigate the impacts of floods in Sindh, and the effectiveness of these measures. By combining the results of our literature review and online survey, we hope to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between climate change and floods in Sindh, and to identify potential strategies for mitigating their impacts. Understanding the role of climate change in the frequency and severity of floods in Sindh is critical for effective adaptation and risk reduction efforts. Such efforts may include improved early warning systems, infrastructure upgrades, and the implementation of land use planning policies that take into account the risks of flooding. Ultimately, addressing the impacts of climate change on floods in Sindh will require a combination of local and global action, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the implementation of adaptation measures at the community level.

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