KINNAIRD COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, LAHORE

PUNJAB CoE-CVE
Home Department

# KINNAIRD'S 1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

## ADVANCING TOWARDS A PEACEFUL AND INCLUSIVE PAKISTAN




# BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

ORIC

KINNAIRD COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, LAHORE
IN COLLABORATION WITH THE PUNJAB CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE ON COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM (COE-CVE)

**Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore**
**Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization**
**"Kinnaird's 1st International Conference on Diversity & Inclusion: Advancing Towards a Peaceful and Inclusive Pakistan"**
**(4th – 6th November 2026)**

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*Conference Titled*

# "Kinnaird's 1st International Conference on Diversity & Inclusion: Advancing Towards a Peaceful and Inclusive Pakistan"

*Is organized by*

*Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore*

*The conference will feature 7 pre-conference workshops, 3 panel discussions, and 12 keynote talks, bringing together distinguished scholars and experts from national and international institutions. More than 200 papers will be presented 18 technical sessions over the three days of the conference.*

# *Introduction*

Diversity and inclusion are essential foundations for building peaceful, equitable, and resilient societies. Pakistan, with its rich cultural, linguistic, social, and religious diversity, presents unique opportunities to promote pluralism, mutual respect, and inclusive development. For over 113 years, Kinnaird College for Women has carried forward a legacy of diversity and inclusion, a community where women of different faiths and backgrounds have learned and led together since 1913. The International Conference on Diversity and Inclusion: Advancing Towards a Peaceful and Inclusive Pakistan aims to bring together academicians, researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and students to discuss innovative research, policies, and practices that promote equity, social harmony, and inclusive growth. The conference is being organized in collaboration with the Punjab Centre of Excellence on Countering Violent Extremism (Punjab CoE-CVE), reflecting a shared commitment to promoting peace, tolerance, social cohesion, and an inclusive society. The Conference will serves as a platform for knowledge exchange, interdisciplinary dialogue, and collaborative partnerships to address contemporary challenges related to diversity and inclusion in Pakistan and beyond.

The themes of the Conference are:

- Advancing Gender Equality, Diversity, and National Integration
- Collaborative Initiatives for Promoting Identity and Cultural Diversity
- Leveraging Technology to Strengthen Interfaith Harmony and Shared Human Values
- Reimagining Inclusive Pedagogies through Universal Design for Learning
- Strengthening Digital and Media Literacy to Bridge the Digital Divide and Empower Communities

Bringing together 60+ national and international universities and institutions, the conference fosters global academic exchange, interdisciplinary research, and strategic collaborations to advance diversity, inclusion, social cohesion, and a peaceful and inclusive society.

*The opinions, findings and conclusions stated herein are those of authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore Pakistan*

## Panel Talks


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| 2 | **Prof. Dr. Iram Khalid**<br>Dean of Humanties and Social Sciences,<br>HOD School of International Relations,<br>Minhaj University Lahore | II |
| 3 | **Dr. Summaira Sarfraz**<br>Professor and Director,<br>FAST–National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences,<br>Lahore, Pakistan | III |
| 4 | **Michael Kugelman**<br>Senior Fellow for South Asia, Atlantic Council,<br>Washington, D.C., United States. | IV |
| 5 | **Dr. Mabel Deane Khawaja**<br>Independent Scholar / Retired Faculty, Hampton University,<br>Hampton, Virginia, United States | V |
| 6 | **Professor Jane Ogden**<br>Professor of Health Psychology, School of Psychology,<br>University of Surrey, United Kingdom | VII |
| 7 | **Professor Arinola Adefila**<br>Professor, Buckinghamshire New University, United Kingdom | VIII |
| 8 | **Dr. Aneeq Ahmad**<br>Professor, Department of Psychology, Henderson State University,<br>Arkansas, United States | X |
| 9 | **Dr. Mauren Porciúncula**<br>Associate Professor, Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG), Brazil | XI |
| 10 | **Dr. Thomas Soseco**<br>Associate Professor, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia. | XIII |
| 11 | **Dr. Zibiah Alfred Loakthar**<br>Senior Lecturer in Refugee Care, Co-Director, Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees, University of Essex, United Kingdom | XIV |
| 12 | **Dr. Qudsia Kalsoom**<br>Lecturer in Education,University of Dundee,Scotland, United Kingdom | XV |

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# Panel Talks

## Panel Talk: Gender Paradox: Progress and Persistent inequality

Women's participation in higher education, professional life and leadership roles has increased, however this progress exists alongside persistent inequalities in access, recognition and decision making. This creates a fundamental gender paradox: if women are entering in professional life in greater numbers, why do unequal outcomes and unequal experiences continue? The highlight of the panel will be to find the reasons why progressive societal change has not been able to materialize from the expected inclusion of woman in academic and professional setups.



**Prof. Dr. Najma Najam**
Professor Emeritus, Institute of Applied Psychology,
University of the Punjab



**Prof. Dr. Rukhsana Kausar**
Professor Emeritus, Institute of Applied Psychology,
University of the Punjab



**Justice Nasira Iqbal**
Pakistani Jurist, Law Professor, and Human Rights Advocate

**Panel Talk: Fostering Interfaith Harmony**

Interfaith dialogue in Pakistan has long been understood through generalized calls for tolerance, peaceful coexistence, and a symbolic display of unity. Yet the lived realities of theological and ideological diversity present far more complex challenges. As digital platforms accelerate the spread of narratives, the traditional approaches to interfaith harmony struggle for addressing the root-cause of socio-religious schisms. This panel seeks to move the conversation to a deeper, actionable framework of interfaith harmony; a spirit to share cross-religious understanding



**Dr. Kalyan Singh Kalyan**
Assistant Professor of Punjabi Government College University Lahore



**Dr. Aurangzeb Haneef**
Assistant Professor, Mushtaq Ahmad Gurmani School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS)



**Dr. Keneth Pervaiz**
Assistant Professor
Religious Studies Department
Forman Christian College (FCCU), Lahore

**Panel Talk: Preserving Heritage and Driving Social Change**

Language and culture are not simply repositories of the past; they are living forces through which communities remember, express identity, negotiate difference and imagine their future. In a diverse society such as Pakistan, languages, oral traditions, literature, music, crafts and cultural practices carry histories and identities that can easily become marginalized by linguistic hierarchies, rapid modernization, and commercialization and changing patterns of media consumption. This panel will therefore move beyond the familiar debate of tradition versus modernity and examine how language and culture can become instruments of inclusion, social cohesion and transformation.



**Mr. Kamran Lashari**
Former Director General Walled City of Lahore
Former Petroleum Secretary of Pakistan



**Prof. Sajida Vandal**
CEO of THAAP and Former Principal, National College of Arts (NCA)



**Dr. Asghar Nadeem Syed**
Playwright, Poet, Novelist, Columnist
Dean, Faculty of Languages and Literature, University of Lahore



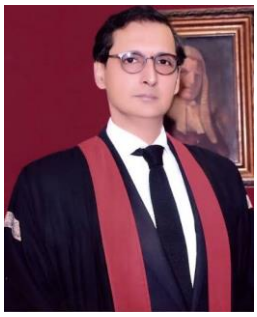
**Ms. Moneeza Hashmi**
Broadcaster, Television Producer, Actress
Director of Programmes, Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV)



**Asher Sidhu**
Artist and Founder of Sidhu's Gallery of Art and Music

# Keynote Speakers: Titles and Abstracts

**1. Justice Jawad Hassan**



Judge,
Lahore High Court,
Lahore, Pakistan.

Honourable Mr. Justice Jawad Hassan is a Judge of the Lahore High Court with extensive experience in constitutional, commercial, civil, and environmental law. Before his elevation to the Bench in November 2016, he practised law in Pakistan and worked on constitutional and commercial matters. He holds an LL.M. in Environmental Law from Pace University School of Law, New York, and has contributed to the development of environmental law through legal practice, legislative drafting, scholarly writing, and teaching. His judicial work includes constitutional cases and environmental matters; in which he has delivered landmark judgments. He has also taught environmental law to judicial officers at federal and provincial judicial academies and participated in international legal conferences. His professional contributions extend to legal research and the development of jurisprudence concerning constitutional rights, environmental protection, and access to justice.

**2. Prof. Dr. Iram Khalid**



Dean of Humanties and Social Sciences,
HOD School of International Relations,
Minhaj University Lahore.

Prof. Dr. Iram Khalid is a distinguished academic and researcher in Political Science and International Relations at the University of the Punjab, Lahore. She holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of the Punjab, an MPhil in International Relations from Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, and a master's degree in Political Science from the University of the Punjab. Her doctoral research examined crisis decision-making through a case study of Pakistan–India conflicts from 1950 to 1999. Her areas of academic interest include national security, Pakistan–India relations, South Asian water politics, nuclear politics, Pakistan's foreign policy, and domestic politics. She has authored three books, co-edited four books, and published approximately 70 research papers in national and international journals, according to her university profile. Her research has also addressed water management, public perceptions of river diversions, and urban security in Pakistani cities. Through her teaching, publications, research projects, and academic leadership, she contributes to the study of regional politics, security challenges, and international relations.

**3. Dr. Summaira Sarfraz**



Professor and Director,
FAST–National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences,
Lahore, Pakistan.

Dr. Summaira Sarfraz is a Professor at FAST–National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences, Lahore, where she has been associated with the university since 1996. She holds a PhD in English from the University of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, completed in 2013, an MS in Applied Linguistics from the University of Management and Technology, and a master's degree in English Language Teaching from Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore. Her academic specialisation includes applied linguistics, communicative approaches to English language teaching, and Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Her research focuses particularly on developing technology-assisted and e-learning resources to enhance English language skills. Her doctoral research explored an integrated model combining e-learning and learner-centred teaching methodologies to improve coherence in undergraduate students' emotive writing. She has contributed to academic research through international publications and has held academic leadership positions, including Head of the Department of Sciences and Humanities and Dean of Sciences and Humanities at FAST-NUCES.

**4. Michael Kugelman**



Senior Fellow for South Asia,
Atlantic Council,
Washington, D.C., United States.

Michael Kugelman is a distinguished South Asia analyst whose work focuses on regional geopolitics, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, and relations between South Asia and the United States. He previously led the Wilson Center's research and programming on South Asia and was appointed the founding Director of its South Asia Institute in 2022. He is currently a Senior Fellow for South Asia at the Atlantic Council and writes the weekly South Asia Brief for Foreign Policy magazine. His analysis and commentary have appeared in leading international publications, including The New York Times, The Washington Post, Financial Times, The Wall Street Journal, and Foreign Affairs. He has edited or co-edited 11 books covering regional political, security, economic, and development challenges. He holds a Master's degree in Law and Diplomacy from The Fletcher School at Tufts University and a bachelor's degree from American University's School of International Service.

**5. Dr. Mabel Deane Khawaja**

Independent Scholar / Retired Faculty,
Hampton University,
Hampton, Virginia, United States.



Dr. Mabel Deane Khawaja M.A. (WIU, USA), Ph.D. (WVU, USA) is a retired professor of English whose research focuses on transnational curriculum. She is a former International Programs Coordinator of the US government and recipient of grants from Fulbright Association, US National Endowment for Humanities, Study Abroad/Teaching Programs (UK, France, Tunisia). She served as Chair for International Concerns Committee of US National Council of Teachers of English. Her cross-cultural research is included in many refereed publications e.g., The International Journal of Critical Cultural Studies and Finding New Voice and Vision in Literacy Learning.

## Title: Enclosures of Despair and Disclosures of Hope

**Abstract:**

There is no simple solution to gender disparity because it is not a battle between sexes. Differences of gender, class, education, ethnicity, race, religion, skin color, or languages exist across male and female populations. These differences represent diversity highlighting the importance of inclusion. Privilege and marginalized status are not fenced within one single category; it is the intersectionality of various categories that creates barriers in a culture of control and dominion. In the 19th century women from around the world joined voting rights movements. In the USA, white women of the National Suffrage Association were only focused on gender inequality. Due to exclusion and discrimination, African American women pioneered a Colored Women's Association to connect voting rights and racial reforms. Their positive contribution promoted inclusion of multicultural voices and perspectives in American Literature that were harbinger to civil rights reform. My visit to Singapore, which ranks among globally top-tiered nations for economic growth and progress, was a testimony to the positive outcomes of an inclusive and culturally diverse democracy with four official languages. When divergent viewpoints coexist, new possibilities for discovery and invention emerge on the horizon. During bloody battles of the

Crimean war (1853 -1856), Florence Nightingale's unique concern for the wounded soldiers gave birth to the noble profession of nursing. New perspectives can point to "The Road Not Taken" that makes "all the difference," writes Robert Frost in his 1915 poem. Yes, women can change the world for a better future! Unfortunately, gender equality is often pushed back to sustain the status quo. Bell Hooks circumvents the social traps of "intersectionality" and discrimination to liberate women's genius and energy for common good. Hooks rams across the traditional guardrails with a compelling declaration: **"**When we choose to love, we choose to move against fear—against alienation and separation. The choice to love is a choice to connect—to find ourselves in the other (2000)." The challenge is whether we can all come together to transcend inconvenient barriers and longstanding prejudices by accepting diversity as an asset to integrate new talents, skills, and knowledge for national progress.

**6. Professor Jane Ogden**



Professor of Health Psychology,
School of Psychology,
University of Surrey,
United Kingdom.

Professor Jane Ogden is an established academic and researcher in health psychology at the University of Surrey, United Kingdom. Her research focuses on eating behaviour, weight management, women's health, and the psychological aspects of health-related behaviour. Her academic work explores the psychological and social factors influencing health, illness, and healthcare practices. She has contributed extensively to research and publications examining eating habits, body weight, health behaviour, and interactions between healthcare professionals and patients. Through her teaching, research, and scholarly publications, she contributes to the understanding of how psychological factors influence health decisions, healthcare experiences, and behaviour change.

**Title: The role of choice in women's health: contraception, abortion, miscarriage and place of birth.**

**7. Professor Arinola Adefila**

Professor,
Buckinghamshire New University,
United Kingdom.



Professor Arinola Adefila is an academic at Buckinghamshire New University, United Kingdom, with extensive experience in education, research, and community development. Before joining the university in 2024, she held academic and professional positions at Staffordshire University and Coventry University. Her areas of expertise include sustainable development education, lifelong learning, social inclusion, and community engagement. Her research examines the relationships between education, social norms, and sustainable development, with a focus on promoting inclusive learning and community participation. Through her academic and research activities, she contributes to discussions on educational development, social inclusion, and the role of lifelong learning in supporting sustainable communities.

**Title: All the Light We Cannot See**

**Abstract**

I have borrowed the title of the talk from Anthony Doerr's novel “All the Light We Cannot See”, a story about a blind French girl and a German boy living on opposite sides of a war, whose lives become connected through something neither of them can see: a radio signal. Some of the most important light in the world exists beyond the limits of our immediate perception. The signal exists even when we are not listening. The frequency exists even when we are not tuned to receive it. And the light exists even when we cannot see it. Perhaps the same is true of one another. Someone else's conviction may be a light we have not yet learned to see. Someone else's faith may illuminate a part of the world that remains unfamiliar to us. Someone else's language, culture, history, gender, ethnicity, or way of being Pakistani may carry knowledge and meaning that fall outside the range of our own experience. Our inability to perceive another person's light is not evidence that it is not shining. Is this the right place to begin a conversation about diversity and inclusion? Inclusion asks something more difficult of us than simply acknowledging that difference exists. It asks whether we have the courage to encounter difference without immediately fearing it, judging it, or trying

to make it more like ourselves. Inclusion asks whether we are prepared to tune ourselves differently. This actually takes courage. The courage of exploration and the idea that lighting another person's candle does not diminish our own, is ultimately a theme about trust. Trust in a nation as historically, culturally, linguistically, religiously, and intellectually layered as Pakistan does not need to extinguish small lights for the big ones to shine. This is one of the most important lessons diversity asks us to learn. Light is not a scarce resource. When one candle lights another, the first flame does not become smaller. The room simply becomes brighter. The question this conference asks us to explore comes from the Kinnard motto “Light to guide us, courage to support us and love to unite us.”Do we have the courage to move towards what we do not yet understand, and to discover what becomes visible when we do?

**8. Dr. Aneeq Ahmad**

Professor,
Department of Psychology,
Henderson State University,
Arkansas, United States.



Dr. Aneeq Ahmad is a Professor of Psychology at Henderson State University, Arkansas, United States. He earned his PhD in Psychology from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1998 and completed a three-year fellowship at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism in 2001. His research interests include behavioural neuroscience and religion, with academic interests spanning human emotions and social psychology. His work and teaching focus on understanding human behaviour and the psychological and neurological processes underlying emotions and social interactions. In 2014, he served as the 60th President of the Southwestern Psychological Association.

**Title: The Social Brain: Neuropsychological Pathways from Bias to Belonging and Peace**

**Abstract:**

Human beings possess a deeply social and adaptable brain, shaped by experience to recognize social groups, evaluate others, detect threat, and seek connection and belonging. Although these processes can contribute to stereotyping, in-group favoritism, and "us-versus-them" divisions, they are not fixed. This presentation examines how meaningful intergroup contact, perspective-taking, empathy, cooperative goals, and inclusive social environments can shape neurocognitive pathways associated with social perception, emotional regulation, and interpersonal connection. Drawing on social neuroscience and psychological research, the presentation considers how repeated positive experiences across group boundaries may reduce automatic threat responses, strengthen regulatory processes, increase empathic engagement, and expand perceptions of who belongs within one's social world. Attention is given to neuroplasticity—the capacity of experience to modify patterns of neural processing—and to the conditions under which contact between diverse groups promotes meaningful psychological change. By connecting brain processes with everyday social experiences, the presentation proposes that inclusion is more than a social ideal: it can become a learned pattern of perception, emotion, and behavior. Creating opportunities for meaningful contact, shared goals, empathy, and a sense of belonging may therefore provide an important psychological pathway from bias and division toward cooperation and sustainable peace.

**9. Dr. Mauren Porciúncula**

Associate Professor,
Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG),
Brazil.



Dr. Mauren Porciúncula is an Associate Professor at the Federal University of Rio Grande (FURG), Brazil, specialising in Statistical Education. She is the founder of the Innovation Center of Statistical Education (ICE), an initiative focused on advancing statistical education through research and innovative teaching practices. Her academic work focuses on statistical literacy and improving the teaching and learning of statistics. She has contributed to research, teacher training, and the development of educational approaches that strengthen the understanding and application of statistical concepts. Through her academic activities and research collaborations, she supports the advancement of statistical education and the development of effective educational practices.

**Title: Statistical Literacy for an Inclusive World: Data, Diversity and Critical Citizenship**

**Abstract:**

In a world increasingly shaped by data and artificial intelligence, statistical literacy has become essential not only for understanding information, but also for recognizing inequalities, questioning representations of reality, and participating critically in society. This talk discusses Statistics Education as a powerful space for promoting diversity, inclusion, social justice, and critical citizenship. Drawing on more than two decades of research, teaching, and educational initiatives in Brazil, I will discuss experiences in which learners investigate real questions emerging from their own social, cultural, and environmental contexts. Particular attention will be given to the LeME – Statistical Multimedia Literacy initiative, which uses Statistical Learning Projects to place students as protagonists of the investigative process, encouraging them to formulate questions, collect and analyze data, interpret evidence, communicate findings, and reflect critically on the realities represented by those data. The discussion will also draw on experiences developed with communities in socially, economically, and environmentally vulnerable contexts, including initiatives in the Brazilian Amazon, illustrating how Statistics Education can make inequalities visible while valuing different territories, cultures, experiences, and voices. Finally, the talk will

consider emerging challenges posed by Artificial Intelligence. In an era in which algorithms increasingly mediate access to information and influence decisions, statistical literacy must go beyond reading graphs and calculating measures. Education must prepare people to question data, sources, representations, uncertainty, and AI-generated conclusions, enabling them to use evidence critically and responsibly. Statistical literacy is therefore presented not merely as a set of technical skills, but as a means of empowering individuals to understand their world, make informed decisions, participate in democratic life, and contribute to building more inclusive and equitable societies.

**Keywords:** Statistical Literacy; Statistics Education; Diversity and Inclusion; Critical Citizenship; Social Justice; Artificial Intelligence.

**10. Dr. Thomas Soseco**

Associate Professor,
Faculty of Economics and Business,
Universitas Negeri Malang,
Indonesia.



Dr. Thomas Soseco is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia. He holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Waikato, New Zealand, an MSc in Economics from Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia, and a bachelor's degree in Economics from Universitas Andalas, Indonesia. His research interests include development economics, regional economics, household wealth, poverty, and inequality. In addition to his academic role, he serves as a research associate at the ROTASI Institute and a researcher at the Institute for Educational and Learning Development (LPPP). He also contributes to scholarly research and academic publishing as a reviewer for journals indexed in SCOPUS and SINTA. His academic work focuses on economic development and the socioeconomic factors influencing household welfare and regional disparities.

**Title: Women's Economic Empowerment through Education and Land Rights: Evidence from Rural Indonesia**

**Abstract:**

Investments to improve the lives and livelihoods of people who are experiencing poverty can be achieved through providing sufficient time for individuals to attend school and earn income. Delaying early marriage can be beneficial, especially for girls from poorer households, as it allows them to stay in school for longer periods, hence increasing their capacity and capability. Then, equal access to asset accumulation should be provided for both males and females. An empirical study of Indonesian rural households shows that female land ownership is positively associated with monetary welfare and with women's labour participation. Further, female ownership does not significantly correlate with food insecurity, whereas male ownership does. The findings support the view that women's property rights are linked to economic resilience and agency in rural Indonesia. Therefore, policies that expand women's land titles, secure joint ownership, and complement land programs with human-capital and market access interventions are likely to yield broad welfare gains.

**11. Dr. Zibiah Alfred Loakthar**

Senior Lecturer in Refugee Care,
Co-Director, Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees,
University of Essex,
United Kingdom.



Dr. Zibiah Alfred Loakthar is a Senior Lecturer in Refugee Care at the University of Essex, United Kingdom, and Co-Director of the Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees. Her academic and professional interests include refugee care, asylum, human rights, social justice, and the experiences of refugee and migrant communities. Her work focuses on understanding the challenges faced by displaced populations, particularly in relation to protection, inclusion, and well-being. Through her academic and research activities, she contributes to discussions on the experiences of refugees and migrants and the social and institutional issues affecting vulnerable communities. Her work engages with the importance of human rights, dignity, and social justice in addressing the needs of people affected by displacement.

**Title: Promoting Inclusion within Educational Settings**

**Abstract**

To feel fully included in learning settings, people must feel a sense of power, or agency, as well as a sense of belonging. How many educators help foster these feelings amongst learners? What steps can learners take themselves to help facilitate inclusion? This paper will consider how differently abled learners may be included in mainstream settings and how inclusive learning spaces may be created for people from diverse cultural backgrounds and people from refugee backgrounds. The author will draw upon her own experiences and reflect upon various barriers to inclusion by sharing some anonymised case studies. Effective strategies to remove barriers to inclusion will be shared. The author will acknowledge how well-intended action by educators may at times create barriers to inclusion and learning. The benefits of education practitioners receiving some training to support the adoption of a mindful, therapeutic approach to their work will be advanced.

**Keywords:** Inclusion diversity belonging agency learning.

**12. Dr. Qudsia Kalsoom**

Lecturer in Education,
University of Dundee,
Scotland, United Kingdom.



Dr. Qudsia Kalsoom, PhD, FHEA, is a Lecturer in Education at the University of Dundee, United Kingdom. Her academic interests include education, teacher development, sustainable education, gender equality, and social justice. Her work focuses on educational research and teaching, with particular attention to inclusive educational practices and contemporary challenges in education. She is interested in promoting equitable learning environments, supporting teacher development, and exploring the role of education in advancing sustainability and social justice. Through her academic work, she contributes to discussions on inclusive education, educational development, and the creation of learning environments that respond to diverse learners' needs.

**Title: Whose Knowledge Counts? Diversity, Inclusion and Justice in Education**

**Abstract:**

Diversity and inclusion are often discussed in terms of access, representation and participation. While these dimensions remain important, educational institutions face a deeper challenge: determining whose knowledge is valued, whose experiences are recognised and whose voices influence the futures that education seeks to create. In a world marked by increasing social fragmentation, inequality, technological disruption and environmental uncertainty, questions of diversity and inclusion cannot be separated from questions of knowledge, power and justice. The keynote will explore these issues through the lens of Powerful Curriculum Practice, a framework that helps us think about how educationally significant learning experiences emerge through the interplay of curriculum sayings, doings and relatings. Drawing on my research in curriculum studies and sustainability education (For example: Kalsoom & McLennan, 2026; Kalsoom et al., 2026; Kalsoom, 2025; Coker et al, 2024; Kalsoom, 2024), I argue that educational inclusion cannot be understood through universal prescriptions alone but requires ongoing educational judgement about what is meaningful and significant for particular learners in particular contexts. I will also

discuss how curriculum, pedagogy and institutional culture can either reproduce existing inequalities or create opportunities for recognition, representation and democratic participation. Particular attention will be given to the role of knowledge plurality, exploring how local, community, indigenous and experiential knowledges can enter into meaningful dialogue with disciplinary and scientific knowledge. The keynote will conclude by inviting reflection on how educationally significant learning experiences emerge through the interplay of curriculum sayings, doings and relatings, and what this might mean for creating educational spaces in which diverse learners can participate meaningfully, expand their capacities to understand, act in and relate to the world and contribute to the development of more inclusive, just and peaceful societies.

# ROLE OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY ON STUDENTS ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECTOR UNIVERSITIES

**Eeraj Fatima[1*], Syeda Tehreem Bukhari[1], Abira Ismat Butt[2]**

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**Abstract:**

Digital technology has changed the way students learn, communicate, and complete their academic work. In today's digitalized world, digital literacy is becoming a crucial learning competency to meet the changing needs. This study was conducted to investigate students' perception regarding technology usage in teaching and learning and the role of digital technology on their performance in public sector universities. The study was quantitative in nature and guided by Positivist Paradigm. Research design was descriptive. Survey study was conducted. The population of the study was undergraduate and graduate students of public sector universities. Random sampling technique was used, sample included 300 students. Questionnaire was used as the research instrument for data collection which consisted of 20 statements. Data was analyzed by using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were applied, frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were found. The study concluded that students had a positive perception towards technology use and digital technologies were seen to be improving students learning and academic performance in public sector universities. The study highlighted that access to digital technology, the attitude and ability of the students to use digital technologies for learning purpose and the support provided to the students are crucial for attaining meaningful benefit from technology. Therefore, strengthening students' digital literacy and promoting equitable access would enhance positive contribution of technology on their performance while also facilitate bridging the digital divide in higher education.

**Keywords:**

Digital technology, Digital Literacy, Students perception, Academic performance, Public sector universities

# WORKING WOMEN, UNPAID HOURS OF WORK: AN ANALYSIS OF FACTORS HINDERING ECONOMIC PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

The female labor force participation in the country has risen from 21.4 percent to 24.4 percent from 2020-21 to 2024-25 (Government of Pakistan, 2025). This is a marginal increase still accompanied by the existence of wide gender gaps in the labor market of an emerging economy like Pakistan. These differentials are one of the widest ones in South Asia. with almost 45 percent women who are not in employment, education, or training (NEET), as compared to only 13 percent young men. SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) emphasize the active economic participation of women, realizing the role that they play in the prosperity of any nation. The participation of women remains low due to domestic and child care responsibilities, cultural norms, and socioeconomic factors existent in Pakistan. The gap between the male and female workers' unpaid hours of work identifies the time-burden females are trapped in. the latest labor force survey 2024-25 has captured the unpaid and domestic care burden for the first time, which is the primary focus of this paper. The present study examines the effect of unpaid hours of work, familial, and cultural factors on the economic status of women in Pakistan. Probit estimation has been employed for assessing the role of these factors in hindering the economic participation of women in Pakistan. It will aid the policy makers in devising policies for managing unpaid domestic and care work that puts burden on the hours of paid work of labor market participants in our country.

**Keywords:**

Female labor force participation; employment status; SDG 5; Probit estimation; unpaid hours of work.

# IMPACT OF MONEY SUPPLY ON INFLATION IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

This study examines the impact of money supply on inflation in Pakistan by incorporating other key macroeconomic variables, including the real interest rate, real effective exchange rate (REER), and unemployment, over the period 2000–2024. The study uses annual secondary time-series data obtained from the World Development Indicators (WDI). The Autoregressive Distributed Lag (ARDL) approach is employed to investigate both the short-run and long-run relationships among the variables after confirming stationarity through the Augmented Dickey-Fuller (ADF) unit root test. The empirical findings reveal the existence of a long-run cointegrating relationship among inflation and its determinants, as confirmed by the ARDL Bounds Test. Money supply has a positive and statistically significant effect on inflation in both the short run and long run, supporting the Quantity Theory of Money. The real interest rate exhibits a significant negative relationship with inflation, while unemployment also has a significant negative impact on inflation, consistent with the Phillips Curve hypothesis. The real effective exchange rate has a weak negative and statistically insignificant effect on inflation. The study concludes that money supply is the most influential determinant of inflation in Pakistan and emphasizes prudent monetary policies to achieve price stability and sustainable economic growth. The study also contributes to the theme of the Kinnaird International Conference on Diversity and Inclusion for a Peaceful Pakistan by highlighting the importance of economic stability in promoting inclusive and cohesive communities. Stable prices can protect household purchasing power and support greater economic participation across different social groups. Employment-supporting policies can contribute to social cohesion by improving economic opportunities and reducing vulnerability. In line with SDG 8, sustainable economic growth and productive employment can help empower communities and strengthen human values. Thus, effective economic policies can contribute to a more inclusive, stable, and peaceful Pakistan through stronger and more resilient communities.

**Keywords:**

Inflation, Money Supply (M2), Unemployment, Sustainable Economic Growth, Social Cohesion

# IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION IN SOUTH ASIA: A PANEL DATA ANALYSIS (2004–2023)

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**Abstract:**

This study examines the quantitative impact of climate change-related variables on agricultural production across eight South Asian countries Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka from 2004 to 2023. Grounded in an integrated theoretical framework of Neoclassical Production Function and Ricardian Climate Valuation, the research utilizes a balanced panel dataset of 208 observations sourced from the World Development Indicators. Methodologically, the study employs a Fixed Effects (FE) regression model with robust standard errors, a choice justified by the Hausman specification which preferred Fixed Effects over Random Effects. Empirical results reveal that $CO_2$ emissions ($\beta$=0.0270, p=0.000) and fertilizer consumption ($\beta$=0.1638, p=0.000) exert a positive and significant impact on agricultural production within the region. Agricultural land area demonstrated a positive and significant relationship ($\beta$=5.1440, p=0.000). The positive $CO_2$ coefficient identifies the short-run fertilization effect on crops, providing critical insights into regional biophysical dynamics. These findings highlight the urgent necessity for climate-smart policies, balanced nutrient management, and sustainable land use to ensure long-term food security against accelerating regional climate forcing. By supporting sustainable agricultural development, the study also contributes to national integration and social cohesion by promoting equitable access to resources and opportunities. Climate-smart agriculture can advance gender equality and women empowerment by strengthening the economic participation of women in rural communities. Digital literacy and efforts to bridge the digital divide can enable farmers, especially women and marginalized groups, to access climate information, markets, and modern agricultural technologies. Such inclusive approaches can empower communities to adapt collectively to climate challenges. Ultimately, sustainable and inclusive agricultural policies can strengthen human values, cooperation, resilience, and contribute to a peaceful and inclusive Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Climate change, agricultural production, panel data, fixed effects, South Asia, $CO_2$ emissions.

# DETERMINANTS OF EXTERNAL DEBT IN SAARC COUNTRIES: IMPLICATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE AND PEACEFUL DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract:**

External debt is a significant challenge for the economic stability and sustainable development of South Asian countries. This study examines the determinants of external debt in five SAARC countries—kistan, Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal—using panel data from 2005 to 2024. A linear egression model is employed to investigate the effects of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), inflation, and GDP growth on external debt. The Hausman and Breusch-Pagan tests support the use of a random-effects model. The analysis further identifies heteroscedasticity and serial correlation; therefore, the cluster ethod is applied to obtain unbiased estimates and standard errors. The findings indicate that all three independent variables have a statistically significant impact on external debt. FDI and GDP growth demonstrate a negative relationship with external debt, whereas inflation has a positive relationship with external debt. The study contributes to the discourse on inclusive and peaceful development by highlighting the relationship between macroeconomic stability and social well-being in diverse South Asian societies. Reducing unsustainable external debt can create greater fiscal space for investment in education, healthcare, employment opportunities, and gender equality. Sound and sustainable economic policies can also reduce socioeconomic inequalities and strengthen social cohesion. Furthermore, regional economic cooperation among SAARC countries can promote shared prosperity, economic resilience, and peaceful integration. The study concludes that responsible debt management, investment promotion, price stability, and sustained economic growth are essential for building resilient and inclusive societies. Addressing external debt is therefore not only an economic priority but also an important step toward advancing equality, inclusion, peace, and sustainable development across South Asia.

**Keywords:**

External Debt; SAARC; Foreign Direct Investment; Inclusive Development; Economic Stability,Peace

# SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF LIFE EXPECTANCY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: A PANEL DATA ANALYSIS

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**Abstract:**

This study examines how social and economic factors affect life expectancy in 22 developing countries during the period 2003–2020. The main purpose of the study is to investigate the effects of health expenditure, inflation, education, and unemployment on life expectancy. Secondary data were collected from the World Development Indicators (World Bank) and Our World in Data, with a total of 414 observations. The study uses panel data analysis, and the Fixed Effects Model was selected after the Hausman test. The findings show that health expenditure has a positive and significant effect on life expectancy, meaning that higher spending on healthcare helps people live longer. On the other hand, inflation and unemployment have negative and significant effects, indicating that rising prices and higher unemployment reduce life expectancy. Although education has a positive relationship with life expectancy, its effect is not statistically significant in this study. Overall, the study concludes that increasing healthcare investment, controlling inflation, and creating employment opportunities can improve life expectancy in developing countries. These findings can help governments design better health and economic policies to improve the quality of life. This study also contributes to gender equality by highlighting the importance of equitable access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities for all individuals, regardless of gender. Improved health and economic security can promote peace and harmony by reducing social inequalities and vulnerabilities within communities. Ensuring inclusive access to healthcare and employment can strengthen social cohesion by enabling marginalized and disadvantaged groups to participate more fully in society. Recognizing diversity in the social and economic conditions of developing countries emphasizes the need for inclusive policies that address the needs of different populations. Therefore, investing in health, education, and decent employment can contribute not only to longer lives but also to a more equal, peaceful, harmonious, diverse, and inclusive society.

**Keywords:**

Inflation, Health, Unemployment, Gender equality, Diversification.

# EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS' SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AT COLLEGE LEVEL

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**Abstract**:

Education plays an important role in molding an individual success and national development. However students' academic achievement is repeatedly influence by their socio economic status. The aim of this study was to examine the relationship between student socio economic status (SES) and academic achievement at the college level in Pakistan special focus on parental income, education, and occupation. A correlational research design was adapted to explore this relationship in a structured manner. The sample size is consisted of 200 male and female students from public and private colleges selected through convince sampling with 200 valid responses used for analysis. Data was gathered by using a structured questionnaire that measured socio economic status (SES) variables and students' academic achievement it ensures reliability through pilot testing and Cronbach's Alpha data analysis procedure was conducted using SPSS, applying descriptive statistics (mean , standard deviation , frequency) and inferential techniques example Pearson correlation and independent sample t – test . The outcomes revealed that whole economic status and a weak and statistically insignificant relationship with academic. However a slight negative relationship was found between parental education and student achievement, during parental occupation and living conditions showed no significant effect. Further no significant gender difference were observed in student socio economic status and academic achievement .Excitingly , strong positive correlation were identified among student socio economic status elements themselves pointing their interdependence. These findings suggest that even though socio economic factors shape students status, they do not solely determine academic achievement at college level. Other factors like as individual motivation, learning strategies and institutional support may play more import role.

**Keywords:**

Academic Achievement, socio economic status, income, gender, education.

# INVESTIGATING HOW GENDER SHAPES ACADEMIC STREAMING AND CAREER PLANNING IN LAHORE'S SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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**Abstract:**

With the changing educational landscape, especially in the Global South, gender, academic streaming and career choices are a critical research theme. This is particularly evident in Lahore, Pakistan, where secondary school students find themselves are at a critical juncture in their educational journey. The main aim of this research study was to examine the perceptions of teachers and students regarding the role of gender in academic streaming and career planning at secondary level. A qualitative research approach based on the interpretivist paradigm was employed using semi-structured interviews and purposive sampling. The sample consisted of ten students and ten teachers from five secondary schools in Lahore. The data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Key findings from the teacher interviews revealed that academic performance and socioeconomic status were filtered through gender expectations. This resulted in a protective stance that channeled girls toward "safe" and "respectable" fields, honor- and family-driven constraints, and an absence of formal career counseling, with boys steered toward STEM, business, and law and girls toward teaching, nursing, and care-giving. The themes from the student interviews revealed restricted options and family-imposed caution for girls, alongside some resistance to these norms, career choices negotiated between personal interest, family pressure, and economic pragmatism, and a lack of institutional career guidance that left students dependent on family and individual teachers rather than structured support. The study recommends institutionalizing professional, gender-neutral career counseling, training teachers on gender sensitivity and implicit bias, adopting merit-based streaming policies, engaging families (particularly fathers) through awareness programs, exposing students to counter-stereotypical role models, and expanding accessible digital career resources and curriculum reform, so that academic streaming shifts from a gendered sorting process to one guided by students' interests and abilities.

**Key Words:**

Gender, Academic Streaming, Career Planning.

# TEACHERS PERCEPTIONS ON THE ROLE OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP IN PROMOTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PUNJAB, PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan is operating one of the largest Public Private partnerships (PPP) in education. And Punjab is in the lead among all provinces. This study investigates teachers' perceptions about inclusive education in schools across three dimensions: Language, Gender and Religion. The study took place in 6 districts: Bahawalpur, Sialkot, Kasur, Faisalabad, Rahim Yar Khan, and Okara where inclusive education is being supported through PPP. All the schools are in the rural areas. Nine teachers from seven schools were selected through purposive sampling. The findings of the semi- structured interviews indicate that while enrollment ratio particularly among girls has increased through Punjab Education Foundation and Punjab Education Initiative Management Authority, the substantive challenges remain persistent across other dimensions. Teachers identified:, The imposition of the national language, which is Urdu, but most of the students speak either Punjabi, Sairaki, or Pashto, so a student who is unable to understand the medium of instruction is considered a slow learner and is left behind. Limited representation of minorities in the curriculum including Non-Muslims and Shia Community which has direct impact on students' confidence and identity. Moreover, non-Muslims students do have the option to opt for "Ethics", but these books are never available in the schools, consequently they have to study Islamiyat. Girls' enrolment does not increase because of the PPP model, but it increases because of the availability of a school in their village. Furthermore, out of nine, seven teachers heard the term inclusive education for the first time even after the term was translated into Urdu. This study highlights that Public-Private partnerships in Punjab is functioning merely as an instrument of distribution. There is a need for target interventions regarding medium of instruction, curriculum analysis and pre -and in -service teacher training. The findings highlight the need of holistic governance reforms to ensure that PPPs can achieve inclusive and high-quality education for all children in Punjab particularly in rural areas.

**Keywords:**

Public-private partnership; inclusive education; language; gender; religion; children with disabilities

# VULNERABILITY TO AND REGISTANCE AGAINST DUALISM AND PATRIARCHY: ECOFEMINIST READING OF THE MONSOON WAR

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**Abstract:**

Bina Shah's novels, usually called dystopian feminist fiction, reflect bodily autonomy, resistance against class disparities, and women's vibrant struggle against hierarchy and dominance. *The Monsoon War*, the sequel of Shah's *Before She Sleeps*, exposes the political and cultural agencies like Semita that deprive the women of their true identity and pride in their bodies. Ultimately these modes of control and subjugation turn the women's resentment into an active struggle of the *Hamiyat* with their exclusive focus on the experiences of Katy Azadeh, Fatima Kara and Alia Musa. This paper interprets the vulnerability and resistance of women as cause and effect of dualist thinking and hierarchical structures like patriarchy. Building upon the views of Val Plumwood, the ecofeminist theorist, the paper responds to the paradoxes of control, hegemony and dominance and their products in form of *Hamiyat* movement. The women's potential is actualized not only in the leadership roles but in their resistance against patriarchal control of their bodies and choices. The ecofeminist analysis of *The Monsoon War* offers a counter narrative to dualist hierarchy and patriarchy and asks for relational bond in an inclusive society that is not a utopia but the real need of the world threatened by gender inequality, social injustice and environmental degradation.

**Keywords:**

dualism, hierarchy, patriarchy, vulnerability, resistance

# THE CROSSROADS OF WORLDING: PLACE AND LITERATURE

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## Abstract:

This paper explores the idea that the world as viewed by Heidegger as endlessly storied, is also endlessly mappable, palimpsestic and relational. This paper explores the ideas of space, place, literary geography and literary cartography within the context of Heidegger's concept of being-in-the-world, worlding and Gayatari Spivak's reinterpretation of worlding and being-in-the-world, with the lens of power. This paper aims to reveal how place-names are valorized when literary topography is within western taxonomies and epistemologies. Spivak's questioning of space/place and knowledge investiture due to the process of worlding itself is explored by questioning both real places and imagined ones in literary texts, briefly, while focusing on the theoretical engagement of the complex nodal points of literary geography, literary cartography, and worlding. This paper limits itself to the spatial and textual relations off this topic, however future researchers can explore the linguistic aspect of the same.

## Key Words:

Literary Cartography, Literary Geography, Worlding, Spivak, Heidegger

# FROM DOMESTIC WALLS TO CITY ROADS: SUBVERTING GENDER TROPES IN PAKISTANI TELEVISION

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**Abstract**:

Pakistani television narratives have historically operated within private, domestic settings, restricting female characters to archetypes of passive endurance or household conflicts. ARY Digital's miniseries Sar-e-Rah subverts this convention by relocating the female experience from private walls to public city roads through a female taxi driver protagonist. This paper presents an academic analysis of Sar-e-Rah, examining how shifting the physical environment of female characters disrupts long-standing gender tropes and advances social inclusion in contemporary Pakistan. Utilizing a qualitative media content analysis framework, this study evaluates the thematic representation of female economic agency, corporate misogyny, digital privacy rights, and intersex empowerment across the series' episodic arcs. The analysis focuses on how the central narrative space the taxi operates as a moving site for dialogue, empathy, and advocacy across varied socioeconomic backgrounds. The findings indicate that replacing portrayals of domestic victimhood with active public mobility normalizes women's participation in civic life, challenges patriarchal norms, and fosters broader social cohesion. The paper concludes with actionable recommendations for media producers to institutionalize solution-oriented, mobility-driven narratives that support national equity goals

**Keywords:**

Sar-e-Rah, Gender Tropes, Female Mobility, Media Representation, Social Cohesion

# BEYOND THE UNIVERSAL WOMAN: A VERGÈSIAN EXAMINATION OF GENDERED VIOLENCE, POWER AND RESISTANCE IN AWAIS KHAN'S *NO HONOUR*

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**Abstract:**

This paper performs the intersection of patriarchy with feminism through the lens of Francois Verges's decolonial feministic theory. It challenges the character of Abida in the novel *No Honour* by Awais khan from the universal experiences of women which forgets the war of racism, class and gender. Abida is used as a preponderant instance of women oppression within the specific structural power of social, political and economics. Abida's experience is used as a representation of young Pakistani women who endure gender and honor-based violence and are under the control of diversity and socialism. The imposition of honor is strict for her body and choices. Through the use of Verges's perspective, the study argues that the marginalization of Abida must remain within the border of religious conservatism and broader history of colonialism rather than interpretation built on the notion of oppressed eastern woman or liberated western woman. The study of Abida's life exposes rural community of Pakistan. It confronts the codes of women through sexual purity, marriage and obedience. This paper considers Abida's struggle as an imperative theme which resists against the system that attempts to control her body and future. This study emphasizes the interconnected features of capitalism and deeply rooted sufferings that regulates women's mobility and displacement. This research concludes that the perplexed character of Abida acts as a barrier subject in the novel which deny women autonomy and cultural diversity not only on the basis of sex but also at the same time, her movement through different geographical spaces. It records the unequal access to power and protection. In this regard, Verges's concept provides an effective framework for understanding the multiple dimensions of Abida's survival.

**Keywords:**

Advancing gender equality, coloniality, diversity, *No Honour*, Awais Khan

# THE SPARK OF THE QISSA: REIMAGINING GENDERED AUTHORITY THROUGH FEMALE AGENCY IN MUSHARRAF ALI FAROOQI'S, THE INGENIOUS FARKHANDA AND THE TWO CONDITIONS

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**Abstract:**

This paper contends that Musharraf Ali Farooqi's translated qissa, *The Ingenious Farkhanda and the Two Conditions*, reimagines gendered authority through the trickster heroine, Farkhanda, whose wit and ingenuity is an enactment of Bakhtin's carnivalesque to invert patriarchal order and established gender hierarchies. The study aims to foreground female agency as a force to be reckoned with through the literary genre of qissa, transforming inventiveness and tactical moves into contrivance for disrupting the gendered power dynamics. The objective is to examine the portrayal of Farkhanda as a trickster figure capable of negotiating and challenging formal authority, in order to emerge as the more effective and consequential agent of change within the narrative. While existing scholarship on qissa focuses on its narrative conventions, cultural significance, and gender vulnerability, this research revisits gender representation through sustained configurations of female agency, without necessarily eliminating the traditional forms of authority. In Farooqi's narrative, power remains vested in the male order, but the overlooked female order establishes an alternate edifice that reshapes the inherited perception of gender in the South Asian literary heritage. By bringing Michel de Certeau's concept of strategy and tactics into dialogue with Bakhtin's carnivalesque, this study employs a qualitative textual analysis of Farooqi's translation to contribute to the debate on gender equality and inclusion. Ultimately, this research kindles the spark of qissa by transforming it into a space where authority can be questioned and reconfigured through feminine agency. Farkhanda's character can fuel future debates in Pakistan to draw upon the complicated assumptions surrounding similar characters in other narratives to dismantle exclusion and foster inclusion.

**Keywords:**

*Qissa, Trickster, Carnivalesque, Tactics, Inclusion*

# LIMITS OF INCLUSION: CAPABILITY, AGENCY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN FATIMA BHUTTO'S THE RUNAWAYS

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**Abstract:**

Fatima Bhutto's *The Runaways* explores the experiences of young people shaped by poverty, social inequality, and exclusion. Existing studies have largely examined these issues in relation to identity, marginalization, and radicalization. However, less attention has been given to the social conditions that prevent marginalized individuals from achieving genuine inclusion. This study addresses this gap by examining Anita Rose through Amartya Sen's Capability Approach, with particular focus on capability, agency, and capability deprivation. Using qualitative textual analysis, the study traces Anita's life from her childhood through her school years, her encounters with class and gender discrimination, her intellectual growth, and her eventual decision to rename herself as Layla. The analysis argues that Anita develops capabilities including learning, critical thought, self-expression, and aspiration but cannot turn these into meaningful functioning because the intersection of class, poverty, gender, religion, and social status restricts her social opportunities. Her choices reveal a tension between having the ability to act and the absence of enabling social conditions. Anita's search for recognition and belonging leads her toward an alternative identity, yet this does not provide genuine freedom. The paper concludes that Anita's journey challenges the assumption that social inclusion can be achieved through formal participation alone and shows why inclusion must be understood as substantive freedom rather than mere access. In doing so, the study offers a critical perspective on gender equality, diversity, and national integration in Pakistan and demonstrates how intersecting inequalities shape the lives of those excluded from full participation in society.

**Keywords:**

The Runaways, Capability Approach, social inclusion, gender equality, diversity.

# RECLAIMING THE NATION: GENDER, DISCIPLINE, AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN THE POETRY OF KISHWAR NAHEED AND BENAZIR BHUTTO

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**Abstract:**

This research argues that gender equality and national integration in Pakistan are not parallel struggles but a single, continuous one, articulated with particular clarity in Pakistani political poetry. Drawing on Sandra Lee Bartky's extension of Foucauldian discipline to femininity, the paper examines how patriarchal power operates less through centralized coercion than through diffuse, internalized practices that regulate women's bodily gesture, comportment, and visibility — producing "docile" subjects who police themselves in the absence of any single overseer. This framework is applied comparatively to two texts: *Kishwar Naheed's "We Sinful Women,"* a foundational work of Pakistani feminist resistance poetry written against the backdrop of General Zia-ul-Haq's Islamization laws, and an *exile poem* by former *Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto*, which fuses personal, familial, and national suffering under authoritarian rule. Naheed's poem is read as a refusal of everyday gestural discipline — the bowed head, the folded hands — enacted collectively rather than individually, thereby resisting the isolating logic Bartky identifies as central to patriarchal self-surveillance. Bhutto's poem is read as a confrontation with the literal disciplinary apparatus of the authoritarian state, converting a body marked by exile, grief, and visible aging into a source of political legitimacy rather than shame. Situating both poets within the broader lineage of the Progressive Writers' Movement and Pakistan's tradition of dissident literature under military rule, the research aims to contend that their poetry exposes gender exclusion and the failure of national integration as expressions of the same underlying logic: a state and society that scripts who may speak, appear, and claim belonging on their own terms. By reading feminist literary resistance alongside constitutional and policy debates on representation and federalism, the research offers a literary-critical contribution to ongoing conversations on inclusive nation-building in Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Gender Performativity, Disciplinary Power, Pakistani Feminist Poetry, National Integration, Sandra Bartky

# THESE ARE NOT OUR STORIES": INHERITED VIOLENCE AND NATIONAL HISTORY IN RAAZA JAMSHED'S WHAT KEPT YOU? (2025)

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**Abstract:**

This research examines Raaza Jamshed's What Kept You? As its primary text to question and challenge the dominant narratives of national history through feminist historiography. Themes like trauma, displacement, memory, and identity have been at the centre of the scholarship produced on Partition. How women's remembered experiences contest official histories and how women can rewrite inherited narratives from their perspectives have been among the less-discussed topics. This study addresses this gap by examining women not only as subjects who remember history but also as agents who reinterpret and reshape it. It draws on Joan W. Scott's understanding of gender as a category through which historical experience is produced and interpreted. The paper argues that Nani's memories are a counter-discourse to the officially documented histories of Partition. Her stories are not part of the historical narratives, but the emotions of fear, loss, displacement, and survival construct Jahan's understanding of her family and her relationship with Pakistan. Her insistence that "these are not our stories" questions whose experiences are authorised to represent the past. The novel draws a parallel between these memories and fairy tales in which female characters are frequently defined by fixed roles and predetermined fates. The story traces Jahan's realisation of the ideas that these narratives teach women how to survive exploitation without letting them imagine an alternative future for themselves. Hence, Jahan's rewriting of these endings can be understood as an act of feminist intervention through Hélène Cixous's concept of écriture féminine. The paper therefore argues that What Kept You? presents storytelling as a feminist historiographical practice through which women can reclaim their place in the narratives of Pakistan's past. It contends that a more inclusive understanding of Pakistan's past must recognise women as narrators capable of preserving, questioning, and rewriting its history.

**Keywords:**

Feminist Historiography; Women's Counter-Memory; Partition; Fairy-Tale Rewriting; National History

# BEYOND RE-ORIENTALISM AND NOSTALGIA: SPATIAL SOVEREIGNTY AND FEMALE AGENCY IN MUSHARRAF ALI FAROOQI'S BETWEEN CLAY AND DUST

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**Abstract:**

Critical scholarship on Musharraf Ali Farooqi's *Between Clay and Dust* generally splits into two camps: Re-Orientalist analyses that accuse the novel of packaging South Asian tropes for global markets (Tahir, 2025), and classical post-colonial readings that view it as a nostalgic elegy for dying indigenous traditions (Qasim et al., 2025). Though both approaches offer useful insights into post-Partition cultural loss, they largely overlook how female characters exercise quiet, localized self-determination within traditional spaces. This study addresses that oversight through a post-colonial feminist examination of Gohar Jan's moral autonomy and spatial authority within the *kotha* (courtesan's house). Applying theoretical insights from Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Gayatri Spivak, I use close textual analysis to demonstrate how female power in the novel operates outside Western models of direct political confrontation. The findings reveal that Gohar Jan actively subverts the economic logic of her institution. Instead of exploiting her ward, Malka, to keep the dying *kotha* financially solvent, Gohar Jan prioritizes Malka's independence, effectively choosing institutional collapse over human commodification. Furthermore, her intentional decision to surrender her morning vocal practice (*riyazat*) to offer Ustad Ramzi an emotional sanctuary, alongside her quiet defiance of local civic and religious hypocrisy, highlights an intentional, non-passive mode of agency. By moving past male-centered tragic arcs and passive female victimhood, this paper shows how female authority in South Asian literature often manifests as ethical self-determination. Ultimately, the study contributes to ongoing discussions on gender integration and cultural diversity by offering nuanced literary models for understanding female dignity and social equity in Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Post-Colonial Feminism, Spatial Sovereignty, Female Agency, Musharraf Ali Farooqi, Between Clay and Dust

# SERVANTS AT THE THRESHOLD: SPATIAL ISOLATION, DOMESTIC SUBALTERNITY, AND THE RHETORIC OF INCLUSION IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIAN REALISM

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**Abstract:**

The discourse of diversity and inclusion, as it circulates within contemporary academic, corporate, and policy frameworks, frequently operates within the comfortable parameters of legal rights, public representation, and institutional visibility. Yet such discourse often fails to interrogate the most intimate and pervasive site of social stratification: the domestic sphere. This paper argues that the fiction of Aravind Adiga and Daniyal Mueenuddin exposes the structural invisibility of domestic labor, revealing how the spatial organization of elite households in post-colonial South Asia actively produces and maintains class-based subalternity. Drawing on Gayatri Spivak's theory of subalternity, Henri Lefebvre's concept of spatial hegemony, and critical scholarship on domestic servitude, the analysis examines how servants navigate, resist, or succumb to entrenched socio-economic hierarchies. In Adiga's The White Tiger, the narrator Balram Halwai articulates a radical rejection of the master-servant relationship, culminating in an act of violence that exposes the "rooster coop" of psychological subordination while ultimately reproducing the very structures of servitude he escapes. In Mueenuddin's "Nawabdin Electrician," "Saleema," and "In Other Rooms, Other Wonders," the feudal order of rural Punjab manifests a more insidious form of hegemony, one where inclusion is conditional, precarious, and predicated on the servant's internalization of their own subordination. By contrasting Adiga's overt class warfare with Mueenuddin's paternalistic feudalism, this paper demonstrates that the servant occupies a liminal position at the threshold of the household - functionally indispensable yet socially invisible, spatially present yet discursively silenced. The paper ultimately contends that any genuine project of diversity and national integration must first confront the foundational grammar of domestic servitude, a reality these texts expose as a brutal counter-narrative to idealized notions of unity and inclusion. Inclusion, the analysis concludes, remains a hollow promise without the radical reconfiguration of the spatial, economic, and discursive structures that produce subalternity.

**Keywords:**

Domestic subalternity, spatial hegemony, South Asian realism, class inequality, servant narrative

# RECLAIMING AGENCY: MATERNAL CAREGIVING IN QAISRA SHAHRAZ'S NOVELS

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**Abstract:**

This research study aims to explores how biological and non-biological forms of maternal caregiving functions as a site of empowerment for women within patriarchal societies. By applying Sara Ruddick's theory of maternal thinking, the primary objective of this research study is to analyze the reciprocal nature of the mother-child relationship that leads to the empowerment and identity transformation of women in Qaisra Shahraz's novels. It further explores how maternal practices, when acknowledged in their socio-cultural context, contribute to alternative models of resistance and agency. It investigates how maternal practices of care, protection, nurturance and responsibility enable female characters to negotiate restrictive patriarchal structures and develop alternative forms of agency. This qualitative research study contributes to the growing discourse on feminist ethics by challenging the culturally entrenched perception within South Asian and specifically Pakistani communities that motherhood is inherently a site of subjugation and oppression. Instead, it repositions maternal caregiving as a potential source of agency, emotional strength and resilience by foregrounding women's agency within the familial and domestic sphere. Furthermore, maternal care both in biological and non-biological forms can be an avenue of self-expression and autonomy through an analysis of reciprocal mother-child relationship in Shahraz's fiction, connecting to the broader concern of the female gender as a resilient and empowering force adapting with the role of motherhood in Pakistani society. This study offers a counter-narrative to rigid patriarchal construction of femininity and contributes to broader discussions of gender equality and women's empowered and resilient forms of maternal caregiving within Pakistani and South Asian contexts.

**Keywords:**

Maternal thinking, biological and non-biological caregiving, patriarchy, empowerment, resilience

# FROM LINEAR PRODUCTION TO INCLUSIVE CIRCULARITY: RETHINKING WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN PAKISTAN'S TEXTILE SECTOR

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan's textile sector is often described as the backbone of the national economy, and it is now being pushed toward a more circular model that promises less waste and more environmentally responsible production. What gets discussed far less often is what this shift means for the women who actually keep the recycling and sorting chains running. This study looks at that gap, focusing on women's work across waste sorting, recycling, and spinning operations in Faisalabad. Drawing on field visits, stakeholder consultations, and gender-disaggregated data from 30 firms, the research paints a mixed picture. Women make up a large share of the informal workforce in waste sorting and recycling, and their work in fabric classification and quality control is genuinely central to how well these operations function. Yet very few of them hold technical or managerial positions, and many work without basic protection, safe conditions, or proper sanitation facilities. Spinning units tell a somewhat different story, with more formal structures and better working conditions, though women there still struggle to move beyond entry and mid-level roles, partly because so little is invested in the kind of research and innovation work that could open those doors. Taken together, these findings suggest that a circular economy built without attention to gender risks simply carrying old inequalities into a new system. Closing that gap will mean formalizing informal work arrangements, putting real safety protections in place, improving women's access to microfinance, and investing seriously in their technical and leadership growth. Ultimately, this research makes the case that Pakistan's circular textile transition cannot be called sustainable, or genuinely national in scope, unless it also works for the women it currently overlooks.

**Keywords:**

Circular textile economy; Women's employment

# SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR AND GENDER EQUALITY: FROM "THE OTHER" TO DIVERSITY AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION

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**Abstract:**

This paper examines Simone de Beauvoir's contribution to the understanding of gender equality,with particular reference to her influential work The Second Sex (1949).As a French philosopher,intellectual and feminist thinker,Beauvoir crtically examined the social and cultural conditions that have shaped women's lives.Her well known assertion "One is not born but rather becomes a woman," emphasizes the role of society,culture,education and social expectations in constructing gender roles.The paper focuses on Beauvoir's concept of woman as "the Other," through which she explains how women have traditionally been defined in relation to men rather than recognized as autonomous individuals. Her analyses demonstrates that equality requires more than formal rights; it also requires freedom,education,econonmic independence and equal opportunities for participation in social and public life.The paper further explores how Beauvoir's understanding of difference,equality and "Otherness" can contribute to various discussions of diversity and national integration.Just as gender difference should not become a basis for inequality,cultural,social,linguistic or other differences should not lead to exclusion or marginalization.Recognizing and respecting diversity while ensuring equal dignity,rights,opportunities and participation can strengthen social cohesion and national integration.The paper argues that Beauvoir's thought remains relevant beyond gender equality,offering a valuable perspective on diversity,inclusion and national integration.Her critique of "Othering" encourages societies to recognize difference without transforming it into hierarchy and to create more inclusive communities based on equality,freedom,dignity and mutual respe

**Keywords:**

The Other, Equality, Freedom, Diversity, Integration

# WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AS A PATHWAY TO NATIONAL INTEGRATION

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## Abstract:

National Integrations initiates participation and amalgamation of various groups of society into social, economic, political organizations. Nearly half of the population is women in Pakistan; however, their political representation remains only symbolic. Women are denied substantive representation due to patriarchal norms, gender biases, unfair social norms and limited access to political opportunities. Political Disparity could lead to distrust between the society and the institutions representing their interest. Women's political representation has the capability to connect religious, ethnic communities together and their leadership focuses on common human needs over identity politics. Higher number of women in governance leads to stronger attention towards childcare, healthcare and gender equality laws. However, not all women belong to the same community. Some live in rural or urban areas belonging to different provinces having different educational backgrounds. These factors lead to differences in political experiences. Therefore, gender equality is not just about increasing the number of women in parliament but also about giving them substantive roles and access to political opportunities. Such inclusive governance would ensure that all sections of society are equally treated which will lead to national integration. This research will analyze how giving political representation to women would lead toward social cohesion and national integration and to determine the factors that hinder their political access. A qualitative approach will be used to evaluate policy documents, electoral process, distribution of seats and existing data on women's representation. The findings are expected to illustrate that just increasing the numerical representation of women is not enough for national integration, however there is a need for meaningful political inclusion. The research concludes that inclusion of underrepresented sections of society can serve as a pathway to gender equality, social cohesion and national integration in Pakistan.

## Keywords:

Gender Equality, political inclusion, national integration, substantive representation

# BEYOND REPRESENTATION: GENDER EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AS INTERLOCKING FOUNDATIONS OF INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

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**Abstract:**

Gender equality and diversity are frequently discussed as parallel but separate concerns, yet both rest on the same underlying question: who gets access to institutional power, and on what terms? This presentation argues that gender equality cannot be fully understood or achieved in isolation from broader diversity — encompassing ethnicity, religion, region, and class — because women's experiences of exclusion are shaped differently depending on which other identities they hold. A woman from a marginalized ethnic or religious community, for instance, often faces compounded barriers to political and economic participation that gender-only frameworks fail to capture.The discussion examines how gender quotas and representation policies, while necessary, frequently benefit women from already-privileged groups while leaving diversely situated women behind. It considers how institutions — legislatures, party structures, civil service, and media — can move from token inclusion toward substantive power-sharing that accounts for intersecting identities rather than treating gender as a single, uniform category.Drawing on comparative cases from plural societies and international frameworks such as CEDAW and SDG 5 and SDG 10, the presentation proposes an intersectional approach to policy design — one that evaluates gender reforms through the lens of diversity, and diversity reforms through the lens of gender, rather than treating them as competing priorities for limited institutional attention.The paper concludes that durable progress on gender equality requires diversity-conscious design, and that meaningful diversity policy must center gender as a cross-cutting variable rather than an afterthought. Together, these two agendas offer a more accurate and effective framework for evaluating inclusive governance than either can provide alone

**Keywords**:

Gender inequality in government, Inequalities based on ethnicities

# RECOGNIZING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC INEQUALITY: UNPAID LABOUR AND WAGE DISPARITIES IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan's economy is measured in exports, remittances, and factory output, but a second, hidden economy runs underneath it, measured in hours instead of rupees. This paper argues that Pakistan's GDP is not just incomplete, it is built on a rule that leaves certain work out completely: a restaurant meal counts, but the same meal cooked at home does not. Because of this rule, millions of women's daily work never enters the numbers. Time-use data shows Pakistani women spend close to five hours a day on unpaid housework and caregiving, against half an hour for men, one of the widest gaps in the world. This labor is not a private family matter but real work that supports the paid economy, the health system, and childcare, at no cost to the state. The paper looks at the glassbangle industry in Hyderabad, Sindh, where almost a million workers, nearly all women, shape and decorate bangles inside their own homes. They are paid by weight, sometimes as little as one to five rupees per kilogram, often working twelve to sixteen hours a day beside hot furnaces. Because the work happens at home, it was long treated as a household chore rather than a job, leaving these women without the protections labor law is meant to give. It took the founding of the Home-Based Women Workers Federation in 2009, and years of organizing under Sindh's Home-Based Workers Act, before the province set a minimum wage for the trade. The paper proposes a district-level "Unpaid Work Account," run through local union councils, to estimate the value of household and care work alongside GDP, without rewriting how Pakistan calculates national income. The main point is simple: recognition must come before fairness. Pakistan cannot fix what it never bothers to count.

**Keywords:**

Unpaid care work, women's labor, GDP measurement, home-based workers, gender economics

# A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE ON STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE AND WOMEN'S MARGINALIZATION IN AFGHANISTAN (2014–2025)

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**Abstract:**

This study explores the relationship between structural violence and women's marginalization in Afghanistan from 2014 to 2025 through a feminist perspective. It argues that gender inequality in Afghanistan is not only the result of direct conflict but is deeply rooted in political, economic, and social institutions that systematically restrict women's rights and opportunities. Using the concept of structural violence, the study examines how governance systems, economic dependency, and socio-cultural norms have limited women's access to education, employment, mobility, and participation in public life. The research further explains how patriarchal power relations sustain these inequalities by normalizing discrimination within both public institutions and private spaces. It also highlights the role of cultural and religious narratives in legitimizing restrictions on women. Although the period between 2014 and 2021 witnessed progress in women's empowerment through legal reforms and political participation, these gains remained fragile because of weak implementation, lack of local ownership, and persistent cultural barriers. The study critically evaluates peacebuilding efforts in Afghanistan, arguing that externally driven and state-centric approaches largely failed to address the cultural dimensions of gender-based violence. Following the Taliban's return in 2021, many advances in women's rights were reversed. The study concludes that sustainable peace requires inclusive peacebuilding, cultural transformation, legal reform, and women's empowerment to achieve long-term stability and gender justice.

**Keywords:**

Afghanistan, Women Marginalization, Gender Equality, Peacebuilding.

# EVALUATING EUROPEAN CYBER LAW AGAINST TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE; LESSONS FOR PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Technology facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) has accelerated in recent years due to the advancements in technology and regulatory oversight. This research identifies the gap in authority of the state, whose duty is to protect the rights of its citizens where as digital enclaves becomes spaces for violations of basic rights, becoming more specifically a gender security threat. TFGBV is a gateway crime as highlighted by the digital "law-free zone" nature of the *Coco* website through which physical, real-world mass assault was coordinated. This case bridges the gap between online anonymity and offline physical security The method employed is qualitative analysis of existing cases of TFGBV in Europe. We identify rising misogyny in digital spaces that become a threat to the growing number of women in politics, and European democracy as a result. The findings of this research summarized that TFGBV is not an isolated issue but a consequence of the gap within international law that allows cyber spaces to go unchecked resulting in an increased rate of TFGBV. This paper also highlights the existing European cyber laws that exist to tackle this issue and analyses how they can be used as foundations for further international cyber legislation against TFGBV particularly for Pakistan where TGBV is on the rise. Pakistani women are increasingly being subjected to online harassment and abuse which escalates into honour killings as observed in 2026 with the murders of Sana Yousef and Shamso Bibi. While the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA) 2016 does exist; it has failed to provide women from all sectors of life protection against abuse owing to lack of awareness among public and loopholes within the laws themselves. Swift changes are necessary to ensure that Pakistan's cyberlaws are in line with international standards and establish safer online experiences for women.

**Keywords:**

TFGBV, Gender Inclusive Cyberlaws, Digital Sovereignty, Technological Gender Equity, Integration

# WOMEN'S POLITICAL REPRESENTATION AND PEACEBUILDING IN POST-CONFLICT REGIONS OF PAKISTAN.

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**Abstract:**

This research examines the extent of women's political representation in peacebuilding processes across post-conflict regions of Pakistan, particularly the newly merged tribal districts, Balochistan, and parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where reconciliation and reconstruction efforts remain largely male-dominated. Traditional conflict-resolution mechanisms such as jirgas and tribal councils, while central to local peacebuilding, routinely exclude women from decision-making despite their disproportionate exposure to displacement, economic loss, and violence during conflict. The study situates this discussion within the broader framework of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, for which Pakistan has yet to develop a comprehensive National Action Plan. Drawing on secondary data, government reports, and civil society assessments, the research analyzes three interlinked dimensions: women's formal political participation through local government quotas, their informal influence in community-level reconciliation, and the structural, cultural, and security-related barriers that limit their agency. The paper argues that peace settlements excluding women's voices tend to produce shallow, unsustainable outcomes, as gender-blind reconstruction policies often overlook issues central to durable peace, including access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunity for women survivors of conflict. Comparative insights from South Asian peacebuilding models, where women's inclusion has strengthened community trust and reduced recidivism into violence, inform recommendations for Pakistan, including reserved representation in local peace committees, capacity-building for women mediators, and gender-responsive monitoring of reconstruction programs. By foregrounding women's political representation as a peacebuilding imperative, this study contributes to discourse on inclusive governance and offers policy-relevant insights for Pakistan's transition toward sustainable peace and national integration.

**Keywords:**

Women's political representation, peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction, gender inclusion, national integration.

# RETHINKING FEMINIST CHANGE ACROSS GENERATIONS

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**Abstract:**

While feminist movements have expanded the possibilities available to women, gender norms continue to be negotiated differently across generations, including in the Pakistani context. This paper examines how strategies developed by women to navigate patriarchal constraints can become normalized and subsequently reproduced as expectations for younger women. Drawing on Deniz Kandiyoti's concept of patriarchal bargaining and situated within Feminist International Relations, the paper argues that women's responses to patriarchy are shaped by the social, economic, and institutional conditions of their time. Practices such as accommodation, endurance, silence, and conformity may function as pragmatic strategies for navigating gendered constraints in one context, but can become restrictive norms when transmitted to subsequent generations. The paper focuses on the tension that emerges when younger women challenge expectations that earlier generations came to regard as necessary, respectable, or protective. What one generation may understand as resilience or pragmatism may therefore be interpreted by another as the reproduction of gender inequality. This process can produce forms of intergenerational gendered gatekeeping, particularly within families, workplaces, and other institutions where women participate in shaping expectations of appropriate female behaviour. Instead of framing these tensions as a simple conflict between conservative older women and progressive younger women, the paper conceptualizes both actors as the outcome of historically different experiences of patriarchal constraint. It argues that patriarchal bargaining can have an intergenerational dimension: strategies that enable women to navigate unequal structures may themselves become norms that reproduce those structures. Examining this process provides a more layered understanding of feminist solidarity, particularly in Pakistan by highlighting the need to recognize how historically conditioned strategies of survival can both empower women within existing constraints and create barriers to the forms of equality demanded by subsequent generations.

**Keywords:**

Patriarchal Bargaining; Intergenerational Gender Norms; Feminism; Gendered Gatekeeping; Feminist Solidarity

# THE STRUGGLE FOR FEMINIST SOLIDARITY IN PAKISTAN'S AURAT MARCH

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**Abstract:**

The Aurat March is an annual feminist movement in Pakistan that has taken place since 2018, addressing patriarchal structures, gender inequality, women's rights, gender-based violence, and policy reform. This study adopts an intersectional approach to examine the movement's mobilization, public discourse, and digital activism, exploring how it challenges existing gender norms and engages with diverse women. Recognizing that women's experiences of inequality differ across factors such as class, religion, ethnicity, geography, and socioeconomic status, findings indicate that while the march has expanded to major urban capitals across the country including Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Peshawar, and Quetta, physical participation remains largely anchored in metropolitan hubs, struggling to translate into broader rural reach. Furthermore, while digital activism has helped amplify advocacy and visibility, the movement struggles to reach beyond its established urban network. As noted by the UNDP, roughly 68% of rural women lack regular access to digital platforms and the internet compared to urban counterparts. The study also identifies debates surrounding slogans such as "Mera Jism, Meri Marzi" (my body, my choice), which have produced different understandings of autonomy, rights, and cultural values. Critics have characterized the movement as Western or incompatible with traditional and religious values, complicating its public image alongside ongoing concerns regarding domestic violence, harassment, economic inequality, and unpaid care labor. These challenges highlight the difficulties feminist movements face when attempting to build solidarity among women with unequal social, cultural, and economic experiences. The study therefore recommends strengthening grassroots engagement, incorporating a wider range of women's experiences into movement building, and developing locally grounded communication strategies to help build broader and more inclusive forms of feminist solidarity in Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Aurat March; feminist movement; Intersectionality; digital activism; urban-rural divide

# TRANSGENDER POLITICAL INCLUSION AND THE LIMITS OF LEGAL RECOGNITION IN PAKISTAN: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PUNJAB AND KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan's Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018 (TPA) was hailed internationally as a progressive milestone, granting self-perceived gender identity recognition unmatched even in comparable South Asian and Western jurisdictions. Yet the Federal Shariat Court's May 2023 ruling, which struck down the Act's core provisions on gender self-identification and inheritance rights as un-Islamic, exposed the fragility of statutory recognition when it collides with contested religious and political authority. This paper examines the resulting gap between formal legal recognition and substantive political inclusion, arguing that transgender rights in Pakistan remain hostage to an unresolved constitutional tension between parliamentary legislation and religio-judicial review, now pending before the Supreme Court on appeal. Using a comparative provincial framework, the study contrasts Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), the two provinces with the most developed though divergent implementation records. Punjab's earlier institutional steps, including the appointment of transgender protection officers and NADRA registration drives, are weighed against KP's 2026 Transgender Protection Policy, which introduces a province-wide welfare registry, endowment fund and police coordination desks, but which follows a documented history of disproportionately high violence, including dozens of recorded killings since 2015. This divergence illustrates that neither earlier institutionalization nor newer policy comprehensiveness alone predicts lived security or political voice. Drawing on legislative texts, court judgments, human rights documentation and provincial policy records, the paper argues that Pakistan's transgender inclusion crisis is not primarily one of absent law but of enforcement asymmetry, provincial devolution gaps and the precarious constitutional standing of self-identification itself.

**Keywords:**

Transgender rights; Legal recognition; Pakistan; Federal Shariat Court; Provincial governance

# WHEN FORMAL ACCESS IS NOT ENOUGH: GENDERED SOCIAL NORMS AND WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Formal access of women to public institutions does not necessarily translate into their meaningful participation in local governance. In many communities, informal gender norms continue to shape who can approach state institutions and participate in public decision-making. This study examines the gap between formal institutional accessibility and women's participation through a qualitative case study of remote communities within Pind Dadan Khan Tehsil of Punjab District. The study focuses on women's reluctance to approach local administrative offices to communicate their grievances by particularly focusing on their experiences of water insecurity. This is significant in a context where women are formally able to access government institutions and where tehsil has been headed by a female administrator in recent years. Drawing on Feminist Institutionalism, the study examines how formal institutional arrangements interact with socially constructed perceptions of appropriate gender roles to shape women's engagement with local administration. Data will be collected through semi-structured interviews with women in Pind Dadan Khan's remote communities and an interview with the administrator of tehsil as a key institutional informant. Thematic analysis will be used to identify patterns in women's experiences of access to administrative institutions, gendered constraints, and perceptions of institutional environment. The study argues that formal institutional access alone is insufficient to ensure inclusive governance because informal gender norms constrain women's ability to exercise that access. It highlights the need for a gender-responsive mechanism that enable women to directly communicate their grievances and participate meaningfully in local governance.

**Keywords:**

Feminist Institutionalism, Women's Political Participation, Local Governance, Gender Norms, Water Insecurity

# FAITH, DIVERSITY, POLICY MAKING, AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

While common external perceptions often inaccurately portray Islamic societies as homogenous, Islam fundamentally celebrates human diversity as a divine sign of creation meant to foster mutual understanding rather than hierarchy. This article explores how these foundational theological principles are operationalized to advance gender equality, diversity and national integration within modern Pakistan. Through a contextual analysis of contemporary civic and political frameworks, the study examines the mechanisms used to bridge ethnic, religious, and gender divisions to build a cohesive national identity. Key structural initiatives are analyzed, including reserved legislative seats in the National Assembly and Senate to secure minority and gender representation, the institutionalization of National Minorities Day, and the vital role of grassroots NGOs like the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) in championing cross-demographic equality. Furthermore, the paper highlights critical educational reforms aimed at removing biased content from school textbooks to foster early inclusive mindsets. Concluding with actionable proposals for state and civil society, this research demonstrates how integrating Islamic values of justice and tolerance with robust civic policy can mitigate systemic marginalization, protect minority rights, and ultimately strengthen national integration.

**Keywords:**

National Integration, Diversity in Islam, Pakistan Policy, Curriculum Reform, Minority Representation

# EQUAL BEFORE THE EVIDENCE: HOW PROCEDURAL DESIGN INCLUDES OR EXCLUDES VULNERABLE LITIGANTS IN PAKISTANI TRIAL COURTS

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**Abstract:**

There is uniformity in civil procedure in Pakistan. The Code of Civil Procedure, 1908 and the Qanun-e-Shahadat Order, 1984 do not take any gender, faith or class discrimination. Despite this, many litigants are not able to make the most of these rules, and in this paper an attempt is made to explain how this is likely to occur during the trial. The burden of proof can be placed upon the party who is the weakest provider. A typical example is woman who claims to have been the heir but must prove mutation and possession when the records are in the possession of her brothers. Besides language issues are the issue of language. A witness can give evidence in Punjabi/Saraiki language and the record is written in Urdu/English language; this is the real translation done by the court. Documentary evidence poses a similar challenge as the law favours registered documents, attested documents and the requirement for mobility and finances that a woman living in a rural area may not have. Also taken into account are questions of oath and demeanour, as credibility is still judged to a certain extent, and purdah is not in harmony with this. These scenarios are explored in the paper after which the question of what can be done by a trial judge under the current law is explored. Among the suggestions offered are the following: Present questions as questions of evidence to the party that is supposed to possess the evidence; record some answers in the language of the faith or custom required; and be prepared to be flexible in oath and testimony practice when it is necessary because of faith or custom. The discussion is informed by the two statutes and superior court decisions, together with eight years of observation of the civil, commercial and family jurisdictions, anonymised.

**Keywords:**

Access to justice; trial procedure; burden of proof; gender equality; Pakistani courts

# HEARING HER VOICE: AI-DRIVEN SENTIMENT ANALYSIS OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AT LAHORE GARRISON UNIVERSITY

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**Abstract:**

Women's empowerment is a multidimensional concept encompassing education, economic participation, institutional voice, health and safety, digital access, and participation in decision-making. However, its measurement often relies on broad national indicators or composite indices whose weighting procedures may limit transparency and institutional applicability. This study proposes an integrated artificial intelligence–driven framework for examining women's empowerment within the higher-education context, using Lahore Garrison University (LGU), Pakistan, as a case study. The framework combines three complementary analytical layers. First, a bibliometric analysis maps global research trends, influential publications, thematic clusters, and the representation of Pakistan-based scholarship at the intersection of artificial intelligence and women's empowerment. Second, primary data are collected through semi-structured interviews with female students and faculty members across multiple academic disciplines. The study examines six domains of empowerment: educational empowerment, economic and career aspiration, political and institutional voice, health and campus safety, digital access and confidence, and institutional support. Rather than combining these dimensions into a single composite score, domain-level descriptive statistics are used to preserve transparency and enable direct interpretation of areas of strength and concern. Third, open-ended interview narratives are analyzed using natural language processing and sentiment analysis to identify positive, neutral, and negative perceptions associated with different dimensions of empowerment. The proposed approach integrates quantitative evidence with computational analysis of qualitative experiences, allowing institutional stakeholders to examine not only measurable patterns but also the emotional and experiential dimensions underlying them. By combining bibliometric mapping, interview-based descriptive statistics, and AI-driven sentiment analysis, the study offers a transparent and reproducible framework for assessing women's empowerment in higher education. The findings are expected to support evidence-based institutional interventions and provide a scalable methodological foundation for future research on gender equity in Pakistani and other higher-education institutions.

**Keywords:**

Women's Empowerment; Artificial Intelligence; Sentiment Analysis; Higher Education; Gender Equality

# REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN TV MINI-SERIES: A STUDY OF SAR-E-RAH

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**Abstract:**

Pakistani television has long been criticized for portraying women through stereotypical and restrictive roles, creating a need to examine whether newer narratives offer more empowered representations. This study aims to investigate how the mini-series Sar-e-Rah depicts women's empowerment by analyzing financial independence, resistance to patriarchy, and decision-making power. Guided by Feminist Media Theory, a qualitative content analysis was conducted on six episodes using a structured coding sheet with fifteen variables. The analysis shows that the series consistently challenges patriarchal norms, avoids traditional gender stereotypes, and presents women as autonomous, confident, and capable of driving their own narratives. Findings indicate moderate representation of financial independence but strong evidence of agency, empowerment, and positive scene outcomes. Overall, the study concludes that Sar-e-Rah offers a progressive portrayal of Pakistani women and reflects a shift toward more modern, multidimensional female characters in television storytelling.

**Keywords:**

Women's empowerment, Pakistani mini-series, Sar-e-rah, feminist media theory, patriarchy

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AS A TOOL FOR ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Inclusive education is an integral aspect of social justice and democratic rights. Governance, especially in contexts of gender inequality, is marked by unequal power dynamics and theexclusive use of state authority. In gendered societies, governance, especially, is defined by the uneven power distribution and concentrated use of state power stratification, and cultural diversity. In Pakistan, there are longstanding inequities in access to education, achievement of substantive equality and inclusive citizenship. In this study, the study attempts to look at how far inclusive education could go to achieve or could be a tool to promote gender equality and national integration in Pakistan. It sees education not only as a service-delivery institution but as an institution that is formative.Political institution that influences social relations, civic identities and their sense of belonging. Drawing on the theoretical perspectives of social inclusion, substantive equality, and the critical examination of the relationship between educational and democratic citizenship is conducted in the study.Including and building up a more cohesive national community.The study is qualitative and policy-oriented, using a policy framework to analyse the constitution. Evaluate provisions, national education policy and literature to consider the institutional capacity of the education system to deal with exclusionary structures of Pakistan. The role of gender, socioeconomic inequalities and language is emphasized andethnic marginalization, the educational obstacles suffered by persons with disabilities. The analysis also takes into account issues related to curriculum, teacher preparation, the focus is on institutional practices and equitable resource allocation and its impact on inclusive education outcomes. The study proposes that inclusive practice can make a contribution to national integration in terms of the development of intergroup understanding, civic equality and shared political belonging.However, its integrative potential is dependent on the extent to which educational institutions accept diversity, but don't reinforce identity hierarchies' privilege. The results indicate that solutions and agreements towards equality are not enough in theLack of effective implementation, institutional accountability and investment. Marginalized communities. The study concludes that inclusive education should be: was not seen as an outside element to democratic state building, but rather as an integral part of it. Educational intervention. Promoting gender equality and national integration in Pakistan. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce an education policy framework in which there is a connection between an equitable access to education and a purposeful result. Participation, recognition of difference and substantive equality of citizenship.

**Key words:**

Inclusive Education, Gender Equality, National Integration, Social Inclusion, Education Policy Pakistan

# INCLUSIVE BY DESIGN? GENDER, RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY AND VERNACULAR SPIRITUALITY IN SUFI SHRINES OF SOUTH ASIA

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**Abstract:**

South Asian Sufi shrines have historically served as unique spaces of inclusivity that have challenged religious and social boundaries. In Sufi shrines such as the dargah of Ali Hujwiri (Data Darbar) in Lahore, Baba Farid's shrine in Pakpattan, Lal Shahbaz Qalandar's shrine in Sehwan Sharif, and people of diverse gender identities, social classes, castes, and religions are welcomed alongside Muslim devotees. This paper argues that the inclusivity of these spaces emerged from the synthesis of the ethical and spiritual resources of Sufism and the historical, cultural and political conditions in which shrine communities developed. Sufi ideas of divine love, spiritual equality and devotion to saints, along with practices of pilgrimage, *urs*, music and vernacular worship, created possibilities for inclusivity of the *Other*. The paper conducts a historical investigation of the late Mughal period, the Sikh Empire and early colonial Punjab, when pilgrimage, shrine patronage and festivals enabled interaction among Muslim, Hindu and Sikh communities. It explores the Mughal state ideology of ṣulḥ-i kull which made the Mughal Empire one of the most inclusive states of its time, further it explores Ranjit Singh's interest in Sufi shrines, Sikh devotion to Baba Farid, and the collective Hindu-Muslim traditions associated with Lal Shahbaz Qalandar. By bringing Sufi philosophical thought into conversation with historical practice of Sufi doctrine, hence bridging theory and practice, the paper shows how possibilities of inclusion embedded within Sufi traditions were realized in South Asia. This historical inquiry contributes to contemporary debates in Pakistan concerning religious pluralism, minority rights and social diversity as it highlights a core element of a major Pakistani religious and cultural structure that has the potential to make larger society more inclusive.

**Keywords:**

Sufism, Sufi shrines, South Asia, Mughal Empire, Culture

# HOW ELECTORAL BOYCOTTS DRIVE POLITICAL EXCLUSION: A CASE STUDY OF BALOCHISTAN'S POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

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**Abstract:**

Electoral participation is a crucial process through which political parties achieve representation within institutions in a democratic manner. However, in the case of political conflict, the parties may resort to methods of making their voice heard, one of which may be boycotting elections. This paper examines the relationship between electoral boycotts of political parties and political exclusion in Balochistan, Pakistan, focusing on the role of political parties between 1970 and 2013. It questions the extent to which electoral boycotts by political parties contributed to the political underrepresentation of Balochistan, and how these strategies shaped the province's political voice? Employing a qualitative historical case-study design, the study uses process tracing and comparative analysis of key elections, with particular emphasis on the 2008 and 2013 general elections. The analysis draws upon Election Commission of Pakistan electoral data, parliamentary records, political-party statements and manifestos, newspaper archives, election-monitoring reports, and relevant academic literature. Electoral participation, vote shares, legislative representation, and party presence in elected institutions are used to assess political inclusion, while party statements and historical records are examined to identify the reasons behind electoral boycotts. The paper further argues that electoral boycotts may serve as a political strategy with a paradoxical effect. On one hand, they enabled political parties to express opposition to state policies, and perceived political marginalization, while concurrently reducing the institutional representation of regional political forces, leading to a representation gap. The contrasting experiences of 2008, when several major nationalist parties boycotted the elections, and 2013, when many returned to electoral politics, provide a particularly important basis for examining this paradox. The paper also provides effective recommendations for curbing the effect of political exclusion produced by non-participation in the electoral process.

**Keywords:**

Balochistan; political exclusion; electoral boycotts; political parties; political representation

# ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION: A LEGAL AND POLICY ANALYSIS OF PAKISTAN'S CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS AND GROUND REALITIES

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**Abstract:**

Gender equality, diversity, and national integration are closely interlinked terms of an inclusive, cohesive and peaceful society. The Pakistan Constitution of 1973 has established the framework of equality, justice, fundamental rights, and protection of minorities. However, this constitutional promise does not ensure effective implementation in practice. Persistent gender-based violence, sectarian and ethnic marginalization, social inclusion, underrepresentation, and unequal participation continue to highlight the significant gap between constitutional guarantees and lived realities of the citizens. This study examines Pakistan's constitutional framework regarding equality and diversity. It also explores how these principles are reflected in institutional practices. It adopts a qualitative approach with an amalgamation of secondary as well as primary sources, comprising existing literature and a field survey to explore public perception of gender equality, diversity and national integration. The finding reveals strong relationship between marginalization and gender inequality with national integration and how operational failures restrict gender equality and meaningful social inclusion. It further explores whether greater representation of diverse groups can contribute to strengthen the national cohesion. Moreover, it also argues that national integration should not be understood as uniformity; rather it requires the development of an inclusive and strong national identity based on equality, representation, participation, and mutual respect. It concludes that Pakistan requires structural reforms and amendments, meaningful participation, and inclusive representation instead of relying solely on constitutional and legal promises. Such measures are essential for narrowing the gap between law and practice and for building a more cohesive and integrated Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Gender Equality, Diversity, Social Inclusion, National Integration, Pakistan Constitutional rights

# NATIONAL INTEGRATION THROUGH PARLIAMENTARY LITERACY AND DEMOCRATIC INCLUSION IN PAKISTAN (2024-2026): CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

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**Abstract:**

National integration in Pakistan is rooted in the complex dynamics of federalism, historically challenged by the socio-economic disparities, ethno-linguistic diversity, and its accommodation across the federating units and the constant friction in the centre-provincial relations. This study lays focus on the political landscape from 2024-2026 to examine how parliamentary literacy and democratic inclusion can serve as the structural mechanisms required for inter-provincial as well as national cohesion and democratic consolidation in a federal parliamentary democracy. Centralized institutional power is often prioritized in traditional approaches of state building, however, this study posits for a model of integration that is embedded in civic engagement and inclusion at the legislative level. It advocates that civic education fosters institutional trust among the citizens by including them in the legislative processes, parliamentary oversight mechanisms and making them aware of their constitutional rights, especially among the under-represented and marginalized regional groups. This paper evaluates how the gap between peripheral communities and legislative bodies can be bridged by institutionalizing parliamentary education. It further investigates the roles of linguistic policy in fostering democratic inclusion and emphasizes on how the translation of parliamentary proceedings, and civic outreach initiatives into regional languages can foster institutional trust as well as develop a sense of inclusion and cohesion. This study adapts a qualitative approach to assess the federal structures and parliamentary outreach programs in order to identify the existing challenges and demonstrate that, parliamentary literacy can transform the Abstract constitutional guarantees into practically lived democratic consolidation, develop harmony among provinces and foster such a national identity that is inclusive, and rooted in federal equity and linguistic respect, instead of a forced cultural homogeny.

**Keywords:**

National integration, Parliamentary literacy, Democratic Inclusion, Federalism

# WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND ITS ROLE IN STRENGTHENING NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Women's political participation is an important and vital part of building a diverse, inclusive and also integrated society. In Pakistan women constitute almost half of the population yet their participation in political decision making still remains limited in comparison with their overall representation in the society. This research examines the role of women's political participation in strengthening national integration in Pakistan with particular focus on diversity and inclusion. The study argues that the meaningful inclusion of women from different social, economic, ethnic, cultural and regional backgrounds can make political institutions more representative of the population as a whole. When women are given equal opportunities to participate in elections, political parties, legislatures and decision making processes then the diverse perspectives and community concerns are more likely to be reflected in national policies as well. The inclusion of women in politics can also help promote a sense of belonging among groups that have historically remained underrepresented in public life. Women representatives can raise issues related to education, healthcare, social welfare, economic opportunities and the rights of marginalized communities result in contributing to more inclusive governance. Moreover, greater political representation can encourage better dialogue and cooperation among different sections of Pakistani society helping reduce social divisions and strengthen a shared sense of national identity. However, barriers such as social and cultural restrictions, limited political opportunities, lack of resources, political violence and gender based discrimination continue to affect women's effective participation. Therefore, this study emphasizes alot that increasing numerical representation alone is not sufficient yet women must also have meaningful opportunities to influence political decisions. The research concludes that promoting diversity and inclusion through women's political participation can contribute alot to more representative institutions, social cohesion, equal citizenship and ultimately stronger national integration in Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Women's Political Participation, National Integration, Political Representation, Diversity and Inclusion, Social Cohesion.

# BALANCING TWO WORLDS": EXPERIENCES OF PSYCHOLOGICALLY DISTRESSED MOTHERS IN ACADEMIA

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**Abstract:**

The challenges that come with motherhood and pursuing a higher degree are particularly emotionally, physically, and socially demanding for women, especially in a context where there is a lack of flexibility in family expectations and institutional arrangements. This phenomenological qualitative study examines the lived experiences of student mothers in Pakistan, focusing on the ways in which they cope with the psychological distress of trying to manage academic and caregiving responsibilities. Six participants have been screened for psychological distress using the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale (K-10). Five fell within the mild to severe distress range were invited to participate in the study. A total of five student mothers attending graduate and post-graduate studies have been interviewed in depth using semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis has been used to analyze the data based on Moustakas' framework for phenomenology. Based on the data, five primary themes emerged: Balancing motherhood and academics, the hidden strain, Identity and Social Expectation, Support System and Coping Mechanisms. The study highlighted how the participants managed the simultaneous and conflicting challenges of academics and parenting and the resulting pressure of time scarcity, lost sleep, and emotional burnout. This calls the need for adaptable educational systems, inclusion of family in the support structures, and greater awareness of the educational systems that support women with multiple responsibilities.

**Keywords:**

Psychological distress, Mothers in academia, Role-strain, coping strategies, Pakistan.

# INCLUSIVE MOBILITY AS SOCIAL INCLUSION: UNEQUAL ROAD RISK AND RIGHT TO SAFE MOBILITY IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Mobility constitutes an overlooked dimension of social inclusion. Debate on diversity and inclusion largely concentrate on representation, education, employment and political participation. However, there is dearth on research to whether different social groups can move through public space safely. This study introduces inclusive mobility as a sociological framework for understanding road safety as a question of inequality, citizenship and access to public space. It asks a fundamental question: *who possesses an equal right to move safely through the city?* This study draws on mixed method research conducted in Islamabad including a large scale survey of approximately 3,500 road users, 100 qualitative respondents, focus group discussions, and in-depth interviews undertaken as part of a wider research programme on road safety and transport governance. This analysis examines how institutional arrangements, uneven access to driving education, weak enforcement, infrastructural disparities and differentiated mobility resources distribute road risk. Findings challenge the assumption that traffic risk results primarily from individual behaviour. Road vulnerability emerges from the interaction between social position, mobility practice and institutional capacity in urban space. Women, young people, pedestrians, motorcyclists, lower income commuters and other less protected road users encounter distinctive constraints in accessing safe mobility. Such inequalities matter beyond transportation because unsafe movement restricts access to education, employment, healthcare, social relationships and participation in urban life. Mobility inequality, therefore, becomes a mechanism through which wider forms of social exclusion reproduce themselves. This paper advances the concept of mobility inclusion, defined as the socially and institutionally secured capacity to reach people, opportunities, service and places without disproportionate exposure to preventable risk. It argues that an inclusive society requires not only recognition of social diversity but also an equitable distribution of safety across public space. For Pakistan, this requires shifting road governance from vehicle centred traffic management toward people centred mobility policy that prioritizes vulnerable road users, equitable infrastructure, accessible road safety education and coordinated use of existing institutional resources. Safe mobility, from this perspective, constitutes both a public good and a practical condition of inclusive citizenship.

**Keywords:**

Inclusive mobility; social inclusion; mobility justice; road safety; urban inequality; Pakistan

# CLIMATE DISPLACEMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION: RETHINKING GENDER, MOBILITY AND BELONGING IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

With the advent of climate change, the mobility pattern of people within Pakistan is also changing and more and more people are being displaced and moved due to the flood, extreme heat, water insecurity, land degradation and livelihood disruption. However, climate induced mobility does not happen equally. The abilities to move, stay, adapt and rebuild one's life are greatly influenced by gender, socioeconomic position, resource access, and pre-existing social inequalities. This paper aims to explore the climate displacement of Pakistan within a gender-responsive lens of social inclusion and human security, as it should not simply be viewed as an environmental or demographic matter but one of inequality, access and social belonging. It examines the role of climate-related displacement in exacerbating gender inequalities, for example, through the disruption of livelihoods, access to healthcare and education, housing security and social networks, and by adding unpaid care responsibilities to women's work, and reducing their mobility and opportunities for participation in decision making. It also explores the possibility of new forms of social exclusion that may be experienced by displaced communities in the places that they are forced to resettle, especially when they are unable to secure employment, documentation, a political voice, social networks, or access to public services. This lens may reveal a dual vulnerability that is created when displacement exposes communities to climate hazards in their places of origin and leaves them vulnerable to marginalization in places of reception. Inspired by current research on climate mobility, gender and social inclusion, and human security, the paper theorises the concept of climate displacement as a multi-dimensional phenomenon that poses an alternative framework of understanding mobility and integration. It champions inclusion-based policies rather than relocation and disaster-response policies in the context of effective climate governance in Pakistan, and suggests that displaced populations must be treated as rights-bearing members of society. Realising the potential for climate-induced mobility to build resilience and social cohesion requires gender-responsive social protection, access to key services, livelihood opportunities, participatory decision-making, and inclusive urban and local governance. The paper concludes that the social inclusion approach of tackling climate displacement is essential to establish an equitable, peaceful and resilient Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Climate Displacement, Gender Inequality, Social Inclusion, Human Mobility, Pakistan.

# ADVANCING GENDER EQUALITY THROUGH COACHES' LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS, PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT, AND EMOTION REGULATION AMONG WOMEN CRICKETERS

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**Abstract:**

Coaches' leadership behaviors and perceived social support are considered important interpersonal resources that may contribute to athletes' emotional functioning in competitive sport. The present study examined the relationships between coaches' leadership behaviors and perceived social support with two emotion regulation strategies, cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression, among women cricketers. A quantitative, cross-sectional correlational design was employed, with 130 women cricketers recruited through purposive sampling from clubs in Lahore. Participants completed the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS), the Perceived Available Support in Sport Questionnaire (PASS-Q), and the Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ). Data were analyzed using Pearson correlation analysis and simple linear regression. Coaches' leadership behaviors and perceived social support were each significantly and positively associated with cognitive reappraisal ($r = .707$, $p < .01$) and expressive suppression($r = .681$, $p < .01$). Perceived social support was also significantly and positively associated with cognitive reappraisal ($r = .364$, $p < .01$) and expressive suppression ($r = .341$, $p <. 01$). Leadership behaviors showed stronger associations with both strategies than perceived social support. The findings are broadly consistent with Conservation of Resources Theory, which views supportive interpersonal relationships as potential psychological resources for coping with emotional demands in sport. The findings highlight the importance of supportive coaching and social environments in strengthening women athletes' emotional functioning and fostering more inclusive and empowering sporting experiences. Such supportive environments may contribute to advancing gender equality by creating conditions that encourage women's sustained participation, development, and confidence in competitive sport. The results further highlight the potential value of coach education programs that emphasize supportive leadership to enhance athletes' emotional functioning.

**Keywords:**

Coaches' leadership behaviors, perceived social support, emotion regulation, gender equality, women cricketers

# BREAKING BARRIERS, BUILDING INCLUSION: FEMALE SPORTS PARTICIPATION, GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN LAHORE

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**Abstract:**

Female participation in sports is a significant aspect of promoting gender equality and social integration among university students. This study examined differences in social integration between female university students who participated and those who did not participate in sporting events. The quantitative cross-sectional research design was used. A sample of 200 female university students was selected from universities using convenience sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire covering women sports participation, gender equality and social integration. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, while an independent-samples t-test applied to compare social integration scores between Athlete and non-athlete. The findings showed that sports participants had higher social integration scores ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 0.54$) than non-participants ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.61$). The difference between the two groups was statistically significant ($t(198) = 5.01$, $p < .001$). This conclusion indicated that female sports participation was linked with higher levels of social integration among university students. The study emphasized the importance of providing protected and accessible sports opportunities for female students. University sports programs may provide opportunities for interaction, collaboration, coordination and social inclusion. The findings provided useful information for university administrators, sports departments and policymakers seeking to encourage female participation in sports and promote inclusive university environments. The study determined that female sports participation was associated with better social integration among university students in Lahore.

**Keywords:**

Female Sports Participation, Gender Equality, Social Integration, University Students, Inclusion

# MEASURING INCLUSION GAPS: A STATISTICAL ASSESSMENT OF SOCIOECONOMIC INEQUALITIES AMONG PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Persons with disabilities continue to face substantial barriers to equal participation in education and employment, limiting their opportunities for socioeconomic advancement and full inclusion in society. Promoting inclusion requires not only recognizing disability as a dimension of diversity but also identifying and quantifying the inequalities experienced by persons with disabilities for designing evidence-based policies and targeted interventions. This study aims to measure the inclusion gaps regarding health facilities, education and employment opportunities for disable persons in Pakistan, with particular attention to differences across gender, age, and rural–urban residence. The study utilizes data from the Pakistan Population and Housing Census 2023 for studying the distribution of disabled persons in education and socioeconomic activities at population level. Further, the data from the Pakistan Health and demographic Survey (PDHS) is utilized to assess the health facilities available for disable persons in Pakistan. Inclusion gaps and disparities for disable persons in literacy, Health facilities, educational attainment, school attendance, labour-force participation and employment status are measured by employing descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Furthermore, disaggregated analysis is conducted by gender, age group, and rural–urban residence to identify population groups experiencing more disproportionately. By providing statistical evidence on where and among whom inclusion gaps are greatest, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of disability-related inequality in Pakistan. The findings can support policymakers, health organizations, educational institutions, employers, and social-sector organizations in developing inclusive education and employment strategies that address structural barriers and promote equal opportunities for persons with disabilities. The study ultimately emphasizes that meaningful inclusion requires not only recognizing diversity but also ensuring equitable access to opportunities for all members of society

**Keywords:**

Inclusion Gap, Pakistan health and demographic Survey (PDHS), Pakistan Census 2023

# BEYOND GENDER: ASSESSING ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OF MINORITY WOMEN IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Religious minority women may be exposed to various intersecting and multiple obstacles to participation in school, the labour market, economic activities and social decision-making that may hinder their socio-economic outcomes and meaningful integration into society. The process of promoting inclusive development should involve not only tackling gender inequalities but also consider the nature of minority status and how this can contribute to women's access to opportunities and resources. The purpose of this research is to evaluate the economic and social status of minority women in Pakistan focusing on disparities in their education, employment, economic status, digital access and involvement in decision-making in the households. A microdata set obtained from Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) Household Integrated Economic Survey ( HIES) 2024–25 is used in the study. The analysis will include socio-economic and inclusion outcomes for women from religious minority backgrounds and will be compared with the outcomes for non-minority women. Some key indicators are literacy and educational attainment, school participation, labour-force participation, employment status, occupation, household income and consumption-related measures, access to information and communication technologies, and women's participation in household decision-making. Quantitative statistical methods such as descriptive and inferential statistics will be used to quantify the difference in these indicators and to determine factors related to economic and social inclusion of minority women.In addition, disaggregated analysis will be undertaken by age, marital status, education level, household socio-economic position and rural–urban to help identify population groups where disadvantage is more prevalent. The study aims to broaden the discussion on gender and socioeconomic inequalities beyond the use of simple indicators of inequality and raise the profile of the gender-minority gap, by offering statistical evidence of the size and patterning of the gap. The results can inform policy makers, educational institutions, social sector institutions and educational development practitioners on designing interventions aimed at addressing the needs of women and improving their agency and access to economic participation, digital inclusion and education. The study finally focuses on the need to ensure that gender disparities are addressed as well as the extra socio-economic barriers faced by women from minority groups.

**Keywords:**

Minority Women; Social Inclusion; Economic Inclusion; Gender Inequality; Multidimensional Inclusion; Socioeconomic Disparities; HIES 2024–25; Pakistan

# GENDER EQUALITY AND FEMINIST SELF-AWARENESS IN URDU LITERATURE: A CRITICAL STUDY OF SELECTED WRITERS' WORKS

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**Abstract:**

This paper explores the relationship between gender equality, social diversity, and national cohesion through the lens of Urdu literature and the socio-cultural context of Pakistan. It examines how Urdu literary narratives have represented women's identities, agency, social constraints, and participation in the formation of a more inclusive society. The writings of Ismat Chughtai, Qurratulain Hyder, and Khadija Mastur, provide significant examples of how Urdu fiction has questioned patriarchal structures, challenged conventional gender roles, and brought diverse female experiences into literary and social discourse. Chughtai's **"**Lihaaf" and "Terhi Lakeer", Qurratulain Hyder's "Aag Ka Darya" and "Mere Bhi Sanam Khane", and Khadija Mastur's "Aangan" demonstrate different dimensions of women's agency, identity, and social belonging within changing historical and cultural contexts. The paper argues that representation and recognition of diverse voices are essential to the development of an inclusive national identity. It further investigates how education, literature, and cultural discourse can challenge gender based stereotypes, promote mutual understanding, and bridge social differences. By connecting literary representation with the broader ideals of equality, diversity, and inclusion, the study argues that Urdu literature can serve as an important space for imagining a more equitable and cohesive Pakistani society.

**Keywords:**

Gender Equality, Diversity, National Cohesion, Feminism, Social Inclusion.

# REPRESENTATION OF SOCIAL ISSUES AND SOCIAL JUSTICE IN THE POEMS OF HARRIS KHALIQUE

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**Abstract:**

Haris Khalique is contemporary Urdu poet whose poetry reflects the social realities and problems of the present age. His poems are closely connected with the life of ordinary people and the difficulties they face in a society. He writes about poverty, social inequality, class differences, exploitation, injustice, and the loss of human dignity. These issues give his poetry a strong connection with the everyday experiences of people who are often ignored or left behind. His poetic expression shows that literature can play an important role in understanding the problems of society and giving voice to those who have limited opportunities to express themselves. The research uses a qualitative and textual approach to analyze selected poems. In his poetry, we will examine how Harris Khalique portrays the lives of poor and marginalized people and highlights issues such as class division, social inequality and injustice in society. Another important aspect of his poetry is the concern for human rights, freedom and equality. His poems contain a sense of protest against oppression and unfair social practices and expresses a hope for positive change in society .Overall this study shows that social issues and social justice are closely connected themes in the poetry of Harris Khalique and his poetry attempts to become a voice for the deprived people of society.

**Keywords:**

Harris Khalique, Social issues, Social Justice, Class Difference, Human Rights

# AN ANALYSIS OF THE FORMATION OF MARGINALIZED CHARACTERS WITHIN SOCIAL STRUCTURES: A STUDY OF SARMAD SEHBAI'S STAGE PLAY "ASHRAF-UL-MKHLOOQAT

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**Abstract:**

In this article, the formation of marginal characters in a society will be reviewed in the context of Sarmad Sehbai's stage play "Ashraf-ul-Makhlooqat". Sarmad Sehbai is an important play writer of modern Urdu literature. His stage plays highlight various aspects of social life. Class differences, social inequality and the relationship between an individual and his society are the major subjects or themes in his plays. His characters represent the social realities of their era. Modern Urdu stage drama not only reflects the social attitudes, values and issues of its time but also highlights the various strata of society and their interrelationships. In Sarmad Sehbai's stage play "Ashraf-ul-Makhlooqat" (the noblest of Creations), alongside various facets of social structure, characters emerge who appear to exist on the margins of society rather than its center. This paper will analyze those marginal characters to examine how social, economic and cultural factors shape these characters and influence their attitude.Furthermore, it will offer a critical examination of the extent to which these characters address issues such as social inequality, class disparity, deprivation and social inclusions. The primary objective of this paper is to demonstrate that in "Ashraf-ul-Makhlooqat" marginal characters are not merely incidental figures rather they emerge as vital instruments for understanding the social structure and its inherent contradictions.

**Keywords:**

Urdu stage play, marginal characters, social structure, social inequality, social inclusion.

# GENDER EQUALITY AND CHANGING SOCIAL ATTITUDES IN MODERN URDU FICTION: A CRITICAL AND ANALYTICAL STUDY OF KHALIDA HUSSAIN'S SELECTED SHORT STORIES

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**Abstract:**

Contemporary Urdu fiction is an effective interpreter of the social changes of its era, changing human relationships and the changing identity of the individual. In particular, the changes taking place in gender relations have given new meaning to literary expression. Gender equality is not just an issue of equal rights for women and men, but is also associated with social attitudes, distribution of powers, autonomy and the formation of mutual relationships. In this context, Khalida Hussain's fiction has special significance. Khalida Hussain is a prominent fiction writer of Urdu fiction who has presented human existence, internal conditions, social relationships and the life experience of women with deep sensitivity. In her fiction, instead of presenting women as a mere oppressed character, her internal conflict, self-awareness and various aspects of social existence are highlighted. These features provide her fiction texts with a basis for meaningful study regarding gender equality.The present paper will critically and analytically study selected stories by Khalida Hussain to examine how gender roles are formed in them and to what extent changing social attitudes affect the identities and relationships of these characters. The research will consider aspects such as patriarchal values, women's autonomy, gender discrimination, social expectations, and equal human status. The main objective of the paper is to clarify how Khalida Hussain's fictional narrative highlights the possibilities of equal and balanced social attitudes along with highlighting gender differences.

**Keywords:**

Urdu Short Fiction, Gender Equality, Changing Social Attitudes, Female Identity, Patriarchy.

# THE CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER IDENTITY AND THE CONCEPT OF EQUALITY IN ZAHIDA HINA'S SHORT STORIES

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**Abstract:**

Zahida Hina is an important Urdu writer who has given special attention to women's lives, identity, rights, and social position in her fiction. Her short stories present different forms of inequality that women face in a male-dominated society. This research paper studies selected short stories by Zahida Hina in the context of gender identity and equality. The main purpose of this study is to explore how Zahida Hina represents the unequal treatment of men and women and how she presents women's struggle for equal rights, freedom, identity, and respect. The study also examines how family, society, cultural expectations, and traditional values shape women's gender identity and create gender-based differences. Special attention is given to women's right to make their own decisions, their social status, emotional freedom, and their efforts to challenge traditional gender roles. The research uses a qualitative and textual approach to analyze selected short stories. The characters, events, dialogues, and situations in these stories are examined to understand the writer's views on gender relations, identity, and equality. The study argues that Zahida Hina does not present women only as victims of social injustice; rather, her female characters also demonstrate awareness, resistance, courage, and a desire for an independent identity. Her fiction highlights the importance of equal rights, opportunities, dignity, and freedom for both men and women. It also shows how social expectations can limit women's choices and influence their understanding of themselves. The study concludes that Zahida Hina's short stories offer a meaningful literary perspective on the construction of gender identity and the concept of equality. Her representation of women remains relevant to contemporary discussions about women's rights, gender equality, social inclusion, and social justice.

**Keywords:**

Zahida Hina, Gender Identity, Gender Equality, Women's Identity, Gender Inequality, Women's Rights.

# APPARENTLY, ONLY WOMEN HAVE A GENDER RETHINKING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Say the word "gender" in a policy room and a familiar image appears: a woman. Men remain the apparently gender-neutral norm, while transgender, non-binary and other gender-diverse persons disappear from the frame. Equating gender with women is not merely a linguistic error; it is a policy failure. The association emerged from the struggle to make women visible in institutions designed around men. Over time, however, a corrective focus hardened into a restrictive definition: equality became female headcounts, diversity a male-female binary, and integration a paragraph added after major decisions were made. Across education, employment, health, public finance, technology and social protection, this produces inclusion without institutional change. Women are added while underlying norms, budgets, data systems and decision-making rules remain untouched. Gender norms affecting men and boys are ignored, diverse gender identities excluded, and women compressed into a single category concealing differences of class, ethnicity, religion, disability, age and geography. For Pakistan, national integration cannot mean assimilation into an imagined "neutral" citizen or representation without voice. A peaceful, inclusive federation requires equal citizenship that recognizes difference without turning it into hierarchy, backed by institutions that translate recognition into access, safety, participation and power. Correcting this requires a shift from women as the presumed gender beneficiary to gender as an analytical lens; from headcounts to power and outcomes; from binary inclusion to intersectional recognition; and from isolated activities to integration throughout policymaking. Broadening gender does not dilute women's rights. It makes equality structural, diversity honest and national integration credible. If gender continues to look only like a woman, policy will continue to see only part of the nation.

**Keywords:**

Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, National Integration, Gender Mainstreaming, Intersectionality

# SCORING BEYOND THE FIELD: A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF SPORTS SCHOLARSHIPS, ENTREPRENEURIAL EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AMONG FEMALE STUDENT-ATHLETES FROM NORTHERN PAKISTAN AT LAHORE GARRISON UNIVERSITY

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**Abstract:**

This study is a qualitative case study, which explores the experience of female student-athletes in the process of obtaining a sports scholarship at Lahore Garrison University (LGU). The eleven participants were included in the present analysis. The participants were recruited from six academic programmes and there were nine participants from Gilgit-Baltistan and two from Punjab. The athletes were from taekwondo, judo, football, swimming, weightlifting and basketball. The interviews were conducted using semi-structured questions that lasted about 15 minutes, recorded, transcribed and analysed following the six-phase thematic analysis framework by Braun and Clarke (2006) assisted by the software NVivo for organisation, coding and retrieval of qualitative data and documentation. The coded structure was used to develop four themes: access to education via sports scholarships; success in sport and identity; confidence, communication and personal change; and social inclusion and cross-cultural connections. The results indicate that the scholarship was perceived as a tool to help on the path to higher education and allow for further development in their sport, and that the university experiences and sporting experiences were linked to more confidence, communication and social interaction in their narratives.

**Keywords:**

Women's empowerment; sports scholarship; higher education; entrepreneurship; Pakistan

# TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION AMONG EMPLOYEES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: EXPLORING GENDER DIFFERENCE

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**Abstract:**

With the recent trend of digitalizing work place, higher education institutions are embracing technology to enhance their educational capabilities. The current study investigated the gender differences in technology adoption among employees in public sector universities of a developing country. The study design was quantitative. Survey was conducted for data collection. Adapted questionnaire was used, the study surveyed 300 male and female employees from public sector universities of Lahore. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS. Technology adoption of male and female university employees were assessed through their attitude towards the use of technology, their competency in using technology and their technology and media usage practices. Findings of the study showed difference in gender's technology adoption in the universities. Difference in male and female employees' attitude towards use of technology and their technology usage frequency was seen. The results showed statistical difference in technology usage between gender, having a p value 0.038, employees' attitude towards technology, with a p value 0.00. Overall the mean score of female employees was better than the male employees. The study concluded that female university employees demonstrated a higher inclination and positive attitude towards technology integration in work processes, potentially challenging the digital divide and promoting equitable access to technology-driven environments. The study highlighted the evolving landscape of technology adoption in higher education, reflecting potential of bridging digital disparities between the genders and promoting equitable access to technology. Further studies should be conducted for obtaining deeper insight in this area of research.

**Keywords:**

Technology Adoption, Gender Difference, Bridging Digital Divide, Higher Education, Quantitative Research

# PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES AND COPING STRATEGIES AMONG BURN SURVIVORS: A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

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**Abstract:**

This qualitative study explored the psychosocial challenges and coping strategies of female burn survivors in Punjab, Pakistan. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six female burn survivors with visible burn scars using purposive and snowball sampling, with an age range between 25-50 years. The sample consisted of participants with total body surface area (TBSA) burns ranging from 20% to 60%, representing different types of burn injuries, with the time since injury ranging from 5 to 30 years. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, and three main themes emerged: psychological and emotional impacts, social marginalization, and coping processes. The findings revealed various psychological, and social challenges followed by the role of supportive network and various coping strategies. The research has theoretical and practical implications for educators, researchers, psychologists, and mental health professionals highlighting the need for culturally specific therapeutic approaches when working with burn survivors. Despite limitations in sample size, this study contributes to the understanding of challenges faced by the female burn survivors in Pakistan and the culturally relevant coping strategies they use, by providing culturally relevant insight for future research and practices.

**Keywords:**

Psychosocial challenges, burn survivors, thematic analysis, coping strategies, therapeutical techniques, visible scars

# CRIMINAL NARRATIVES OF PAKISTANI WOMEN OFFENDERS: A GROUNDED THEORY STUDY

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**Abstract:**

The grounded theory research investigated the gender-specific contexts, sociocultural dynamics, personal criminal narratives and roles of Pakistani women offenders. The research study included narcotics and murder offenders recruited from two penitentiaries, the Kasur and Shiekhupura district jails. A purposive sample of 10 women inmates (*M*= 45.8, *SD*=18.90), with ages ranging between 20 to 80 years, was recruited for semi-structured interviews. The years of conviction ranged from 9 to 25 years. Constructivist Grounded Theory approach was used for analysis and theory construction. An iterative, back-and-forth analysis was administered across four intervals of data collection. Initial, Focused, and Theoretical coding procedures were operated for data analysis. Theoretical sampling guided the theoretical saturation process and five core categories emerged under the Sociocultural and Personal Narratives Construction in Women Offenders framework. It was later analyzed to construct the three dimensional Six Narrative Criminal Roles Typology of Women Offenders which was grounded in the sample's sociocultural context. The dimensions of Coercion, Survival, and Reconstruction were proposed. Similarly, roles namely the Silenced Scapegoat, the Marginalized Victim, the Compelled Survivor, the Devoted Caregiver, the Transformative Resistor, and the Moral Re-framer were identified. The theoretical emergence of the women offenders' roles might significantly contribute to the emerging research shift towards narrative criminology and is expected to guide feminist scholarship on indigenous, gendered offending. The theoretical findings can be employed to guide gender-oriented, trauma informed rehabilitation and legal programs to address the proliferation in women criminality in the Global South.

**Keywords:**

Women criminality, narrative criminology, constructivist grounded theory, criminal narrative roles

# EXPLORATION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL MASOCHISM IN COMMUNITY SAMPLE

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**Abstract:**

Psychological masochism can be defined as the tendency to have self-defeating cognitive, emotional, and behavioral traits such as self-sacrificing, self-neglect, self-punishment and experiencing psychological pain. Even after knowing that it is highly theoretical and clinically well recognized construct, the construct of psychological masochism lacks the attention in indigenous literature and an indigenous measure has not been developed for the measurement of the construct in community individuals of Pakistan. In the current study, expression of psychological masochism among the adult population of Pakistan has been investigated. An exploratory qualitative design has been used. The sample size consists of eleven participants, four males and four females with the age range from 18 to 30 years. Participants were selected due to their ages (18-45) and their high scores on self-defeating and masochistic behavior scales of Measure of Self-Defeating Personality (Schill, 1990) and depressivity and submissiveness PID-5 facets. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews. Two major themes of psychological masochism emerged in this study. These included inter-personal and intra-personal domains. Interpersonal domains were represented by relational dependency and rejection sensitivity, self-sacrifice and people pleasing traits, need for validation and attention; fear of abandonment and being trapped in an unhealthy relationship, need for belonging and connection. Intra-personal domains included self-blame and religious and cultural guilt, self-defeating attitudes, inability to experience positive emotions; emotional problems and maladaptive coping strategies. Such areas can be considered the examples of cultural representations of psychological masochism in the community sample. The above-mentioned themes are culturally sensitive manifestations of psychological masochism suffered by community sample, which become the basis for understanding the indigenous manifestation of this construct. The findings of the current study contribute to the existing pool of knowledge since they indicate the role played by culturally sensitive interpersonal, religious, and social experiences in the manifestation of psychological masochism. Moreover, the findings lay a foundation for further development of an indigenous measure of psychological masochism in the future.

**Keywords:**

Psychological Masochism, Qualitative Research, Thematic Analysis, Community Sample

# TRANSNATIONAL THEATER FOR INCLUSIVE CLIMATE ACTION DISCOURSE: DECOLONIZATION OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS FOR A CULTURAL RECLAMATION IN THEATRICAL PERFORMANCE DHARTI MAA

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan is one of the most climate vulnerable countries in the world despite its less than 1% contribution to climate change. The global temperature rise is melting Pakistani glaciers, disturbing the Monsoon rain patterns with devastating floods, heatwaves and water scarcity, smog and air pollution. This climate phenomenon gets compounded with general public's lack of knowledge, resources and agency impacting the nature and scale of each disaster. In this context, Pakistani theatre's potential to become a space to translate scientific and policy debates into human, cultural, and ethical narratives, making climate change tangible for common people is unexplored. Although it fits within eco-theatre or climate theatre globally, in Pakistan it has a distinct postcolonial and neocolonial dimension as climate change is tied to histories of colonial and industrial imperialism, global capitalism and resource extraction. Therefore, this paper analyzes the theatrical performance of the play, *Dharti Maa (2025),* directed by Wahab Shah and performed at Alhamra Arts Council Lahore in January 2025. The paper explores the hybrid aesthetics and multilingualism in the performance for an elaboration of the vital nexus between art and climate action that decolonizes the global narrative. The paper attempts at filling the knowledge gap about the potential of Pakistani theatrical performance as a site of alternate yet inclusive climate change knowledge production. This further suggests enlarging the scope of transnational theatre for the decolonizing of indigenous land-based climate sensible knowledge and its reclamation. The paper employs a qualitative research design with the close analysis of theatrical performance of *Dharti Maa*. The performance serves as the performative text along with the director's interview. The theoretical framework for this paper borrows from Thomas Faist Kasia Lech and Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o for decolonizing aspects of indigeneity for building a climate action narrative.

**Keywords:**

Inclusivity, climate action discourse, Pakistani theater, decolonization, Indigenous Knowledge System, identity reclamation.

# PATHWAY: HOW GENDER SHAPES THE BIG DATA–PERFORMANCE RELATIONSHIP IN PAKISTANI BANKING

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**Abstract:**

The value of big data in banking depends on a bank's capacity to absorb and apply new knowledge, yet whether this mechanism operates alike for male and female managers remains untested. Capability studies in Pakistan's banking sector routinely pool gender-imbalanced samples and report a single set of estimates, implicitly assuming that the data-to-performance chain is gender-neutral. This study tests that assumption. Survey data were collected from 287 managers (181 male, 106 female) in Pakistani conventional and Islamic banks, measuring Big Data Applications (BDA), potential and realised absorptive capacity, financial innovation, and banking performance. Composite-based sequential mediation with bias-corrected bootstrapping was combined with permutation-based multi-group analysis and measurement invariance testing, so that male and female responses were established as comparable before any group difference was interpreted. Men and women differed on no construct mean, and measurement invariance held for nine of ten constructs. In both groups, BDA strengthened potential and realised absorptive capacity, absorptive capacity drove financial innovation, and financial innovation improved performance; the full sequential path was supported for both groups and differed by gender in none of fifteen models. Gender nonetheless reshaped the model. Absorptive capacity converted directly into performance for male managers ($\beta = .445$–$.495$) but not for female managers, for whom BDA retained a strong direct effect on performance. Gender-moderated equations improved model fit in all fifteen tests. The knowledge-absorption mechanism is therefore gender-invariant, while its direct performance pathway is not. Pooled estimates drawn from gender-imbalanced samples describe the majority group rather than the sector, and capability assessments in banking should be reported by group rather than in aggregate.

**Keywords:**

Big Data Applications; Absorptive Capacity; Financial Innovation; Banking Performance; Gender Diversity

# LOYALTY? A STIMULUS–ORGANISM–RESPONSE ANALYSIS OF ENGAGEMENT-MEDIATED BANKING RELATIONSHIPS

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**Abstract:**

Retail banks now serve customers across branches, ATMs, mobile applications, internet banking and social media simultaneously, yet the engagement strategies built on those channels are typically designed as though all customers respond to them in the same way. Grounded in the Stimulus–Organism–Response framework, this study examines how three dimensions of omnichannel service quality – perceived fluidity, quality of channel integration, and assurance/reliability – shape customer loyalty through the mediating mechanisms of cognitive and emotional engagement, and tests whether these relationships differ systematically by customer gender. Survey data were collected from 473 retail customers of Islamic and conventional banks in Pakistan (250 female, 223 male) using a validated 37-item instrument. The structural model was estimated using covariance-based structural equation modelling, and gender variation was tested three ways: independent-samples t-tests on construct means, multi-group structural equation modelling with critical-ratio tests of path differences, and hierarchical moderated regression as a robustness check. Perceived fluidity and quality of integration were the dominant drivers of both engagement dimensions, while assurance/reliability showed no significant direct effect once the two were controlled. Gender emerged as a meaningful boundary condition. For male customers, cognitive ($\beta = .40$, $p = .020$) and emotional engagement ($\beta = .39$, $p = .018$) each predicted loyalty independently, indicating a dual-route, think-and-feel pathway. For female customers, emotional engagement was the only significant route to loyalty ($\beta = 1.41$, $p < .001$), while the cognitive path was non-significant, indicating a single-route, affect-dominated pathway. Gender differences in the emotional ($z = -3.20$, $p = .001$) and cognitive ($z = 2.34$, $p = .019$) engagement-to-loyalty paths were statistically significant, as was the fluidity-to-emotional-engagement path ($z = -2.10$, $p = .036$). Omnichannel banking's engagement-to-loyalty mechanism is therefore not gender-neutral: a uniform digital-engagement strategy risks under-serving one segment.

**Keywords:**

Omnichannel Service Quality; Customer Engagement; Customer Loyalty; Gender Differences; Multi-Group Structural Equation Modelling

# CONSTITUTIONAL EQUALITY VS. CUSTOMARY ERASURE: SECURING TRANSGENDER RIGHTS FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION

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## ABSTRACT:

The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan guarantees fundamental rights to all citizens, yet the transgender community continues to face cultural rejection and systemic disenfranchisement. This paper explores the gap between these constitutional promises and the lived experiences of transgender individuals. While Article 25(1) mandates equal protection under the law and Article 25(2) explicitly prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, customary practices routinely erase these safeguards. Through forced family disownment, denial of lawful inheritance, and severe economic marginalization, transgender individuals are pushed to the fringes of society, fracturing the social fabric required for true national integration.To understand this dichotomy, this paper examines the tension between progressive statutory reform and traditional jurisprudence. It analyzes the Supreme Court's landmark judgment in Dr. Muhammad Aslam Khaki v. S.S.P. (PLD 2013 SC 188), which officially recognized transgender individuals as equal citizens. This foundational precedent catalyzed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2018, which formally banned discrimination and guaranteed statutory property shares. These advancements are then contrasted with the 2023 Federal Shariat Court ruling that struck down the right to self-perceived gender identity, underscoring the ongoing clash between legislative efforts to foster diversity and conservative judicial interpretations.Ultimately, this paper argues that achieving substantive gender equality requires the constitutional definition of "sex" to extend beyond the traditional male-female binary to encompass all gender identities. By strictly enforcing civil rights and actively securing inheritance laws for transgender citizens, the state can dismantle entrenched customary prejudices. Bridging this critical gap between constitutional promises and lived realities is an indispensable step toward building a truly inclusive, equitable, and united Pakistan.

## KEYWORDS:

(Maximum 5)

Article 25; Transgender Rights; Customary Erasure; Inheritance; National Integration

# DIVERSITY WITHIN ISLAM AND INTERFAITH COEXISTENCE IN ARAB SOCIETIES

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**Abstract:**

This paper explores religious diversity and its impact on interfaith coexistence in Arab societies. It examines how the variety of religious traditions, beliefs, practices, and communities has influenced social relations, civic life, and cultural interactions throughout the Arab world. Instead of viewing religious identity as uniform or isolated, the study presents diversity as a dynamic social reality shaped by historical experiences, geographical contexts, and the interactions among different communities. Utilizing historical sources and selected case studies from various regions in the Arab world, this paper investigates forms of coexistence, cooperation, social engagement, and cultural exchange among religious communities. It also addresses the challenges and opportunities tied to religious diversity, emphasizing how communities have navigated differences while engaging in shared social and cultural spaces. The study argues that a thorough understanding of religious diversity provides a more balanced view of interfaith relations in Arab societies. By framing coexistence as a lived experience rather than just a theoretical idea, this paper adds depth to our understanding of pluralism, mutual respect, social harmony, and cultural exchange within the diverse societies of the Arab world.

**Keywords:**

Religious Diversity, Interfaith Coexistence, Religious Pluralism, Arab Societies, Cultural Exchange.

# INDIGENOUS ORAL HISTORY IN THE UNIQUE LIFE OF PAKISTAN'S WAKHI SHEPHERDESSES

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**Abstract:**

The BBC Urdu documentary The Unique Life of Pakistan's Wakhi Shepherdesses (2023) by Farhat Javed, the film's director and producer, focuses on the yearly transhumance of Wakhi women in Shimshal Valley, Pakistan. This study aims to demonstrate how the target documentary establishes the Indigenous oral tradition through its transmedial presentation. The research explores the documentary's narration about Wakhi people's oral history, shamanistic practices and their representation as the storytellers' voices in the modern media landscape. To provide a deeper understanding of the representation of the Wakhi women in the documentary, the article analyses the excerpt from the Blank on the Map (1938) by Eric Shipton, the explorer who studied Wakhi community and civilization. The study reveals dissimilarities in the narration about Wakhi people in 1938 and 2023, as well as the intentions of the authors to present this culture to the general audience. The article argues that the BBC Urdu documentary raises the topic of the Indigenous oral tradition in the digital space to empower Wakhi women. It position their voices within the discourse of decolonization of the Western narratives about Third World countries. By referring to the theories of Walter Mignolo, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and Walter Ong about decolonizing the domain of history, anthropology, and oral storytelling, the article concludes that the transmedial representation of Indigenous narratives serves to preserve cultural heritage and empower the Indigenous voices in the modern digital space.

**Keywords:**

Indigenous Narrative, Oral Storytelling, Decolonial Narratives

# REMEMBERING HARMONY: BAPSI SIDHWA'S ICE-CANDY-MAN AS A MODEL FOR COLLABORATIVE IDENTITY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan's diversity is not just a present-day fact — it has deep roots in history, and literature can help us understand how that diversity has been lived, lost, and can be rebuilt. This paper looks at Bapsi Sidhwa's novel Ice-Candy-Man (also called Cracking India), which is told through the eyes of Lenny, an eight-year-old Parsi girl growing up in Lahore just before the 1947 Partition (the division of British India into India and Pakistan). Through Lenny's eyes, the novel shows a Lahore where Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Parsis lived side-by-side in genuine friendship — before political and religious tensions broke that unity apart.This paper argues that Sidhwa's novel is more than a historical record — it offers a model (an example to learn from) for what collaborative identity-building (people from different backgrounds shaping a shared sense of belonging together) can look like, and it also serves as a warning about how quickly such harmony can collapse when communities are pushed toward communalism (dividing people strictly along religious or ethnic lines) instead of connection.By reading the novel alongside today's conversations about diversity and inclusion in Pakistan, this paper suggests that literature itself can be a collaborative initiative — a shared space where readers from different backgrounds encounter one another's histories and identities. Sidhwa's Lahore, imagined through a child's innocent eye, becomes a case study in what genuine coexistence looked like, and what is lost when it is replaced by division.This paper concludes that revisiting Partition literature like Ice-Candy-Man is not just an academic exercise, but a way of recovering models of cultural harmony that Pakistan's collaborative diversity initiatives can draw on today.

**Keywords:**

Bapsi Sidhwa, Ice-Candy-Man, Partition, Cultural Diversity, Collaborative Identity

# CAPITALIST DERANGEMENT, AND RESISTANCE PATHWAYS IN AMITAV GHOSH'S ECOCRITAL: THE GREAT DERANGEMENT CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE UNTHINKABLE

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**Abstract:**

This research explores the rationale of capitalist derangement in The Great Derangement by Amitav Ghosh, directed on how capitalist modernity engenders ecological amnesia and precludes adequate climate representation. The aim is to critically examine the epistemic and narrative failure that render the ecological crisis culturally invisible, while the objective is to identify resistance pathways instigated through alternative literary forms and imagination. The rationale emerges from the increasing disjunction between material ecological catastrophe and its marginalization in dominant cultural forms. Employing eco-criticism and slow violence by Rob Nixon as interpretive frameworks, the study situates Amitav Ghosh's intervention within global histories of imperialism, extractivism, and neo-liberal expansion. It argues that Ghosh not only diagnoses the ideological impasse of capitalist realist, but also recuperates storytelling as a site of moral and political resistance. In conclusion, the study underscores literature's capacity to reconfigure climate consciousness, with future implications for interdisciplinary, approaches to literary studies dealing with capitalist derangement and eco-critical

**Keywords:**

Great Derangement, Amitav Ghosh, neoliberal, failure of imagination, eco criticism.

# REFRAMING MUSLIM WARRIOR WOMEN IN MEDIEVAL ARABIC EPIC AND CONTEMPORARY MANGA

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**Abstract:**

The Western misrepresentation of Muslim women as oppressed and passive poses a direct threat to gender equality and the recognition of Muslim women's diverse identities globally. This research aims to reframe the Muslim warrior women in contemporary translation of a Medieval Arabic Sira, *The Tale of Princess Fatima, Warrior Woman: The Arabic Epic of Dhat Al-Himma,* and a manga, *Jaadugar: A Witch in Mongolia.* This study brings the English translation of a Medieval Arabic Epic into an interdisciplinary dialogue with a Japanese contemporary manga, both published in 2021, to reimagine historical Muslim women, yet they have received limited scholarly attention. Drawing upon Dr. Leila Ahmed's conceptualization of the "ethical egalitarian voice" and "legalistic patriarchal voice" of Islam in *Women and Gender in Islam (1992)* as a critical framework, this research demonstrates that the Muslim females have always claimed their agency within the ethical Islamic law, while navigating the patriarchal and political voices of their respective socio-historical periods. It is significant because cross-cultural collaboration in storytelling constitutes an act of promoting cultural diversity and inclusive representation. Furthermore, it resists the Western construction of passive Muslim women, and asserts that Muslim identity is not monolithic but diverse, expressed through martial warriorship and intellectual authority. Through these distinct narratives, this study produces historically and culturally forms of female agency that challenges the homogenisation of Muslim women. In doing so, it contributes to the scholarship on cultural diversity and gender representation in Pakistan and beyond, through an innovative collaboration of cultural-popular narratives for contemporary audiences.

**Keywords:**

Muslim Female Agency, Cultural Diversity, Gender Equality, Manga, Arabic Epic

# RECLAIMING IDENTITY AND AGENCY: A FEMINIST READING OF PATRIARCHAL CONSTRAINTS IN FORBIDDEN THOUGHT

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**Abstract:**

This paper aims to conduct a close reading of the poem Forbidden Thought by Ayesha Fatima as a form of personal reflection. The text under analysis represents the story of a young woman named Hunain who wanted to study and to liberate herself from the shackles of patriarchy but due to a slight misunderstanding, she was murdered by her own father. This paper will attempt to conduct a qualitative analysis of the text by focusing on the principal themes and images revealed in the poem. For that purpose, the feminist approach will be implemented, along with the concepts of freedom, authenticity, and existence.In the poem, numerous metaphors reflect the inner turmoil of a woman who struggles to realize her true self. She compares herself to a "captured bird," "prisoner," a "jar," or a "tapestry of existence." All these metaphors highlight the theme of finding one's true self and the meaning of life. The analysis of the poem reveals that the feminine spirit may be confined and controlled by patriarchy through social and familial oppression, but also shows the way of rebelling against such suppression. The poem's message has a universal meaning because it reveals the existential threat to the individual who may lose the sense of self. The woman in the poem becomes the symbol of all oppressed people who struggle to liberate themselves from internal and external shackles and "be themselves" despite the circumstances.In the poem, the poetess's thoughts emphasize the social importance of gender equality and respect for the right of women to choose their own path in life. Forbidden Thought reflects the themes of feminism and the existential understanding of freedom that may be achieved by an individual who dares to be himself/herself. Therefore, the text reveals the social importance of building an inclusive society where gender equality will be respected, and women will have equal rights with men.

**Keywords:**

Gender Equality; Feminist Literary Criticism; Identity; Patriarchy; Female Agency

# RECONSTRUCTING BROKEN HERITAGE THROUGH JAZZ AS COUNTER-LINEAGE: A CULTURAL MEMORY STUDY OF XAM WILSON CARTIÉR'S BE-BOP, RE-BOP

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**Abstract:**

This study explores how Jazz as counter-lineage serves to rebuild fragmented history in *Be-Bop, Re-Bop* by Xam Wilson Cartier. It investigates the functioning of Jazz as sound, rhythm, remembering, narrative form, personal expression, struggle, freedom, emotional storytelling in the disjointed image of family and identity in the novel. The paper examines the negotiations of paternal memory, maternal inheritance, pressure of race, domestic rupture that the narrator makes using Jazz-taunting narrativity. Furthermore, its significance lies in approaching Jazz not merely as a musical reference, but as a cultural and narrative practice through which damaged histories are remembered, revised, and carried forward. With the modern world influenced by the trauma and displacement inherited traced in history with the broken belonging, this reading shows the importance of artistic memory as the means of preserving the identity not necessarily intending the normal sense of belonging. Moreover, the study applies the Cultural Memory Theory and examines how individual and group memories are maintained and modified by repetitious sounds, modes and voices, as well as domineering improvisational patterns of narratives. It states that *Be-Bop, Re-Bop* is a reconstruction of fragmented heritage, introducing Jazz as counter-lineage, as a living form of survival and a structure of inter-generational resilience. Additionally, future research may extend this approach to other sound-based memory narratives in African American women's fiction.

**Keywords:**

Keywords: Be-bop, Re-bop, reconstruction, Jazz, musical, memory, identity

# NEGOTIATING BELONGING ACROSS BORDERS: TRANSCULTURAL CAPITAL IN MADE IN KOREA

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**Abstract:**

The movie *Made in Korea* follows the journey of Shenbagam, or Shenba, a young woman from Kollapalur in Tamil Nadu. She travels to South Korea in search of better opportunities and a new future. Through her experiences, the film offers a valuable case study for understanding how people navigate cultural differences and build connections across borders. This paper argues that transcultural capital is not a fixed possession that individuals carry with them; rather, it is a dynamic process that develops through real encounters, challenges, and relationships. Shenba has cultural understanding through her education, social media, and fascination with Korean culture, yet a sense of belonging comes from lived experiences and interactions with others. To explore this argument, the paper employs Israel Reyes's concept of transcultural capital as its theoretical framework, examining how cultural knowledge and practices are transformed through migration and cross-cultural encounters. It first addresses the relationship between cultural capital and transcultural capital, before tracing Shenba's experiences before migration. The analysis then turns to her struggles and negotiations in Seoul, as well as the new forms of belonging she develops through cross-cultural relationships. By reading *Made in Korea* through the lens of transcultural capital, the paper contributes to the growing field of Transcultural Humanities, highlighting how cinema can reveal the complex ways identities, cultures, and communities are formed in an increasingly interconnected world.

**Keywords:**

Transcultural Capital, Transcultural Humanities, Migration, Belonging.

# NEGOTIATING CULTURAL IDENTITY AND THE LOSS OF INDIGENOUS TRADITIONS IN MUSHARRAF ALI FAROOQI'S BETWEEN CLAY AND DUST

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**Abstract:**

When cultural traditions disappear, what remains of the identities that were shaped by them? When societies are undergoing rapid social and cultural change, the holding on to cultural practices becomes entangled with the holding on to collective identity and collective memory. In this paper, the notion of cultural identity in the process of tradition and change is explored through a literary study of Musharraf Ali Farooqi's Between Clay and Dust. As an attempt to capture the vanishing nature of traditional cultures, the novel was given little attention, while the study focussed on the general issue of crisis of belonging and cultural continuity in post-Partition Pakistan. The paper explores the nature of traditions, social roles, collective memory and individual identities in the space of the akhara and kotha and how these are threatened by shifting social values. Based on the argument of cultural identity and cultural memory the study suggests that Farooqi has not just cultural loss, but 'cultural loss of histories, identities and memories within practices'. The paper concludes that Between Clay and Dust is a literary intervention that accounts for the marginal cultural histories while invoking an analysis of cultural diversity, identity and social change.

**Keywords:**

Musharraf Ali Farooqi, Between Clay and Dust, cultural identity, cultural memory, cultural diversity.

# NEGOTIATING BELONGING IN BAPSI SIDHWA'S THEIR LANGUAGE OF LOVE

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**Abstract**:

Postcolonial cultural theory has challenged the representations of cultural identity which are commonly determined by an individual's geographical belonging, ethnicity and language, by revealing how identity is a fluid concept and is constantly evolving. This paper examines the negotiation of cultural identity and belonging in Bapsi Sidhwa's short-story collection Their Language of Love, using Stuart Hall's theoretical lens introduced in his essay "Cultural Identity and Diaspora" and Homi K. Bhabha's concepts of hybridity and the Third Space presented in his book The Location of Culture. The study analyzes selected stories including "A Gentlemanly War," "Breaking It Up," "Ruth and the Hijackers," "Ruth and the Afghan," "The Trouble-Easers," "Their Language of Love," and "Sehra-bai", focusing the effects of migration on an individual and how religion, culture, and language become facets to be negotiated to formulate a hybrid identity. With close textual analysis the paper argues that Sidhwa does not show cultural diversity simply as different communities living side by side. Instead her stories show identity as something that is always negotiated through meetings between cultures, generations, classes, religions and genders. Characters who cross borders of place and culture often feel both alienation and change, creating hybrid positions that challenge a simple East-West binary. The paper also argues that Sidhwa's fiction challenges a view of Pakistani cultural identity by putting its internal plurality in the foreground. In this way literature becomes a space where differences can be questioned and reimagined. Therefore the study links Sidhwa's view of cultural identity negotiation, with the modern need to build a more pluralistic and inclusive Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Bapsi Sidhwa, cultural identity, Third Space, migration, belonging.

# LANGUAGE AND COMMUNITY COHESION IN GWADAR'S CPEC DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract:**

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has made Gwadar an important area of infrastructure and growth projects since 2015, bringing Chinese staff, Pakistani officials, workers, and local communities towards close means of interaction. These groups do not always communicate in the same language, with Balochi, Urdu, English, and Chinese used in different situations. This brought up the important question: does language influence the ability of local communities in order to access information about CPEC projects and engaged in activities being connected to them? This paper examines the relationship in between language and community involvement of CPEC-related development in Gwadar. Derive from Pierre Bourdieu's notion of Linguistic Capital, it focuses on how the usage and significance linked to different languages may shape interactions between local communities and participants involved in CPEC projects. Rather than addressing language differences only as communication barrier, the paper examines how they may shape the use to project-related information, recognition of job and training possibilities, and communication with project members. The paper argues that involvement in development depends not only on the presence of economic possibilities or infrastructure but also includes the people's ability to understand and communicate within the areas where these opportunities are examined. In terms of Gwadar, where local communities interact with individuals using different languages. Therefore, language can become an important part of how development is understood and viewed. The paper highlights language equality as an often neglected aspect of community participation and supports to broader discussions of cultural range and inclusive progress in Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

CPEC; Gwadar; Linguistic Capital; Community Participation; Inclusive Development.

# BRIDGING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES FOR NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract**:

This research paper scrutinizes Pakistan's indigenous and diverse ethnic groups to understand how their identities and cultural practices can be maintained while promoting national integration. Pakistan is home to different ethnic communities, languages, traditions, and cultural identities. The study focuses on how collaborative initiatives can help these communities understand and respect each other while strengthening a shared sense of national identity.The research is necessary because cultural differences are an important part of Pakistan's identity, but they can sometimes create social distance and misunderstandings among communities. Despite Pakistan's cultural diversity, some indigenous groups face challenges in preserving their traditions and receiving equal recognition. Therefore, collaboration between communities, government institutions, educational organizations, and local groups can help protect cultural diversity and create stronger social connections. The study uses a qualitative methodology based on secondary data. Information is collected from research articles, books, reports, and other relevant academic sources. A short case study of the Kalash community in Chitral is included to understand how an indigenous community preserves its unique traditions, festivals, language, and cultural identity while being part of Pakistani society. This case provides a practical example of the importance of cultural recognition and community participation. The study is significant because it shows that cultural diversity does not have to be a source of division. Collaborative initiatives can promote mutual respect, social harmony, and a stronger national identity. By recognizing and protecting different cultural identities, Pakistan can build a more inclusive and united society where diversity becomes a source of national strength rather than separation.

**Keywords:**

Cultural Diversity National Integration Collaborative Initiatives Cultural Identity
Kalash Community

# CLIMATE-INDUCED DISPLACEMENT AND SOCIAL COHESION: UNDERSTANDING RELATIONS BETWEEN DISPLACED AND HOST COMMUNITIES

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**Abstract:**

Climate-induced displacement is increasingly reshaping communities as people relocate in response to floods, droughts, extreme weather events, and other environmental pressures. While considerable research has examined the experiences and vulnerabilities of displaced populations, comparatively less attention has been given to the communities receiving them and to the social relationships that develop between displaced and host populations. This study explores the factors that influence social cohesion between climate-displaced populations and host communities, with particular attention to social interaction, access to resources, local institutions, and communitybased support mechanisms. The research will adopt a qualitative comparative approach, drawing on existing academic literature, institutional reports, and selected case studies of communities affected by climate-related displacement. It will examine how differences in access to livelihoods, housing, public services, and local resources can shape relations between displaced and host populations, while also considering the role of community networks and inclusive local initiatives in facilitating cooperation and integration. Rather than viewing displacement solely as a humanitarian or environmental issue, the study approaches it as a process that can reshape existing social relationships and community structures. By focusing on host communities alongside displaced populations, the research seeks to address an important dimension of climate-migration scholarship and contribute to broader discussions on inclusion, diversity, and peaceful coexistence. The study aims to identify approaches that can support stronger relationships between displaced and host populations and contribute to the development of more inclusive and socially cohesive communities facing climate-related displacement.

**Keywords:**

Climate-Induced Displacement, Host Communities, Social Cohesion, Migration, Inclusion

# THE KALASHA: PAKISTAN'S SHOWCASE MINORITY

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**Abstract:**

The national individuality discourse of Pakistan invokes the diversity frequently as an indicator of the diversity, despite this the inclusion terms differ sharply conditional upon which society is being depicted. Chitral's Kalasha people are a small non provisional, non-Muslim community with a very diverse language, cultural practice, and religion, occupying an unusual position inside this discourse. The Kalasha people of Chitral are amongst the most symbolically and visually wellknown minorities in the international cultural exchange across border and tourism marketing of Pakistan. Despite this, they largely remain absent from the functional policy dialogs on educational and civic integration. The Kalasha functioning as a showcase minority, a community whose distinguishability serves the diversity account of the state without interpreting it into expressive institutional inclusion is examined in this paper. Drawing on the ethnographical literature on the national curriculum documents, Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation materials, minority rights journalism from officialdoms such as the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, the diversity discourse of Pakistan is argued about in this paper that how it operates on two different records, one externally facing and symbolic, and the other internally facing and substantive. These records seldom interconnect for the nonprovincial smaller minorities. While the provincial heterogeneity (Sindhi, Pashtun, Baloch, and Punjabi) is at the least supposedly referred in the federal policy discussions, the marginality of Kalasha is neither sectarian nor provincial in the traditional sense, and falls consequently outside the stereotypically used frameworks used to debate Pakistan's inclusion.

**Keywords:**

Diversity, Kalasha, Chitral, Pakistan Tourism Development Cooperation and provincial heterogeneity.

# BASANT REVIVAL AND CULTURAL PLURALISM IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Culture is not just passed down from generation to generation, rather it is recalled, debated, and reinvented as time goes on. The celebration of Basant in Pakistan highlights the impact of cultural practices on national identity, sense of belonging, and social cohesion. Today, the celebration of Basant has been intertwined with controversy and restrictions, and has lost its place in the cultural memory of Punjab. Therefore, its comeback in Lahore in 2026 is a chance to rethink the role of regional cultural traditions in the Pakistani national identity.This paper outlines the shift of Basant from a limited and controversial tradition in the late 2000s to the regulated revival of it in Lahore in 2026. It discusses Basant in terms of cultural pluralism with regard to its role in protecting cultural heritage, fostering a sense of belonging, and acknowledging regional identities. The study uses a qualitative and interpretive approach, and examines Basant in the context of cultural memory, identity, pluralism and social cohesion. It also reflects on the festival's ability to re-establish a link between youth and the culture of Punjab and issues relating to regulation, safety, commercialization and the interplay between regional cultural expression and national identity.The paper proposes that being aware of cultural diversity can be a factor in strengthening national integration. Thus, Basant can be seen as a case study of the use of cultural heritage in building a more inclusive Pakistani identity that recognizes regional diversity, and fosters a sense of community. In this light, the revival of Basant can also serve as a reminder of the need for shared cultural heritage in a diverse and evolving society.

**Keywords:**

Basant revival, cultural pluralism, cultural heritage, Punjabi identity, social cohesion

# REIMAGINING MINORITY RIGHTS AND PLURALISM THROUGH THE PARSI EXPERIENCE IN PAKISTAN?

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**Abstract:**

An ancient Zoroastrian micro-minority, the Parsis constitute one of Pakistan's smallest and fastest-shrinking communities. The 2023 census recorded only 2,348 Parsis nationwide, down from roughly 5,000 at independence in 1947. Existing research documents this decline but rarely asks the more pressing question: how does a numerically declining minority sustain cultural identity when demographic recovery is structurally impossible? This paper answers that question through a qualitative analysis, drawing on census data, human rights documentation and journalistic accounts. It argues that demographic recovery is structurally foreclosed for the Parsis through three interlocking mechanisms: 1) theological closure, 2) intermarriage restrictions and 3) sustained emigration. Consequently, the community has responded not with advocacy or assimilation but with institutional withdrawal. Continuity is sustained privately through the *anjuman* system of community trusts, restricted fire temples, closed welfare infrastructure and a communal calendar of observances (such as Navroz and Gahambars) that regularly reassemble a dispersed population. The paper argues that the Parsi case exposes limitations in existing minority rights frameworks, highlighting a model of cultural survival where retention replaces reproduction and insularity functions as an intentional preservation strategy. For contemporary pluralism, this challenges states to move beyond integrationist models and instead guarantee protection without forced integration, recognizing that true diversity requires legally and socially accommodating micro-communities whose survival depends on self-governed isolation rather than state-sponsored mainstreaming.

**Keywords:**

Parsi, Demographic decline, Institutional withdrawal, Cultural survival, Cultural preservation, Contemporary pluralism

# WESTERNIZATION AND THE DECLINE OF LOCAL CULTURES IN PAKISTAN: THE NEED FOR CULTURAL COOPERATION

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan is a culturally diverse nation in which various languages, traditions, values, customs and lifestyles work together in the formation of a unique cultural identity. Globalization has transformed Pakistan by connecting its culture to the wider world. However, globalization has led to the rise of Westernization in Pakistan, contributing significantly to the marginalization of local cultures and weakening Pakistan's unique identity. This study focuses on the impact of westernization on the local culture of Pakistan with emphasis on its impact on language, clothing, food, media, and social practices. It also discusses the potential of intercultural cooperation between Pakistan's diverse cultural communities as a collective effort to preserve cultural diversity and respond to cultural pressures. This study uses a qualitative research method based on secondary data that consisted of academic literature, books, articles and research reports. It uses thematic analysis within the conceptual frameworks of Westernization and Cultural Homogenization to examine patterns of cultural change and their implications for local identities. The results indicated that the influence of Western culture on urban life is becoming more evident, especially in the use of English, western clothing and changes in the media. While these influences do not necessarily eliminate local cultures, they may weaken the visibility and transmission of indigenous traditions. Thus, the study concludes that intercultural cooperation can be a collective response when facing cultural pressures, by preserving local languages, traditions, arts and culture. Such cooperation can help sustain Pakistan’s cultural diversity while allowing its communities to engage with globalization without losing their distinctive identities.

**Keywords:**

Westernization, Cultural Diversity, Cultural Homogenization, Intercultural Cooperation

# CHAI PE BAAT: EVERYDAY NATIONALISM AND CULTURAL BELONGING IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

National identity is often examined through state ideology, religion, political movements, and security narratives. However, nationalism is also experienced and reproduced through the ordinary practices that shape people's everyday lives. This paper examines chai (tea) as an overlooked site of everyday nationalism in Pakistan. Although tea entered South Asia through colonial trade and commercial structures, it was gradually appropriated and transformed into chai, now a deeply embedded ritual of Pakistani social and cultural life. Drawing on the concept of everyday nationalism, the paper explores how routine practices surrounding chai, including hospitality, social gatherings, workplace interactions, popular humor, and cultural representation, contribute to the production and negotiation of cultural belonging. Rather than treating national identity as something constructed exclusively by the state or political elites, the paper focuses on how ordinary cultural practices can create familiarity and shared meanings among diverse communities. In a country marked by significant linguistic, ethnic, regional, and socioeconomic diversity, chai represents a widely recognizable cultural ritual that transcends many of these differences while simultaneously acquiring distinct meanings within different communities and social spaces. The paper also considers moments when this ordinary cultural practice enters explicitly national and political discourse. The popularization of the phrase "fantastic tea" following the 2019 India-Pakistan crisis, for example, highlights how an everyday object can become incorporated into narratives of national pride, humor, and collective identity. The paper argues that chai should not be understood merely as a beverage or cultural habit, but as part of the everyday practices through which Pakistani identity and belonging are experienced, reproduced, and negotiated. By bringing attention to this seemingly ordinary ritual, the study contributes to broader discussions on identity, cultural diversity, and national integration by signifying how shared cultural practices can provide a sense of commonality without eliminating the diversity that exists within the nation.

**Keywords:**

Everyday Nationalism, Chai, Pakistan, National Identity, Cultural Belonging.

# PLAYING FOR THE NATION: THE PAKISTAN SUPER LEAGUE AS A MODEL OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan has been the epitome of ethnic, provincial, linguistic, and religious identities. From Kashmir to Karachi, Urdu to Balti, Pakistan has promoted inclusive national narratives and diversity. Sports, in particular, is an arena for inclusivity, diversity and growth; from hockey to athletics and cricket, Pakistanis have shown a great interest when it comes to supporting their teams. The following argues how the sport is utilized as a tool of cultural diversity. Built on the foundation of Joseph Nye's soft power theory and constructivist approaches to identify formation, this paper examines Pakistan's cricketing institutions as avenues of narrative-building and translating provincial and ethnic plurality into symbols of national belonging. One of the most prominent symbols of inclusivity can be seen in the Pakistan Super League which uses a city-based franchise model; representing every province and urban hub in competition. Thus, the model draws communities from Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa into a shared space that goes across regional and linguistic barriers and anchors the sport's soft power potential in grassroots, diplomacy and economic development. With a qualitative, interpretative, case-study approach, this paper concludes the impact sport-based soft power initiatives, demonstrated by the PSL, have on policy makers. The main essence of sport is therefore used to understand the low-cost model for promoting cultural identity, inclusivity and diversity and help policy makers and civil society members towards more collaborative pathways for an inclusive Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Sports, national identity, cultural diversity, inclusivity, Pakistan Super League

# FROM TA'ARUF TO TA'AWUN: AN ISLAMIC FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATIVE CULTURAL DIVERSITY

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**Abstract:**

The teachings of Islam provide a comprehensive framework for building socially cohesive communities while recognizing and respecting their cultural, ethical, social and religious diversities as it is said in the verse of Holy Quran "O' mankind we have created you from one man and woman and then divided you into groups and tribes so that you recognize one another easily"(49:13). Ta'aruf word used for recognition and mutual understanding provides an important foundation for mutual and peaceful coexistence. The verse also establishes Taqwa rather than social status or ethnicity as the criterion of human excellence. The Sunnah reinforces this perspective of diversity through emphasizing on equality,brotherhood,mercy,compassion and mutual respect and responsibility toward other people and communities.The Prophet(PBUH) emphasized brotherhood and mutual support describing believers as a structure whose parts strengthen another(Sahih Bukhari:Sahih Muslim). In addition Quran 30:22 identifies the diversity of languages and colors as signs of Allah encouraging the principle of plurality of humans however any Asbiyyah(discrimination)on the basis of tribalism and clannishness is condemned by Prophet (PBUH) when He says"Leave it(tribalism and ancestral boasting) for it is rotten.(Sahih Bukhari:3518).This paper argues that identity (Ta'arafu) can function as a bridge rather than a barrier to cultural diversity while Quran encourages Ta'arafu towards Ta'awun(Quran 5:2) to "cooperate in righteousness and piety" highlighting that diversity is not a reason for superiority or discrimination( Quran 49:13).The paper concludes that personal identities can compliment eachother when guided by values of justice,brotherhood and mutual respect.The paper urges that applying Ta'aruf can help our society reduce cultural and religious misunderstandings ,promote responsible cooperation(Ta'awun) and develop stronger relationships among diverse communities.

**Keywords:**

Quran; Sunnah; Ta'aruf; Ta'awun; Asbiyyah;

# FROM RECOGNITION TO INCLUSION: LINGUISTIC RIGHTS IN A MULTILINGUAL PROVINCE

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**Abstract:**

Linguistic and cultural diversity is formally recognized in the Constitution of Pakistan: Article 28 emphasizes the right to preserve and promote languages, scripts and culture, Article 251 acknowledges the right to use and teach provincial languages and successive education policies have promoted the use of mother tongue instruction at the primary level. However, in reality, Urdu and English still prevail in the education system, and teaching in the native tongue is still very much restricted. This is especially a problem in internally multilingual provinces like Punjab, where Punjabi is numerically dominant but significant numbers of people speak Saraiki, Potohari, and other language varieties, with Saraiki's legitimacy as a language not always agreed upon. Previous scholarship has focused on language-policy ideologies, the prevalence of Urdu and English, mother-tongue education, and the policy-practice gap, but has not addressed institutional arrangements of linguistic rights in multilingual provinces. This paper considers the question of how a province, which has more than one language, can implement language rights without establishing a hierarchy among its linguistic communities. It takes a doctrinal and comparative perspective and looks closely at clauses of the Constitution, some education policies, and evidence from Punjab, while also comparing with different juridictions when dealing with the accommodation of linguistic minorities. The paper argues that a single-language model and the same provision for all languages is not sufficient and suggests a Proportionate Multilingual Education Model where provision for other linguistic communities may be made based on population concentration, local demand, linguistic vulnerability and educational feasibility. The model shifts Pakistan from formal recognition to substantive linguistic inclusion, whereby the use of one language does not take precedence over the rights of others to learning and culture.

**Keywords:**

Linguistic rights; multilingual education; mother-tongue instruction; Punjab; constitutional law; Pakistan

# RUMI AND IQBAL: THE ROLE OF ARDENT LOVE IN RESHAPING IDENTITIES AND PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY

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**Abstract**:

A passionate inquiry into the self can effectively lead a thinking mind and a feeling heart to evolve into a being that radiates love and concern for humankind. This paper explores the themes of identity, diversity, and inclusion through the unique lenses provided by Jalal-ud-Din Rumi and Dr. Mohammed Iqbal. The first section deals with the extirpation of unnecessary elements that creep into the deepest recesses of the psyche until they become almost one with our core. It encourages one to refuse being led blindly into serving those ideas that erode the self, freeing one from the chains of determinism and fatalism. The second section examines the journey of being and becoming anew—a stage where Iqbal advocates the assertion of the Self through the full actualization of human potential. This stage incorporates the values of human equality, liberty, and unity into the essence of individual identity. The development of the self is directly translated into a nourishing force of life, which is set in motion by showing reverence for all forms of life and reaches its zenith in creativity and love. Finally, the paper navigates the theme of inclusivity and proposes the teachings of these two thinkers and healers of humanity as a remedy to unite everyone under the overarching embrace of love. Love, in their philosophies, is the beacon of light that helps navigate serious dilemmas of human life and acts as a sincere companion through the thick and thin of existential realities. The fundamental purpose of taking on this endeavor is to contribute toward a peaceful and flourishing Pakistan, where diversity can transform into creative inclusivity and act as a shield against the polarization that has bled the nation over the decades.

**Keywords:**

Self, Identity, Love, Inclusivity

# BEYOND BORDERS: SHARED CULTURE AND THE UNITY OF PUNJABI IDENTITY

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**Abstract:**

Punjabi identity represents a rich and diverse cultural heritage that transcends political, geographical, and national boundaries. The division of Punjab between Pakistan and India has created separate political and administrative identities, yet the people on both sides continue to share a deep cultural connection rooted in a common language, history, traditions, literature, music, folklore, and social values. This paper explores the concept of Punjabi identity beyond territorial borders and examines the cultural elements that contribute to its continuity and unity. Particular attention is given to the Punjabi language as a powerful symbol of collective identity, along with folk traditions, poetry, Sufi heritage, festivals, cuisine, music, dance, and oral narratives that connect Punjabis across national boundaries. The study argues that political borders have transformed the social and political landscape of Punjab but have not completely erased its shared cultural consciousness. The literary and spiritual traditions of figures such as Baba Farid, Guru Nanak, Waris Shah, Bulleh Shah, and other Punjabi poets continue to provide a common cultural heritage for communities on both sides of the border. Furthermore, migration, digital media, cultural exchanges, and Punjabi diaspora communities have created new spaces for maintaining and reshaping Punjabi identity in the contemporary era. Using a qualitative and historical-cultural approach, this study highlights how shared cultural practices foster a sense of belonging and collective memory. It concludes that Punjabi identity is not confined to a political territory; rather, it is a dynamic cultural identity capable of crossing borders and preserving connections among diverse Punjabi communities.

**Keywords:**

Punjabi Identity, Shared Culture, Cultural Heritage, Punjabi Language, Punjab

# INCLUSIVE GENDER NARRATIVES IN PAKISTANI TELEVISION AND SOUTH ASIAN CULTURAL MEMORY

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**Abstract:**

In the South Asian context, stories are not limited to geographical borders and binaries, they rather contribute to a shared cultural memory. Television dramas in Pakistan serve as an impetus in South Asia, reaching audiences across culture, regions, classes, and multiple diasporic communities. Moreover, beyond a cultural memory, dramas are a strong and influential way of storytelling that transforms ideas such as those of 'gender, womanhood, family, morality and social belonging. The research intends to unfold the portrayal of women in Pakistani dramas over the course time and how the narratives of portrayal have witnessed a perpetual shift from 1980s to date. The research also unfolds that how rural-urban perceptions, religiosity, and societal perceptions about women complicate these portrayals and create narratives for the larger audiences. Therefore, an evolving portrayal of women in Pakistani dramas is traced through this research, such as classic pieces 'Dhoop Kinaray, and 'Tanhaiyan' during the 1980's portrayed women acquiring modern education and working within socially 'permissible' bounds. Whereas dramas like 'Hamsafar' and 'Zindagi Gulzar' depicted the story of women's resilience, social mobility, and enduring romanticism. However, recent dramas such as such as Sinf e Ahan and kuch Ankahi portray women taking agency over almost all professions, questioning social taboos and eventually breaking barriers. Through a comparative textual analysis, supported by public perception and existing literature, the research identifies that, despite female characters apparently looking more assertive and self aware, but narrative continue to circle back to marriage and raising a family, moral conformity, such as Kafeel, Main Manto Nahin Houn, and Pamaal. Hence, the paper concludes on television's dual role as both a medium of cultural intersection of gender roles as well as custodian of enduring societal aspirations. Therefore, it can be summarized that Pakistani television is not a mere source of entertainment, but a powerful way of shaping gender consciousness and adding to contemporary South Asia's cultural memory.

**Keywords:**

Inclusion, Gender, Television, South Asia

# THE EVOLUTION OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL FASHION IN PAKISTAN SINCE INDEPENDENCE (1947-2026)

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**Abstract**:

This paper explores the trajectory of the political fashion of women in Pakistan since the independence in 1947 and how the negotiation of gendered representation, state ideology and political legitimacy have been secured by clothes. The study employs a qualitative, historical approach using discourse and visual analysis. It highlights five phases: 1947–1977, the era of the gharara and elite saris; 1977–1988, the time of the state's Islamisation; 1988–1999, the era of a "tailored political uniform" for women leaders; 1999–2018, when quotas, greater visibility and image politics in the media were defining women's political fashion choices; 2018–present, when women leaders are being challenged by moral populism, digital scrutiny and new fashion stories. The analysis indicates that Pakistan's women's political visibility and legitimacy is a double bind, it allows for visibility and legitimacy within the acceptable limits of the culture while simultaneously diverting the attention away from the politics towards appearance, stereotypes and a higher degree of political scrutiny. Early elite choices showed cosmopolitan modernity, and expressed the class exclusivity of the visual language of respectability; Islamisation-era choices of dresses introduced the visual of religious respectability but reduced acceptable variable femininities; and digital politics of the present increases agency and vulnerability. The media consistently priorities women's fashion choices over policy efforts, reinforcing gendered hierarchies. The interdisciplinary consideration of fashion history and political science in this paper also reveals the power of sartoriality as an important component of power, representation and agency in relation to gender and politics in South Asia. The results highlight the importance of future studies by conducting primary interviews with women politicians, media producers and audiences to gain a deeper insight into the strategic use and perception of fashion in the changing political scenario in Pakistan.

**Keywords**:

Sartoriality, Gendered Representation, Political Legitimacy, Political Visibility, Gendered Hierarchies

# INDIGENOUS IDENTITY AND POLITICAL MARGINALIZATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE KALASH COMMUNITY'S STRUGGLE FOR IDENTITY IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan has a high degree of ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity, but its native population is one of the least protected. Indigenous people of the Dardic community Kalash in Chitral are formally recognized as indigenous, but other tribes and indigenous communities in Pakistan are not recognized. The researcher's own experience of visiting the Kalash Valley and observing the language, clothing, traditions, and funerary customs showed a great difference in that the culture was evident and visible enough to attract sustained tourism but largely non-existent in formal political and legislative discourse. The cultural adaptation described in local accounts encountered during this visit confirmed the need to consider structural and social aspects of this marginalization. This paper examines if the 2025 draft Kalash Marriage Bill in KP and the ongoing state policies are substantive or symbolic recognitions of Kalash identity along with the history of political representation, census inclusion, and access to resources of Kalash.The research is of a qualitative type with an exploratory design with document and policy analysis techniques. Secondary sources of data were used, such as government and legislative documents, National Commission on Human Rights reports, peer-reviewed literature, and credible journalistic reporting. The sources were drawn from a purposive sample of those that cover the issues of political representation, census policy, and legislative developments from 2017 to 2025. The results show that inclusion of Kalash in the political sphere is still limited: one reserved provincial seat in the provincial assembly, pending bill, and yet to be addressed problems related to census undercounting, land vulnerability, and infrastructural problems. The study calls for accurate representation in the census, political representation based on the number of people in each constituency and protection for land, education, and cultural heritage.

**Keywords:**

Kalash community, indigenous identity, political marginalization, minority rights, Pakistan

# COLONIALISM AND THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE INDIAN SUBCONTINIENT: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

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**Abstract:**

The paper examines the spread and development of Christianity in the subcontinent in the broader context of the European colonialism. It emphasizes the British colonial era and examines the intertwining of colonial expansion, Christian missionary work and the religious and social changes that occurred throughout South Asia. It describes the work of Christian missioners and institutions in education, healthcare, printing, social welfare and evangelistic activity and the political and institutional environment in which they operated. The paper does not present Christianity as a simple imposition on the colonies, but rather the various ways local communities encountered, responded to and shaped Christianity. Indigenous responses to the process of conversion included conversion, resistance, adaptation, intellectual engagement and the assimilation of Christianity into local social and cultural life. The development of educational and social institutions of Christianity and their impact on the communities of the subcontinent; is also taken into the study. Special focus is given to the developments in the areas that are now part of the State of Pakistan, where the Christian community set up schools, hospitals, churches etc, and had a major impact on the social and education landscape. The paper will seek to be balanced both in its analysis of the context of Christianity settlement and the part played by the local Christian communities. It argues that the history of Christianity in the Indian subcontinent is a complex product of colonial structures, missionary efforts and indigenous agency with larger religious and social transformation processes.

**Keywords:**

Colonialism, Christianity, Indian-subcontinent, Social and Cultural transformation.

# A CURRICULUM IN CRISIS: PERPETUAL CLICHÉS OF PAKISTAN'S IDENTITY AND IDEOLOGY

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**Abstract:**

A recurring theme throughout all textbooks and across all Educational Boards is the ideology and identity of Pakistan. The Pakistan Studies textbooks, for instance, open with a dedicated chapter on Pakistan's ideology and conclude typically with a brief chapter on Pakistan's identity. The representation of Pakistan's ideology and identity, however, is extremely repetitive as all textbooks fail to offer any original or critical insight. There is no logical progression or advancement of the debate as each progressing year advances nearly the same repetitive arguments, devoid of any fresh uptake. The textbooks appear to operate under the assumption that ideology and identity are rigid, static and uncompromising. Although ideology and identity are typically associated with religion, the manner in which this association is made however is often confusing, inflated and overstated. This paper will set out to examine the longstanding and somewhat perpetual clichés of Pakistan's identity and ideology by conducting a thorough content analysis of the textbooks being taught in the Pakistani schools and colleges. In the process of doing so, the paper will also offer a more logical understanding of identity and ideology that is more organic and empathetic.

**Keywords:**

Identity, Ideology, Pakistan, Curriculum, Textbooks.

# GHAKKER WOVEN: DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT, CULTURAL PRESERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS FOR TRADITIONAL RUG-WEAVING COMMUNITIES

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**Abstract:**

Ghakker, a small town between Gujranwala and Wazirabad in Punjab in Pakistan is famous because of its traditional handwoven darris. Typically featuring geometric design, bright colours, and locally-learned weaving skills, these rugs are significant manifestations of Pakistani textile culture and they generate revenue to a significant portion of the local population. Although it has cultural and economic value, the craft is facing a growing threat due to reduced access to the market, lack of proper branding, low digital literacy, reliance on intermediaries, and loss of interest among the younger generations. This is a qualitative-dominant research that explores social, cultural and economic issues faced by the rug-weaving community in Ghakker. The data collection was carried out using semi-structured interviews with the families and traders of artisans and intermediaries, direct observations at home based weaving facilities and a small survey of consumers. The results indicate a well-developed craft society supported by pride and collective memory and intergenerational knowledge, but structurally out of touch with modern markets and not able to fairly obtain economic value on its labour. To counter this, the paper suggests a strategic framework that is integrated, named. “Ghakker Woven—Crafted with Heritage.” The framework is a mix of the creation of a shared brand identity, a digitally available micro-marketplace via Instagram and WhatsApp, and city pop-up exhibitions in large cities. These are all interrelated interventions intended to enhance the digital literacy of artisans, minimize middleman usage, create provenance of products, build consumer trust by telling stories and develop direct relationships between makers and customers. The model suggested will show how culturally responsive design, digital technologies that are accessible, and community-based entrepreneurship can help save the threatened textile culture and ensure fairer and more sustainable livelihoods. The initiative facilitates the preservation of cultural continuity, inclusive economic involvement and sustainable community growth without undermining the authenticity of Ghakker heritag handwoven, since artisans, especially women and younger family members will be empowered to participate participate in the digital economy.

**Keywords:**

Ghakker Darris, Digital Empowerment, Artisan Livelihoods, Cultural Heritage, Sustainable Development

# PAKISTANI CULTURAL AND CIVILIZATIONAL TRENDS IN THE POETRY OF SALEEM KAUSAR

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**Abstract:**

Saleem Kausar stands out as one of the most distinguished voices in contemporary Urdu ghazal. While his roots remain firmly planted in tradition,he is equally celebrated for pioneering modernist and post modernist sensibilities.Well attuned to the political and social realities of his era,he gave vibrant expression to these dynamic times through his poetic vision.His affection for Pakistan is far more than an abstract ideal,it comes alive through the very essence of its land,its people,shared history,relationships, language,cultural values and collective spirit.In his verse,Pakistani identity isn't just an afterthought or a superficial layer but an authentically woven reality. This becomes especially clear in his reflections on the closing decades of the 20th century,a time shaped by shifting political tides,ideological divides,instability and deep socio cultural fractures.Due to his deep love and attachment to Pakistani culture and civilization, Saleem Kausar stands out as a distinguished poet. Despite avoiding thematic conventionality and sensationalism,he remains a beloved poet of his era, and his popularity continues to grow with time.

**Keywords:**

Pakistani civilization and culture, cultural identity, national consciousness, collective consciousness, Homeland and Tradition.

# COLLABORATIVE PATHWAYS TOWARD INCLUSIVE CULTURAL IDENTITIES

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**Abstract:**

Nowadays, people face the issue of preserving identity and promoting cultural diversity. The growing awareness of the impact of modernization, immigration, and other processes on less influential populations increases the need for finding new ways of engagement. The idea of collaboration between different parties, including governments, educational institutions, societies, and local communities, helps address the matter. It allows representing the interests of more than one party and promoting tolerance and inclusiveness. Identity is something that each person or a group of people shares, converses, and engages in. Thus, various actions, such as collaborative programs, exchange initiatives, educational activities, and governmental policies, help preserve a unique cultural heritage and promote diversity by engaging people in dialogue. In this manner, the initiative helps different parties actively participate in an action that appreciates differences and promotes unity.Collaboration initiatives, aimed at increasing the level of inclusiveness and engagement, help societies and communities address the issue of diversity. Identity and cultural diversity are crucial for a society as they promote peace, prosperity, and other benefits. The article discusses the topic of identity and diversity and collaboration initiatives intended for promoting representativeness and inclusiveness and aimed at increasing engagement levels. The initiatives help different parties participate actively in celebrating and sharing their diversity and strengthen the unity of the whole community. Identity and diversity are crucial for a society, and different initiatives help engage people in creating a thriving and inclusive community.

**Keywords:**

Culture, Diversity, Identity, Unity, Progress.

# A 27 YEARS LONG STRUGGLE FOR IDENTITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING THROUGH PROMOTING & CELEBRATING LINGUISTIC & CULTURAL DIVERSITY- A CASE STUDY FROM INDUS KOHISTAN, KPK, PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan in general and its Northern part in particular is linguistically & culturally diverse. About 70 linguistic and ethnic groups having diverse cultural background are living in Pakistan and when it comes to its Northern part, some 27 such linguistic and cultural groups are indigenous to this area. This diversity has never been celebrated for unity at the state level over the past 79 years and has always been considered as a threat for the unity. Such a diversity has never been taken as a tool to create unity out of it at national level and identity based and inclusive development plans have never been initiated at state levels and hence a state of deprivation among different groups nurtured over the past 79 years which in turn has compelled different groups to think about their own identities and belonging in a sustainable manner. This is the scenario developed on the national front in the life of the country but my story leading this movement in the region in particular and in Pakistan general is spread over a period of 27 years. It was started by knowing about myself as a member of an indigenous group called Kohistani different from the major ethnic and linguistic group, speaking a different language from that of the major group (Pashtoon) living in the province. Furthermore, this belonging was sensed during my news bulletin translation from national language into my mother tongue which was not an established written language rather was merely a speech. This was the occasion from where I had started my journey towards identity, inclusion and belonging and it has taken about 27 years of my life but I am proud of my achievements. This identity and self-knowing based personal internal movement have always provided me a zeal, motivation, and guidance to move up on to the ladder for a complete a cause-oriented mission. My feelings about my language, my identity and my community's marginalization, had inculcated a spirit in me which resulted in a sustainable result-oriented struggle spread over a period of 27 years. Hence, this paper will shed a light on this journey of identity-based result-oriented struggle on documentation and development of my mother tongue; Indus Kohistani through research and mother tongue based multilingual education in a sustainable manner.

**Keywords:**

(Diversity, Identity, Inclusion, Belonging, Unity

# A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CHILD-LIKE ART OF PAUL KLEE AND QUDDUS MIRZA

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**Abstract:**

This study explores the concept of Child-like art in the artworks Paul Klee Qudus Mirza through a comparative lens and contextual framework. Child-like imagery in modern and contemporary art is a representation of conscious departure from the academic realism towards the emphasis on the spontaneity, imagination, symbolic simplification and emotional expression. Paul Klee who was associated with the early modern art practices and Bauhaus pedagogy considered children's drawing a pure form of art, it can be a model of pure creativity and artistic truth. By using simplified forms, playful lines, Abstract symbolism to express their emotion, inner conscious and imagination. In contrast Qudus Mirza adopts this art style and naïve language through distorted figures and simplified imagery to critically engaging it with socio political context, identity, violence in Pakistani society. The study argues that although both artists were employing childlike aesthetics their intentions differ significantly Paul Klee uses it as a modernist exploration of sub conscious creativity and spiritual Abstraction, Whereas Qudus Mirza transforms it into a social political critique. The methodology is based on the comparative visual analysis and contextual art historical interpretation. The expected objectives are to analyze the childlike visual language contexts, its artistic and ideological functions, and explore the relationship with the modern and contemporary art discourse. This study closely relates to the manifesto of Surrealism, which emphasized on the dreams, imagination, unconscious mind source as an artistic creativity. It argues the modern society suppresses human imagination through logical and social rules. The manifesto encouraged the artist the explore the spontaneity, imagination and subconscious expression which closely related to the child-like artistic language and simplicity.

**Keywords:**

Child-like art, Symbolism, Naïve imagery, Imaginative expression, Socio-political.

# ENDURANCE IN RUPTURE: THEORIZING INTERRUPTED BELONGING IN GAYATRI SARKAR'S THE WILDFLOWER OF ASSAM (2025)

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**Abstract:**

Belonging, as a phenomenon, is frequently imagined as a synonym for association and continuity: continuity of physical presence, geography, connections, and possession. But what happens to belonging when this continuity breaks? Does it vanish altogether with a disruption? This paper theorises "interrupted belonging" as a framework for reading Gayatri Sarkar's The Wildflower of Assam (2025), proposing that rupture does not automatically end belonging. Instead, connections tend to survive division, non-arrival, absence, and loss. The Wildflower of Assam (2025) explores belonging not as a fixed condition dependent on physical presence and proximity, but as a continued process that can endure absence and departure.The reading centres around a distinction between interruption and termination. On the surface, the novel features separation quite frequently; people get separated from other people, from their favourite places, and from the objects they admire. But this separation does not completely split the relations that connect them. A particularly significant example is the green scarf that never reaches the protagonist, Shabana. Despite its constant absence, the scarf's emotional connection to its presumed receiver persists. Shabana's death aggravates this contradiction; she ceases to exist, but continues to inhabit memories, relationships, and narratives. In The Wildflower of Assam, letters, stories, objects, memories, rivers, and chai (tea) become forms of transmission through which attachments travel across spatial, temporal, generational, and cultural borders. The novel's temporally moving storyline performs this condition, requiring readers to reimagine relations across gaps and discontinuities. The paper offers a relational interpretation of cultural identity, diversity, and inclusivity by separating interruption from termination. "Interrupted belonging", as a conceptual framework, highlights forms of attachment that are disrupted, dispersed, and continuously reimagined rather than being dependent on unbroken connections to places, people, or community. The Wildflower of Assam (2025), in this way, suggests that cultural diversity is not something that is sustained merely through the coexistence of diverse identities, but through the transmission of memories, implications, and connections across all sorts of margins. In doing so, the novel opens possibilities for a more inclusive understanding of belonging that is qualified to accommodate difference, displacement, and discontinuity without treating them as the end of cultural connection.

**Keywords:**

Interrupted Belonging, Cultural Identity, Cultural Diversity, Inclusion, Transmission

# DIGITAL BRIDGES OF HARMONY: LEVERAGING TECHNOLOGY TO CULTIVATE INTERFAITH UNDERSTANDING AND SHARED HUMAN VALUES IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan's profound religious, cultural, and linguistic diversity constitutes both a foundational strength and a persistent challenge for social cohesion. In an era of rapid digital transformation, technology emerges as a powerful yet contested instrument for advancing interfaith harmony and reinforcing the shared human values of empathy, compassion, justice, and mutual respect. This article critically examines how digital platforms, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and online media can be strategically harnessed to bridge divides among Muslim, Christian, Hindu, Sikh, and other communities, while acknowledging the risks of algorithmic polarization and online hate. Drawing on intergroup contact theory and contemporary peacebuilding frameworks, the analysis demonstrates that technology can expand meaningful encounters beyond physical constraints. Initiatives such as virtual-reality interfaith simulations in Lahore, AI-powered tools for detecting religiously motivated disinformation, digital storytelling projects that amplify minority voices, and social-media campaigns promoting localized narratives of coexistence illustrate tangible pathways toward empathy and dialogue. Concurrently, rising internet and mobile penetration creates unprecedented scale for disseminating messages of shared humanity and countering divisive content. Empirical insights further indicate that digital engagement correlates positively with religious tolerance, particularly when mediated by education and digital literacy. Yet technology remains double-edged. The proliferation of hate speech and disinformation on digital platforms has been linked to real-world tensions, underscoring the urgent need for ethical AI moderation, inclusive digital design, and robust policy frameworks that prioritize human dignity over sensationalism. The article argues that effective leverage of technology requires multi-stakeholder collaboration among policymakers, faith leaders, educators, technologists, and youth to embed universal design principles, amplify positive interfaith narratives, and cultivate digital citizenship grounded in shared values. By positioning technology as a deliberate catalyst rather than a neutral tool, this study contributes to the discourse on building peaceful and inclusive societies. It offers academically rigorous insights and practical recommendations for transforming Pakistan's digital landscape into a space of genuine pluralism, thereby advancing the broader vision of social harmony and resilient national integration.

**Keywords:**

Interfaith harmony; digital technology; shared human values; artificial intelligence; social media peacebuilding

# THE VISIBILITY-ATTITUDE GAP: DIGITAL ACCESS AND MOB VIOLENCE IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

This paper examines a critical question for leveraging technology to strengthen shared human values: when digital access expands, does it change attitudes toward violence or merely change how violence is reported and seen? Existing research often conflates visibility with attitude change. This paper introduces the Visibility-Attitude Gap model to separate two distinct effects. The reporting effect refers to the rise in violent content filmed, shared and viewed as digital access spreads. The attitude effect refers to an actual shift in societal acceptance of violence. The model is tested using the 2010 Sialkot mob lynching, where two brothers wrongly suspected of robbery were beaten to death while bystanders filmed on early camera phones; the footage was later aired by television broadcasters. This case illustrates how digital tools can turn bystanders into broadcasters without demonstrating that underlying crowd values have shifted. The study combines Pakistan-focused research on vigilantism and desensitization with content analysis of incident data from the Pak Institute for Peace Studies, comparing how mob violence was reported before and after the spread of digital access. The evidence suggests that increased digital access primarily expands what gets seen and shared rather than reshaping core values, though repeated exposure may gradually lower emotional response. For policymakers and technology platforms seeking to foster shared human values, this distinction is vital. Measures such as Pakistan's Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (2016) often assume that removing violent content will change attitudes, yet deeper cultural roots may remain untouched. Understanding this gap is essential for designing technology interventions that genuinely promote social cohesion rather than merely managing visibility.

**Keywords:**

Digital Access; Mob Violence; Visibility-Attitude Gap; Desensitization; Pakistan

# DIGITAL BRIDGES, NOT DIVIDES: USING TECHNOLOGY TO PROMOTE INTERFAITH HARMONY AND SOCIAL COHESION IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

In the era of ever-increasing globalization, digital technology has become one of the most important elements influencing people's attitudes, identities, and relations. In the case of Pakistan, which is a country where diverse religious communities live in one state, digital technology poses certain risks of fostering social conflict and tensions between different ethnicities and religions but, at the same time, opens up a range of possibilities to create an environment for interfaith dialogue and understanding. This paper focuses on the transformation of digital technology in order to make it contribute to interfaith peace building. This analyzes how such elements of digital technology as social media, digital education, digital interfaith dialogue, and youth led digital initiatives can be used in the promotion of mutual understanding between various religious communities. The paper highlights the fact that besides being just means of communication, digital technology may become an important instrument of peace building, human security, and public diplomacy. Digital technology can create inclusive spaces in which people of different religious communities interact, deconstruct stereotypes, exchange perspectives and realize their common humanity.The study proposes a framework centred on digital literacy, responsible digital engagement, interfaith dialogue, and youth participation**.** It concludes that, with appropriate support from educational institutions, civil society, policymakers, and technology platforms, digital spaces can help transform religious diversity from a potential source of social tension into an opportunity for greater understanding and national cohesion. Ultimately, it highlights technology as a strategic resource for building a more peaceful, inclusive, and socially cohesive Pakistan**.**

**Keywords:**

Digital Technology, Interfaith Harmony, Social Cohesion, Peacebuilding, Human Security, Public Diplomacy.

# INTERFAITH HARMONY IN MODERN TECHNOLOGICAL ERA: AN ASSESSMENT OF DIGITAL RISKS IN PROMOTING TOLERANCE IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

This research focuses on how digital media could be leveraged to facilitate inter-faith harmony in Pakistan to further investigate online interactions between different religious groups . Furthermore, digital spaces in Pakistan linked to the increased prevalence of xenophobia, sectarian divide and religious intolerant behavior, media is now being used as a tool to unite these religious minorities to promote interfaith harmony and to encourage religious tolerance. Without a systematic assessment of these digital risks Pakistan's ministry of religious affairs and inter faith harmony faces resistance in its legal and policy frameworks to strengthen harmony. This paper focuses on qualitative research by critically examining primary and secondary literature such as case studies, policy frameworks from the ministry of interfaith harmony and other analytic research articles. The findings reveal that digital risks manifest in various forms through technology including but not limited to using media monitoring cells to detect and remove objectionable content from the cyberspace and censoring hate speech while promoting peaceful coexistence and positive digital interaction between people of different religious backgrounds. The assessment of this analysis demonstrate that in order to minimize such threats, integration of empathetic narratives in framing religious discourse will need to be employed to humanize different religious figures, enforcement of laws are to be executed and more emphasis should be placed on eradicating algorithmic bias in digital content and halting the widespread of online rumors.

**Keywords:**

Xenophobia, digital media, interfaith harmony, algorithmic bias

# RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE AND DIGITAL MEDIA IN PAKISTAN: AN ANALYSIS OF CONTRIBUTING FACTORS AND COUNTER-NARRATIVE APPROACHES

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**Abstract:**

Religious intolerance represents a complex phenomenon that affects social harmony in Pakistan. This challenge stems from various factors including history, social dynamics, education, institutional structures, psychological aspects and communication patterns. The fast paced spread of digital media has added new dimensions to this issue by enabling the quick dissemination of information, opinions and viewpoints related to religious identity and interactions between different communities through online spaces. While digital media can help spread and reinforce harmful divisions, it also provides opportunities for constructive communication, improved digital skills, and open discussions. This study tries to explore the link between religious intolerance and digital media in Pakistan, focusing on the factors that contribute to the formation, spread, and reinforcement of intolerant views in online environments. Conceptually Social Identity Theory provides the main framework for understanding how perceptions of group identity, categorization of people into in-groups and out-groups and interactions between different religious communities' shape attitudes. The quantitative part of the research aims to identify links between attitudes toward religious diversity, levels of digital literacy, exposure to social media, and communication between different communities. In visibly accessible digital content, the qualitative analysis focuses on identifying recurring themes, communication styles, and the presence of both positive and negative messages. Contextual insights are gathered through semi-structured interviews with academics and media professionals. The study examines counter-narrative approaches that can promote positive online interactions and social unity, based on a conceptual framework and empirical findings. Key elements include digital literacy, evidence-based communication, positive storytelling, intergroup dialogue and engagement through credible and reliable sources. The research considers digital media as a tool for fostering constructive participation and greater understanding, rather than solely viewing it as a factor that divides society.

**Keywords:**

Religious Intolerance, Digital Media, Social Identity Theory, Counter narrative approaches.

# THE ROLE OF AI AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN FOSTERING INTERFAITH HARMONY AND POSITIVE ATTITUDES

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**Abstract:**

In the contemporary digital age, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital technologies have transformed communication and information sharing among diverse religious and cultural communities. This paper examines the role of these technologies in promoting interfaith harmony and fostering positive attitudes among individuals and communities. It explores how AI-powered tools, social media, machine translation, and digital storytelling can facilitate interfaith dialogue and reduce linguistic and cultural barriers. These technologies can also highlight shared human values and provide opportunities for collaborative educational and social initiatives. The paper argues that technology is neither inherently positive nor negative. Rather, its impact depends on ethical use, human oversight, responsible digital practices, and respect for religious and cultural diversity.At the same time, the study addresses major challenges associated with AI and digital platforms. These include hate speech, misinformation, religious stereotyping, algorithmic bias, deepfakes, and the misrepresentation of religious traditions. It emphasizes the importance of digital literacy, religious literacy, critical thinking, and fact-checking in countering these challenges and promoting responsible engagement with digital content.With reference to Pakistan, the paper proposes digital interfaith platforms, Urdu-based religious resources, AI-supported religious literacy tools, and youth-oriented digital peace initiatives. These approaches can support greater understanding and constructive engagement among diverse religious and cultural communities. The paper concludes that the responsible, inclusive, and human-centred use of AI can transform digital spaces into platforms for dialogue, empathy, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence. In this context, ethical and informed use of digital technologies can contribute to stronger interfaith understanding and more positive attitudes across communities.

**Keywords:**

Artificial Intelligence (AI); Interfaith Harmony; Digital Technologies; Religious Literacy; Digital Peace.

# ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN INTERFAITH HARMONY

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**Abstract:**

Technology has extremely changed this world. We are living in a global village. All the advancements are based on new research, science, and technology. It is benefiting humankind in the best way possible. It has both advantages and disadvantages, but its benefits are hard to ignore. It has become an important part of our everyday life. It can help people for study, medical, online meetings and social media and also help people to learn about different religions and cultures. They can also provide digital platforms to people who can share their ideas, learn about different religions, and understand each other in a better way. It is an important tool to make people aware of how important humanity is, unity, and interfaith harmony. Respecting different beliefs and accepting diversity is the key to a successful future.This study explores how technology can promote interfaith harmony and shared human values, and it can also encourage people to understand and respect different religions and communities.

**Keywords:**

Technology, Interfaith Harmony, Digital Communication, Mutual Understanding, Peaceful Coexistence, Social Media.

# ELEMENTS OF IDENTITY AND PROMOTION OF CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN THE SHORT STORIES OF AHMAD NADEEM QASMI

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**Abstract:**

Ahmad Nadeem Qasmi, one of the most prominent figures in Urdu literature, skillfully integrates themes of identity and cultural diversity within his short stories. His narratives often reflect the socio-political realities of Pakistan, portraying characters from diverse ethnic, linguistic, and social backgrounds. Through vivid storytelling and humanistic concerns, Qasmi highlights the struggles of marginalized communities while simultaneously emphasizing the shared values that bind society together. His works serve as a literary mirror, capturing the complexities of identity formation in a multicultural context.By weaving together rural and urban experiences, Qasmi's fiction promotes inclusivity and mutual respect among different cultural groups. His stories not only preserve indigenous traditions and folk elements but also advocate for progressive social change, thereby fostering cultural harmony. The recurring motifs of empathy, coexistence, and resilience in his writings underline the importance of collective identity in a diverse society. This paper argues that Qasmi's short stories are not merely artistic expressions but also cultural interventions that strengthen national cohesion through the celebration of diversity.

**Keywords:**

Culture, Diversity, Identity, Short Stories, Traditions.

# TEACHING EMPATHY TO STUDENTS AGED 10-12 YEARS THROUGH STORYTELLING: AN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY

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**Abstract:**

Empathy plays an important role in children's social and emotional development, yet opportunities to intentionally develop empathy within primary classrooms remain limited. This study explored the effectiveness of storytelling, combined with creative and participatory activities, in fostering empathy among students aged 10-12 years. A qualitative action research design was employed with 22 primary school students who participated in four structured sessions conducted over a period of four weeks. Each session incorporated storytelling alongside activities such as role-play, participatory drawing, and narrative expression, allowing students to engage with characters' emotions and perspectives. Quantitative data were collected through pre- and post-intervention empathy assessments and analysed using a paired-samples t-test, while students' responses and activities were examined through thematic analysis. The findings demonstrated a statistically significant increase in students' empathy scores following the intervention ($p < .001$), with a large effect size (Cohen's $d = 6.07$; Hedges' $g = 5.96$). Qualitative findings further indicated increased emotional awareness, perspective-taking, and students' ability to connect personally with the experiences presented in the stories. The findings suggest that storytelling, when integrated with creative and participatory approaches, can provide an engaging means of supporting empathy development in primary education. By offering varied and participatory ways for children to engage with emotions and perspectives, such approaches may also contribute to more inclusive classroom practices that recognise diverse ways of learning and expressing understanding. The study therefore highlights the potential of narrative-based and creative approaches as practical components of social-emotional learning and inclusive pedagogy.

**Keywords:**

Empathy, Storytelling, Creative Approaches, Action Research, Primary Education

# EXPLORING ASSESSMENT EXPERIENCES AND ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT PREFERENCES AMONG BLIND UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS THROUGH A UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING (UDL) LENS

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**Abstract:**

Assessment at undergraduate level is still not inclusive for blind learners, with the necessity of continuing to use sighted scribes and conventional assessment methods. Although accessibility barriers and accommodations have been reported in the past in Pakistan, limited research has been carried out on blind students' self-reported experiences and preferences for alternative means of demonstrating learning. This qualitative research study based on the theoretical underpinnings of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) aimed to explore the assessment experiences and alternative assessment preferences of ten legally blind undergraduate students who were enrolled at a private women's university. Using a purposive sampling strategy, the data was collected through the use of semi-structured interviews. The data analysis was carried out through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that blind students had problems with regular assessment procedures, and had difficulties in how they could present their learning. Participants showed a preference towards more flexibility and choice in the ways in which they could be assessed, particularly to be able to learn and gain knowledge in a more independent way. Conventional, scribe-based assessment limited students' learning opportunities to showcase their learning in an effective manner. The study echoed the Multiple Means of Action and Expression of the UDL principle's focus on the need to offer flexible and learner-informed assessment pathways. Fair and inclusive assessment systems are essential for blind undergraduate students so that they have more options to demonstrate their learning.

**Keywords**:

Blind Students, Inclusive Assessment, Alternative Assessment, Universal Design for Learning.

# COOPERATIVE AND BLENDED LEARNING STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT IN A RESEARCH STATISTICS POSTGRADUATE COURSE

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**Abstract:**

Teaching research statistics at the postgraduate level remains a problem, particularly in classes where students bring varied academic backgrounds, levels of statistical expertise, learning preferences and heavy reliance on traditional lecture-based approaches. Guided by the principles of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Employ an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, using a case study and an expo-factor approach. The mixed-methods design will enable the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process in a postgraduate statistics course. The study population comprises all postgraduate students enrolled in the 2026 contact session sandwich programme at a Nigerian University, a total of 151 students, who were purposively sampled to include those with direct experience of the implemented pedagogical approaches while learning a core statistics module. The intervention entailed creating an integrated UDL-informed framework that included cooperative learning activities (small-group statistical problem solving, peer tutoring, group data-analysis projects, and joint research discussions). Using the Google Classroom platform, the UDL-Based Practices were implemented with flexible access to learning resources, numerous assessment pathways, alternate content delivery forms, and a continuous feedback mechanism. After the intervention, quantitative data were collected through a student engagement questionnaire, academic performance assessment results, while the qualitative data were collected through open-ended questions embedded within the engagement survey. Both data types were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics (quantitative data), and thematic analysis (for the qualitative data) to identify recurring themes relating to learning experiences, engagement, accessibility, collaboration and confidence development. Both datasets were triangulated during interpretation. The findings demonstrated that the intervention foster a learning environment in which students can engage with statistical concepts at their own pace while being actively participating in shared learning experiences. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that incorporating interactive data-analysis tasks, authentic research challenges, frequent feedback, and different assessment techniques, the methodology strives to boost both academic accomplishment and learner confidence.

**Keywords:**

Cooperative learning; Blended learning; Universal Design for Learning; Inclusive pedagogy; Postgraduate education, Research statistics

# READINESS, BARRIERS, AND PRACTICES OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION IN SCHOOLS: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY OF TEACHERS IN LAHORE

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**Abstract:**

Information technology has become the most important aspect of recent education. It helps teachers to enhance their abilities to teach and manage their class activities. However, its effective integration by teachers in schools is limited due to lack of resources such as infrastructure, lack of digital tools, inadequate training program etc. The study aims to assess teachers' technological readiness and IT proficiency for integrating digital tools into classroom instruction, also identify infrastructural and contextual barriers that hinder effective IT integration in school settings, and to examine the frequency and pedagogical purpose of IT usage in teachers' daily classroom practices, to understand teachers' perceptions of institutional support and professional development opportunities related to IT integration, to explore barriers teachers face when using IT in school environments. A mixed research approach was used in the study. The population of the study consisted of Lahore teachers. For the quantitative data, 300 teachers were selected using convenience sampling technique and for the qualitative data, 20 teachers were selected using purposive sampling teaching for interviews. A questionnaire was used for the quantitative data collection and interview guide used for the qualitative data collection. The quantitative data were examine using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentages) were used to summarize the data. The results were presented in the form of tables for interpretation. While, qualitative data were examine using themes and sub-themes from the interviews. The interview data were carefully transcribed and organized into themes and sub-themes. These themes were used to interpret the respondents' responses. The study concludes that IT integration among teachers in schools is still limited due to limited institutional support and a lot of technical barriers. It is recommended that institutions as well as government should improve teacher training consistently and provide better resources related to information technology integration and provide a positive administrative support to enhance the effective use of information technology.

**Keywords:**

Information Technology, IT integration in educational sectors, Lahore, teaching practices, barriers.

# A MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS OF REGISTER VARIATIONS ACROSS FINAL YEAR TEXTBOOKS OF PECTAA AND CAMBRIDGE

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**Abstract:**

The study aims to compare the registers of selected texts of two mainstream educational textbooks for final years at secondary level in Pakistan, PECTAA and Cambridge, to examine to which extent the linguistic choices vary. Any of the previous comparative studies of both systems have not compared the texts across registers; therefore, this study holds value. Applying Biber's Multidimensional Analysis, the selected texts from both textbooks are analysed. Texts of 400 plus words were selected and cross matched across genre to find similarity; taking 7 pairs in total the corpus was analysed. For analysing, Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (MAT) has been used which provided results on six dimensions. The texts from PECTAA textbook showed more explicit use of language while the texts from Cambridge textbook leans towards narrative discourse. The findings suggest that genre similarity does not determine the similarity of linguistic choices too. This study holds value as it highlights the differences in our local curricula against international curriculum standards and how it can help textbook authors, curriculum developers and policy makers to set the objectives clearly to facilitate and scaffold academic prose for Pakistani students.

**Keywords:**

Register Analysis, Comparative Study, Textbooks, Discourse, Variation

# TRANSCULTURALISM IN THE DIGITAL AGE: PROBING THE SCOPE OF TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES IN THE CONTEMPORARY ERA

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**Abstract:**

The aim of this research is to study the approaches of cultural interaction and to analyze the scope of transculturality within the contemporary digital age. The analysis is supplemented by selected texts from the volume Transcultural Humanities in South Asia edited by Waseem Anwar and Nosheen Yousaf, as well as Cultural Studies edited by Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler. The two articles selected for this study from Transcultural Humanities are "Locating the Transcultural Humanities in South Asian Art" by Kanwal Khalid and "Memory in Theatre, Theatre in Memory" by Mimasha Pandit. The study analyzes the developing definitions of culture, cultural interaction within the digital sphere, and memory as a cultural tool which now functions within the nexus of nationality rather than culture. These concepts are used to develop the scope of transculturalism within the developing notions of culture and human societies. This is pertinent to understand with regards to digital developments in the recent time. This is because digital space enhances the concept of a third space of human interaction. Future researchers can utilize this understanding to develop models of human interaction according to the contemporary socio-cultural landscape.

**Keywords:**

Transcultural Studies, Culture, Memory, Third Space, Interaction.

# ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE EAR": ACOUSTIC ECOLOGY AND THE SOUNDSCAPE IN JANET FRAME'S SELECTED NOVELS

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**Abstract:**

Literary pedagogy, like literary criticism itself, remains largely ocularcentric — trained to privilege visual motifs and "eyewitness" modes of reading over the acoustic textures a text may be organized around. Janet Frame's lifelong, well-documented sensitivity to noise has been treated as biographical curiosity rather than critical method, and existing readings of her mid-career fiction consistently privilege seeing over hearing, leaving her acoustic imagination almost entirely unexamined. This paper argues that in *Scented Gardens for the Blind* (1963) and *A State of Siege* (1966), Janet Frame's protagonists, Vera Glace and Malfred Signal, arrive at self-knowledge principally through sound rather than sight, positioning Frame as an "earwitness" whose fiction models a mode of reading attentive to non-visual perception. Using R. Murray Schafer's *The Tuning of the World* (1977) and *Voices of Tyranny: Temples of Silence* (1993), I trace how blindness, in Vera's case, and displacement from a "low-fi" to a "hi-fi" soundscape, in Malfred's, strip away their unconscious hearing of keynote sounds, such as wind, water, and darkness, forcing each protagonist into acute listening and psychological reckoning. This research addresses the scarcity of scholarship connecting literary studies with acoustic ecology, and offers Schafer's "sonological competence" as a pedagogical tool: reading Frame's soundscapes as an "ear-cleaning exercise" builds sensory-inclusive reading practices that make room for non-visual ways of knowing in the literature classroom.

**Keywords:**

R. Murray Schafer, acoustic archetypes, aural symbolism, sensory-inclusive pedagogy, sound studies

# BEYOND ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL: APPLYING UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING IN PAKISTAN'S MULTILINGUAL, LOW-RESOURCE CLASSROOMS

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**Abstract:**

The classrooms of Pakistan are some of the most linguistically diverse and resource poor classrooms in the world. Upon entering school students speak a variety of languages in the region, but instruction is largely in Urdu or English, didactic, exam-oriented, and is geared towards a single 'average' learner who does not exist in such contexts. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a research-based approach for designing a curriculum that is proactive and flexible based on three design principles: Multiple Means of Engagement, Multiple Means of Representation, and Multiple Means of Action and Expression. The evidence base, however, is primarily from higher income countries, in the Western world, and its relevance to LMICs (lower and middle income countries) has been increasingly challenged in recent times. This paper suggests that the intersection of UDL, multilingualism and low resource schooling in Pakistan is a significant yet unexamined research gap. Although inclusive education and mother-tongue instruction have already been studied separately in Pakistan, not much research has focused on the possibility of using one pedagogical approach that can meet the demands of linguistic diversity, large class sizes and low-density of educational material. The paper summarizes the international and Pakistani literature on UDL and consolidates the evidence on multilingual classrooms in Pakistan to recommend a mixed-methods study to investigate the possibility of adapting the UDL principles to the local context. The study is a combination of classroom observation, teacher interviews, and a pilot intervention to determine which UDL practices can be implemented without any extra resources, and which need adaptations. The study presents an accessible, low-cost model of inclusive pedagogy, that is contextually relevant and in line with SDG 4, that can be a way forward towards ensuring access and availability of quality education for all learners in Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Universal Design for Learning, inclusive pedagogy, multilingual classrooms, low-resource contexts, Pakistan, English-medium instruction

# REIMAGINING INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGIES THROUGH UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE LITERATURE CLASSROOM

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**Abstract:**

This paper examines how the framework of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) can be reconceptualized for the post-secondary/ under-graduate literature classroom, moving the framework beyond its common association with accessibility compliance toward a broader theory of pedagogical justice. It offers a conceptual, discipline-specific translation of UDL. Rather than treating UDL primarily as an accessibility overlay, the paper argues that conventional literary pedagogy rests on a largely unexamined assumption of a single legitimate pathway to meaning — one text format, one mode of engagement, one form of assessed expression — and that this assumption functions as a structural, rather than incidental, barrier to inclusion. Drawing on UDL's three foundational principles — multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression — alongside reader-response theories of interpretive multiplicity, the paper argues that literary pedagogy has long assumed a single, textually silent, individually authored route to meaning, and that this assumption constitutes an unexamined barrier to inclusion. Using an integrative conceptual methodology that synthesizes UDL scholarship with reflective pedagogical practice, the paper develops a framework in which variability among learners is treated as the normative condition of the classroom rather than an exception requiring accommodation. The discussion applies this translated framework to representative instructional scenarios, identifies the central tension it raises for disciplinary conventions of written argumentation, and distinguishes it from accommodation-based models of inclusion, which address learner variability case by case rather than by design. As a conceptual paper, its claims are theoretical rather than empirically tested; it is intended to establish a framework that subsequent empirical research can evaluate against student outcomes and instructor experience.

**Keywords:**

Universal Design for Learning; inclusive pedagogy; literary studies; higher education; accessibility; reflective pedagogy

# DOMINANT ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRACTICES AS A BARRIER TO INCLUSIVE CLASS PARTICIPATION AMONG MULTILINGUAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

In a multilingual country like Pakistan, students who enroll in universities speak various languages, i.e., Punjabi, Saraiki, Pashto, Urdu, English, and other regional languages. In the contemporary era, although English proficiency provides various opportunities, its dominant practices in the classroom create barriers for students' participation. The current study examines English-dominant practices as a barrier and their effects on inclusive class participation among multilingual university students in Pakistan. The present paper explores students' assumptions about classrooms in which there are frequent English language practices. English-dominant practices affect university students' understanding, which hinders students' confidence, interaction, and participation in the classroom. This study also investigates how dominant English language practices in linguistically varied classrooms hamper inclusive classroom participation. A quantitative method is employed to find out how persistent English-language use affects inclusive classroom participation. A four-section questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale was developed for the collection of responses about how English language practices, understanding, and interaction undermine inclusive classroom participation. For the analysis of data, SPSS software has been used. Pearson correlation test has been conducted to examine the relationship between English language practices and inclusive classroom participation. The research is framed theoretically with the principles of universal design for learning, i.e., engagement, actions, and expressions to promote participation in a linguistically diverse classroom. The findings provide flexible approaches that facilitate diversity of language and provide students with opportunities to participate that would lead to effective classroom learning. Results also provide important insights into how learning could be made more student-centered in a multilingual classroom through UDL (Universal Design for Learning).

**Keywords:**

Frequent English practices, barrier, inclusive classroom participation, multilingual classroom, UDL.

# FROM POLICY TO CLASSROOM: EXPLORING IMPLEMENTATION OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL LEVEL

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**Abstract:**

Inclusive education is a worldwide priority and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (United Nations, 2015) puts the focus on inclusive and equitable quality education for all. The HEC has also stressed on the creation of an enabling environment for inclusive education and the involvement of students with disabilities in Pakistan (2021/2022). But how inclusive education, is being put into practice in real classroom and institutional practice, is not clear. Multiple means of engagement, representation, and action (CAST, 2024) is a framework that addresses learner diversity. The study aimed to investigate the current status of the implementation of UDL principles in special as well as mainstream educational environment. Qualitative methodology was used, involving practitioners and academicians from special education, general education and/or inclusive education settings. Total Twelve participants were selected using purposive sampling technique. Six teachers were selected from the special Institutes of hearing impaired, visually impaired and physically disabled (two teachers from each institute type). And six teachers working in mainstream or inclusive higher education institutions (undergraduate/BS) were selected. A semi-structured interview protocol was used to gather data. The interview questions were focused on exploring the arrangements made for provision of multiple means of engagement, representation, and actions to address the diverse learners' needs. Interviews were conducted via zoom meeting, whats app video call, or face-to-face mode as per choice of the respondents. The recorded interviews were transcribed. Thematic analysis approach of Braun and Clarke (2006) was used for data analysis. Participants' views of inclusive practices, accessibility, support, classroom strategies, and barriers to inclusion were explored in the study. The findings shed light on the in congruence between the policy and practice of inclusive education. Suggestions were made on the basis of identified gaps in policy and practices for effective inclusion of students.

**Keywords:**

Inclusive Education, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Qualitative Research,

# INCLUSION BEGINS EARLY: RETHINKING GOVERNANCE OF EARLY YEARS EDUCATION IN PUNJAB: THE CASE STUDY OF NAWAZ SHARIF CENTER OF EXCELLENCE FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

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**Abstract:**

Early years education provides the foundation for children's cognitive, social, and emotional development and can play a significant role in addressing inequalities before they become embedded within formal education. In Punjab, government-led initiatives in early childhood education reflect growing recognition of the provincial responsibility to expand access to quality and inclusive learning. This research examines the Nawaz Sharif Center of Excellence for Early Childhood Education as a case study to explore how government education governance can contribute to inclusive early years education in Punjab. Using a qualitative case study approach, the paper explores the relationship between policy intent, institutional practice, and inclusion with particular attention to policy implementation, accessibility, curriculum, teacher preparedness, learning environment, and engagement with children from diverse socioeconomic and social backgrounds. It argues that meaningful inclusion in early years education requires more than physical access to schooling; it depends upon responsive governance, equitable resource allocation, trained educators, appropriate pedagogical approaches, and institutional accountability. By situating this case study within Punjab's broader education governance landscape, the paper highlights the potential of province-led early education initiatives to address educational inequalities at their foundation. It concludes that inclusion must begin at the earliest stage of education if education systems are to produce more equitable and socially cohesive futures.

**Keywords:**

Early Years Education; Education Governance; Inclusion; Punjab; Early Childhood Education.

# REMEMBERING DIFFERENTLY: A KNOWLEDGE TRACING APPROACH TO INCLUSIVE LEARNING

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**Abstract:**

Treating all learners in educational systems can be an impediment to equitable education and can risk leaving behind students who need to revisit material more often in order to retain it. This work makes use of Knowledge Tracing (KT), which assesses a student's developing mastery from their learning history. Built around the principles of how human memory naturally decays over time, we introduce a learnable forgetting mechanism into a transformer-based model to track how memory decays. Through means of large-scale student interaction data, we show that retention of knowledge varies among students and across learning concepts. Another takeaway is acknowledging differences at the concept-level in retention difficulty is just as vital as differences at individual-learner level, which depends on how the interactions are distributed over time. This strongly suggests that learning technologies must take learner and content-level diversity into account when coming up with learning support. Systems that heavily factor in how people remember and forget things differently can result in a more personalized review scheduling and identify learners at the risk of falling behind early on. This, in turn, supports inclusive technology in diverse learning environments such as Pakistan's growing EdTech zone, where countless students from different educational backgrounds and levels of previous knowledge come together. Such systems can move away from a one-size-fits-all approach and cater towards individual needs. We intend to set this work as an initiative where differences in our human experiences are welcomed and move towards a more inclusive environment.

**Keywords:**

Knowledge Tracing, Memory Retention, Inclusive Education, Learner Diversity, Adaptive Learning Systems

# CLASSROOMS: A TEACHER TRAINING MODEL FOR GOVERNMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN LAHORE

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**Abstract:**

This study developed and structured a low-cost Universal Design for Learning (Universal Design For Learning) training model to promote inclusive science teaching in government primary schools in Lahore, where instruction largely depended on rote memorization and textbook recitation and provided limited accommodation for multicultural learners. The study aimed to prepare teachers with practical, resource-efficient UDL strategies for supporting students with subtle learning difficulties, weak Urdu/English literacy, and limited exposure to structured schooling. A judgement-based sample of government primary school science teachers in Lahore participated in a short training workshop based on locally available materials, including writing board, everyday objects, peer-led demonstrations, and oral storytelling. Data were accumulated through pre- and post-training teacher self-efficacy surveys and classroom observations, while qualitative classroom notes documented adopted strategies and determined barriers. Quantitative data were analyzed comparatively to examine changes in teacher self-efficacy, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically to identify implementation patterns and challenges. The findings demonstrated that inclusive science teaching was achievable without costly resources and that teachers showed improved confidence in applying UDL strategies. The study provides a scalable model for education departments and NGOs seeking to strengthen inclusive pedagogy across Pakistan's public school system

**Keywords:**

Universal Design for Learning; inclusive science teaching; government primary schools; teacher self-efficacy; classroom observations

# FROM EXCLUSION TO INCLUSION: DIGITAL SUPPORT ORGANIZATION, BOUNDARY WORK AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN SOUTH ASIA

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**Abstract:**

Women entrepreneurs have remained systematically excluded from the entrepreneurial ecosystem across the South Asia due to strong patriarchal cultures. While digital transformation and AI mechanisms have transformative potential, limited literature has investigated how digital organizations facilitate boundary work for women's inclusion. This study examines how Digital WESOs (Digital Women Entrepreneur Support Organizations) utilize boundary work to foster inclusive entrepreneurship and how AI augments this process. Drawing on boundary work and AI mechanisms, this study adopts a qualitative multi-case study approach and employs abductive thematic analysis of netnographic observations and documentary analysis of digitally operated organizations in South Asia. Six major themes are revealed from the data. Four themes align with boundary work framework: knowledge brokering via AI augmentation, boundary buffer space via AI activation, boundary object development via AI creation, and boundary practice institutionalization via AI penetration. Two inductive themes are boundary weaving- orchestrating disconnected ecosystem elements- and navigating patriarchal constraints- negotiating family restrictions, overcoming mobility constraints, and achieving digital liberation. This study extends boundary work into a digitally mediated AI context within gender-stereotyped cultures, positioning AI with an augmentation logic rather than substitution. Digital WESOs, when properly designed, can be a significant pathway toward women's economic empowerment and inclusive entrepreneurship, contributing to SDG 1, SDG 4, SDG 5, and SDG 8.

**Keywords:**

Digital Women Entrepreneur Support Organization, boundary work, AI augmentation, inclusive entrepreneurship, patriarchal context

# BEYOND TRADITIONAL BANKING: HOW DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IS SHAPING CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

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**Abstract:**

This study examines the affect of digital banking transformation on customer financial behavior by investigating the roles of customer communication, trustworthiness, transparency and innovation. Customer communication, trustworthiness, transparency and innovation are considered the independent variables, customer financial behavior is the dependent variable, while digital banking transformation serves as the mediating variable. The study adopts a quantitative research approach and uses primary data collected through a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. Data are collected from digital banking users through convenience sampling, with a sample of approximately 200 respondents. The collected data is analyzed using IBM SPSS and SmartPLS. Descriptive analysis is used to summarize the demographic characteristics and study variables, while correlation and regression analyses examine the relationships among the variables. Reliability analysis is conducted using Cronbach's alpha to assess the internal consistency of the measurement items. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is employed to assess the direct and indirect relationships and the mediating role of digital banking transformation. The study is grounded in Behavioral Finance Theory, which explains how individuals' perceptions, experiences and psychological factors influence financial decision-making. The findings provide insights for banks, digital banking service providers, policymakers and researchers by highlighting the importance of effective communication, trust, transparency and innovation in shaping digital banking transformation and customer financial behavior. The study contributes to understanding the behavioral implications of digital transformation in the financial sector.

**Keywords:**

Customer Communication, Trustworthiness, Transparency, Innovation, Behavioral Finance Theory

# BRIDGING THE DIGITAL HEALTH DIVIDE: AN AI-POWERED BILINGUAL APPROACH TO ACCESSIBLE HEALTHCARE

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**Abstract:**

Digital health technologies have gained traction as potential solutions for improving chronic diseases, but low levels of digital and health literacy can hinder many people from deriving benefit from these technologies. The patients of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases might encounter extra problems due to the complexities of the interface and fragmented nature of the health applications along with issues related to language and comprehension of the medical data. These issues hold relevance especially in cases of multilingual settings like that of Pakistan. The paper presents **CuraAI,** which was developed using user-centered design. The platform serves as a solution that minimizes the challenges associated with using technology in relation to diabetes and cardiovascular disorders. The system combines elements such as English and Urdu language communication, an AI-based chatbot providing personal assistance in leading a healthy lifestyle, OCR-based system of digitizing prescriptions, notifications about taking medications, health record management, and monitoring of such health metrics as blood glucose levels, HbA1c and cardiac parameters. The platform allows for connecting wearable devices that will monitor health in real-time and predictive analytics that will offer users information about risks of developing heart diseases.The design process involved an agile design approach that included iterative design and input from intended users such as patients in the family members of the developers, along with input from the academic supervisors and evaluators. The feedback helped improve the aspects of usability, readability, navigation, and bilingual accessibility. With the use of multilingual interactions and simplified digital healthcare processes, CuraAI showcases how an inclusive design of technology can help overcome language barriers and enhance the autonomy of the patient.

**Keywords:**

Digital Inclusion; Digital Health Literacy; Bilingual AI; Healthcare Accessibility; Urdu

# LEXICAL DECLINE OF URDU LANGUAGE

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**Abstract:**

Urdu was the only language that held all the diverse communities of Pakistan together. But today, English segregates the society into different classes while corrupting Urdu and considering it the language of under privileged. Lexical obsolescence is a process in which a language is not actively used by its speakers and are encouraged to use another language. Similarly, Urdu language is sidelined because of excessive use of slang English and Roman Urdu on social media digital platforms. So, our study will present a survey-based analysis to examine the words in Urdu language that have lost their identity and how they are replaced by new words because of rapid digital advancements. This study endeavors to find noticeable generational gaps in lexical command, reflecting a total structural change in Urdu language. Ultimately, our study mirrors the lexical erosion of Urdu and highlights how digital media literacy can preserve a language across communities.

**Keywords:**

Urdu Lexicology, Lexical Obsolescence, Digital Gap, Media Literacy, Community Empowerment.

# DIGITAL CONFESSIONAL CULTURE AS AN ARCHIVE OF ORAL LITERATURE: TECHNOLOGY, SHARED HUMAN VALUES, AND IDENTITY IN CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN NARRATIVES

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**Abstract:**

This paper examines the spaces of digital confessions as reconfiguration that transforms personal storytelling into the archival form of contemporary literature. It analyzes how emotional authenticity and inner monologues are archived through digital platforms as the evolving record of human experiences, their identity and lived realities. It investigates how the raw and spontaneous emotional confessions across short form media platforms turn those experiences into an extension of literature and explores its role in preserving the individual realities and shared emotions of humanity. Emotional intensity found in short form digital narratives provides raw and spontaneous ownership of narrative that is often absent in polished traditional form of literature such as books. This paper employs Affect theory to analyze how fragmented and raw emotions circulate and gain meaning through collective reaction of relatability when observed through digital forms. It focuses on identifying that feelings are not only expressed in short form media but plays a role in archiving the evolution and experience of human history. Hence it concludes that affect driven and fragmented spoken narratives reshape the boundaries of literature and storytelling in 21st century America through preservation. This paper open pathways for the study of literature beyond text forms and suggests that future literature studies can engage with digital memory. It also suggests that media platforms can also be considered as legitimate literary spaces.

**Keywords:**

Storytelling, oral literature, archival studies, digital platforms, media studies

# IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF YOUTH: A CASE STUDY OF SOME SELECTED EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF LAHORE, PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Social media has become an integral part of young people's daily lives, providing opportunities for communication, information sharing, education and creativity while also creating risks for mental well-being. This study examines the influence of social media use on the mental health of youth in Lahore, Pakistan, with particular attention to excessive use, social comparison, cyberbullying, loneliness, anxiety and related physical and psychological effects. Primary data were collected through questionnaires and interviews from students aged 15–24 years across selected educational institutions in Lahore. A total of 274 respondents participated in the questionnaire survey, and the quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS. A Chi-square test was applied to examine the relationship between social media use and mental health. The findings show that excessive social media use is widespread among respondents: 70.8% reported using social media for more than five hours daily. Instagram was the most frequently used platform (59.5%), while 92.3% of respondents believed that social media influences mental health. Moreover, 86.1% reported experiencing anxiety or stress after seeing something on social media, 79.2% reported effects on self-esteem through social comparison, and 75.5% experienced loneliness or isolation. The statistical analysis produced a Pearson Chi-square p-value of 0.016, leading to rejection of the null hypothesis. The study concludes that although social media offers important social and educational benefits, excessive and unbalanced use can negatively affect youth mental well-being. The research highlights the need for digital and media literacy, awareness of responsible online behavior, healthy screen-time practices and balanced digital habits among young people.

**Keywords:**

Social Media; Mental Health; Youth; Digital Literacy; Lahore

# DIGITAL COLONIALISM 2.0: AI TRANSFORMING GLOBAL SOUTH FROM RESOURCE PERIPHERY TO DATA PERIPHERY

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**Abstract:**

The international political economy is being reshaped in the new age of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by creating sites for data extraction and technological dependency. The conventional scholarship on dependency focused on Global South's position as a resource periphery due to extraction of raw material and cheap labour but an unpaid attention to rapid growth of AI, an asymmetry in the domain of digital domain has also been created. This research focuses on a nascent concept of 'data periphery' which examines the transformation of AI-driven capitalism that is replacing the traditional North-South relations which previously only relied on resource dependency. The argument in this research is built with the help of Dependency theory and World-system theory which will help to understand how data resources, behavioural information, human knowledge and digital labour are being considered as strategic inputs to be extracted from Global South. This is happening because of an unlimited control of Global North over advanced AI models, computational infrastructure and intellectual property. This is qualitative research which will analyze Kenya's AI- data-labelling and content-moderation industry as an empirical case to explain the emergence of international division of digital labour. Most of the Kenyan workers are contributing to training and refining globally deployed AI systems but they still occupy the lower-value segments of transnational AI production chains. The paper argues that this relationship constitutes Digital Colonialism 2.0**:** a shift from predominantly resource-based dependency towards a layered structure in which resource extraction coexists with data extraction, algorithmic dependency and digital labour exploitation. Consequently, sovereignty in the AI era increasingly encompasses control over data, algorithms, infrastructure, and technological capacity. The study concludes that without greater data sovereignty, domestic AI capabilities, equitable value distribution, and meaningful Global South representation in global AI governance, artificial intelligence risks reproducing historical core–periphery hierarchies in a new digital form.

**Keywords:**

Digital Colonialism, Artificial Intelligence, Data Periphery, Global South, Dependency Theory

# FROM CULTURAL DIVERSITY TO CULTURAL POLARIZATION: CAN VALUE-SENSITIVE DIGITAL DESIGN PROTECT PAKISTAN'S SHARED IDENTITY?

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan is a culturally diverse country. It has different languages, ethnic groups, traditions, and regional identities. Social media has made it easier for people to connect, but it has created challenges for Pakistan's shared identity. Social media algorithms decide what content users see. When these algorithms focus on likes, views, and engagement, emotional or divisive content can get attention. Users may then keep seeing opinions similar to their own. This can create online groups that are less willing to understand different views. Political debates in Pakistan show how social media can sometimes create divisions between people. There is a research gap in this area. Most studies in Pakistan focus on social media, political polarization, misinformation, hate speech, and radicalization. Less attention is given to how algorithms can increase cultural polarization and affect Pakistan's shared identity. There is limited research on how ethical values can be included in algorithm design to reduce these divisions. This study will focus on this gap. The study will use Value Sensitive Design (VSD) as its theoretical framework. VSD says that human values should be considered when designing technology. It looks at how technology affects people and how values can be included in its design. This study will focus on values such as tolerance, inclusion, fairness, respect for cultural differences, diversity, and social cohesion. The study argues that value-sensitive digital design can help protect Pakistan's shared identity. Algorithms can show users different viewpoints instead of repeatedly showing similar content. They can reduce the spread of hateful and culturally divisive content. Platforms should give users control and explain why certain content is recommended. Regular value-impact assessments can also be carried out with users from different cultural and regional backgrounds. The study recommends combining ethical algorithm design with digital literacy and platform accountability. Digital literacy can help users understand how algorithms shape their feeds and identify divisive content. These steps can make online spaces inclusive and balanced. In this way, social media can help connect Pakistan's diverse communities instead of increasing divisions. VSD can provide a useful approach for using technology to support tolerance, diversity, and a stronger shared national identity.

**Keywords:**

Cultural Polarization Value Sensitive Design Social Media Algorithms Shared National Identity Digital Ethics

# EVALUATING THE LIMITS OF HOME-BASED DIGITAL WORK FOR WOMEN IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

The growth of digital gig work and online businesses is often seen as a major opportunity for women in Pakistan. It allows them to earn independently through e-commerce and home-based work without having to travel outside the home for employment. This paper explores whether online platforms actually give women economic independence or do they simply add new pressures to their existing family responsibilities. To address this question, it uses a qualitative approach. It studies official reports from the Ministry of IT, data on phone and internet access from GSMA gender reports, and real-world case studies of women running home-based businesses documented by local civil society groups like the Digital Rights Foundation. The findings show three main problems: 1) working from home does not reduce household responsibilities as women still have to manage paid work alongside cooking, cleaning, and childcare, creating a difficult double workload, 2) a serious technological gap in Pakistan means that women in low-income or rural areas often lack the personal smart phones, stable internet, and skills needed to secure suitable online work, and 3) sudden government internet shutdowns can affect home businesses by disrupting orders and causing women to lose clients, with little chance of recovering the lost income. The paper highlights that simply giving women internet access is not enough to address gender inequality. By connecting real-life examples with existing policies, this paper highlights the need to protect digital workers from internet shutdowns, improve access to technology for low-income women, and recognize unpaid care work in economic policies worldwide.

**Keywords:**

Digital Gig Work; Digital Divide; Unpaid Household Care; Internet Shutdown; Pakistan

# BRIDGING DIVIDES THROUGH DIGITAL AND MEDIA LITERACY: COUNTERING SEPARATIST NARRATIVES AND PROMOTING INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN BALOCHISTAN

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**Abstract:**

The political and developmental situation in Balochistan has, for a long time, been disrupted by factors such as political representation, economic inequalities, issues of governance, education, and regional marginalisation. In the modern environment, such concerns are often raised and negotiated in online spheres, where different actors engage in discussions, advance particular causes, and shape the discourse. The aim of this paper is to investigate how the political grievances related to the situation in Balochistan were presented and promoted online between 2006 and 2026. The report will also comment on the potential of online resources and public discourses to either mitigate or exacerbate the existing tensions and encourage separatism. The qualitative case study methodology will be applied through a documentary and discourse analysis of relevant academic literature, official reports, news articles, and online sources. The paper will address the ways in which the political, social, and economic concerns related to Balochistan were integrated into particular ideological narratives and the potential of such discourse to promote separatism and divisiveness. It can be said that the existing political and social grievances might provide a solid ground for radical ideologies. In such circumstances, it is essential to address the underlying causes, including the lack of political and digital literacy, educational and economic disparities, and the absence of inclusive governance or shared power. There is a need to pay more attention to the promotion of digital or media literacy, balanced educational reform across the provinces, enhanced freedom of speech, and all-encompassing approaches to governance and development. Only then, the online domain will become a tool for building awareness, understanding, and cohesion rather than furthering the notion of separatism and the division of society along ethnocultural lines.

**Keywords:**

Balochistan, Digital Literacy, Media Literacy, National Integration, Political Inclusion

# A FEMINIST HUMAN SECURITY PERSPECTIVE ON DIGITAL LITERACY FOR RURAL WOMEN IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

This paper aims to bridge the digital divide and empower rural women in Pakistan's diverse society through the use of technology. While the infiltration of internet has increased in Pakistan, its usage rate among rural women is still very low, with only 7% having regular internet access. But just having a connection is not enough for empowerment. It's not about how to use the phone, because many rural women use their phones to connect with social media, it's about lack of critical digital literacy. These women are very susceptible to cyber harassment and financial scams without knowing about digital privacy, financial apps or knowing how to recognize online fraud. Families are thus often forced to limit their use of the devices to preserve "honor", further increasing social and economic isolation. In this study, these obstacles are discussed using Feminist Human Security (FHS). While traditional security emphasizes protection at the border, FHS is concerned with an individual's sense of security and autonomy in their daily lives. Protection from cyber harassment and fraud, and access to digital economies and telemedicine are components of human security in the current digital era. As we have seen, the digital divide is not a barrier to digital literacy; on the contrary, we believe that digital literacy is a basic security need. Providing critical online skills for rural women safeguards them against online exploitation and gives them independent access to services. The study reinforces the importance of promoting critical literacy instead of simply promoting access, moving rural women from vulnerability to being secure and active digital citizens. Finally, this paper shows that the digital human security of the women is a precondition for all the aspects of inclusive, peaceful Pakistan envisioned by this conference.

**Keywords:**

Digital Literacy, Feminist Human Security, Rural Women, Digital Divide, Pakistan

# WHEN THE CULPRIT IS CAUGHT, WHO PROTECTS THE VICTIM? CYBERSECURITY AND THE ENDURING HARM OF DIGITAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

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**Abstract:**

Cybersecurity is commonly understood as the protection of personal data and privacy but it is fundamentally connected to the protection of dignity, autonomy, reputation, safety, and the freedom to participate in public and digital life which constitutes as basic fundamental rights and interpersonal cyber rights. Women being a marginalized community because they are significantly at higher risk to be exploited in a Pakistani society requires special protection both under the law and socially through rights awareness. Lack of cybersecurity legislation specifically for women results in a particularly troubling dimension of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, in which women are disproportionately subjected to cyberstalking, blackmail, image-based abuse, doxing, impersonation, and AI-generated deep fakes. Followed by the patriarchal notions of honor and victim-blaming can magnify the consequences of digital abuse, a single manipulated image or video may transcend the digital sphere and irreversibly affect a woman's family relationships, education, employment, mobility, and social standing. The aim of this research abstract is to ascertain that the harm of a cyber offence is important to address and the pertaining loopholes and gaps are important to be determined. The major dilemma lies in the non reporting of cybercrime cases due to societal pressure which makes the existence of cyber laws less functional in nature. Digital world's persistence, replication, mean that even after legal redress, a victim may remain exposed to an enduring digital footprint that continues to create a hostile environment for victims. This research abstract will analyze and identity that cybercrime is not gender neutral. Digital safety requires not just mere reforms but a paradigm shift, and intersectional, survivor-centered legal reforms and tech designs that dismantle systemic inequities and guarantee equitable security in the digital age with adequate relief and protection for the victim and fair sanctions for perpetrators to set precedence.

**Keywords:**

Cyber security, Feminist lens, Fundamental rights ,Gender justice, Survivor centered

# FUZZY GRAPH BASED MISINFORMATION DETECTION FOR STRENGTHENING DIGITAL AND MEDIA LITERACY TO BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND EMPOWER COMMUNITIES IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

The rapid spread of misinformation across digital platforms poses a serious threat to social cohesion, interfaith harmony, and inclusive development in diverse societies like Pakistan. The current detection models are based on binary network structures which are unable to represent the uncertainty, vagueness, and fuzziness of trust and credibility in online interactions. To fill this void, the present study proposes a novel approach based on the fuzzy graph theory and multi criteria decision making, to model and mitigate the spread of misinformation. Two new fuzzy topological indices are suggested. The Misinformation Spread Index highlights individual "superspreaders," individuals who actively share misinformation to susceptible groups and users, and the Network Misinformation Potential measures network susceptibility to the diffusion of misinformation. Both indices combine user reliability, content credibility and susceptibility of the audience in the form of fuzzy membership values. The indices are used to objective weight and multi criteria rank influential users with the help of Entropy DEMATEL. When applied to a Twitter misinformation dataset, the framework can accurately identify critical spreaders, thus surpassing classical centrality measures as well as existing fuzzy indices. This framework allows platform moderators, policymakers, educators and community leaders to identify and prioritize intervention targets when in uncertainty. The work helps to create safer online spaces, safeguarding vulnerable communities, such as women, minorities and marginalized groups, from targeted misinformation. The research directly contributes to strengthening digital and media literacy, bridging the digital divide, and empowering communities to critically evaluate online information, aligning with the conference theme of advancing towards a peaceful and inclusive Pakistan through technology and collaborative partnerships.

**Keywords:**

Fuzzy graph theory, misinformation modeling, topological indices, digital literacy, community empowerment, Pakistan

# DIGITAL DIVIDE AS DIVERSITY FAILURE: CAUSES, IMPLICTIONS, AND PATHWAYS TO RURAL WOMEN'S INCLUSION IN E-GOVERNANCE

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**Abstract:**

Digital divide has emerged as one of the major aspects of inequality and exclusion, especially in terms of women's access to e-governance services in Pakistan. The paper discusses structural, socio-cultural and policy related issues related to rural women's involvement in and access to e-governance systems, and their impact on access to public services and inclusive development. The goal is to study and critically review previous research about digital exclusion of women and place it in the context of diversity and inclusion. The method used in the study is qualitative research type analysis of secondary data which is exploratory. The data is drawn from policy documents, national and international institutional reports, peer-reviewed academic literature and credible media, and has been purposively selected based on its relevance, credibility and recency. The gathered material is then analyzed and summarized in a systematic way to gain a deeper understanding of the causes, and the implications of digital exclusion of the rural women. The results indicate that lack of digital infrastructure, limited mobility, limited digital literacy, financial constraints, and lack of consideration of gender in the design of digital services are correlated with rural women's unequal access to e-governance. Rural Women's access to digital public services could be restricted, and their full engagement in new digital governance modalities hampered, because of such exclusion. The paper calls for the need for gender informative approaches in digital literacy, localized and accessible e-governance interfaces and community based digital access points to enhance the representation of women in the digital governance system in Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Digital Divide, E-Governance, Gender Inclusion, Diversity Failure

# THE "INTERMEDIARY TAX": EVALUATING BIOMETRIC EXPLOITATION AND GENDERED DIGITAL ILLITERACY IN PAKISTAN'S BISP ECOSYSTEM

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**Abstract:**

This paper explores the effects of the state policies at macro-level that drive the rapid digitalization in Pakistan but create many structural problems related to welfare delivery through digital means to disadvantaged communities. This paper critically assesses the connection between digital illiteracy of a gendered type, the governance of biometric platform, and the predatory finance schemes of the digital wallets linked to the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP). This paper evaluates the imposition of a seemingly "intermediary tax" upon the rural women who are illiterate in the use of digital platforms and are being done without any prior digital literacy training. Using secondary policy audit, data of financial inclusion by the State Bank of Pakistan, and civil society reports, show that mere technical access is not enough to ensure financial inclusion. The results show that this problem does not have to do with the inability of beneficiaries to read text messages, to verify e-receipts, or touch screens, but it is due to the structure where the beneficiaries are obliged to use only third-party POS agents. It highlights the presence of institutional gap, which makes it possible to indulge in the act of seeking rents, extortion of unjust payments, as well as the act of identity theft, among other privacy violations, on a large-scale basis. In addition, it investigates why current state agencies, as well as Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA), fail to offer a platform through which people without literacy can seek redress when it comes to disputes. It suggests three courses of action that include the incorporation of voice-activated as well as multilingual digital literacy protocols into community centers; welfare agents should strictly follow biometric algorithms, which will be audited by independent ombudspersons; lastly, the adoption of decentralized and low-literacy dispute resolution systems.

**Keywords:**

Digital Divide, BISP Digital Wallets, Biometric Exploitation, Gendered Digital Literacy, Financial Inclusion

# DIGITAL INCLUSION AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY IN PUNJAB: EXAMINING GENDER, REGIONAL, AND SOCIOECONOMIC DIVIDES

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**Abstract:**

Digital technologies are becoming an essential tool in the process of accessing information and educational opportunities. With the help of internet access, smartphones, computers, and other technological innovations, modern students gain access to education and learning opportunities that go beyond traditional classrooms. Not all people have equal access to such opportunities, however. Geographical location, level of digital infrastructure, affordability, gender divide and socio-economic factors can influence access to digital tools and lead to inequalities in accessing educational information and resources. With this in mind, the proposed study aims at looking into the impact of digital inclusion on access to educational information and learning opportunities in Punjab. It will investigate the connection between access to digital technology and students' opportunities to access educational information and learn using digital tools. In particular, it will explore the differences between urban and rural areas and socio-economic factors which might affect digital inclusion and educational opportunities. The research will be based on secondary data analysis and will rely on the academic literature, governmental statistics, official policies and reports of national and international institutions. Through this research, it will be made clear the significance of looking at digital inclusion not only as access to technology but as an important aspect of educational equality. It will also help to identify the policies that could enhance affordability, accessibility, digital infrastructure, and inclusive use of technology in education. Ultimately, this research will help add to the debate about how Punjab can embrace digital transformation while avoiding inequalities in education.

**Keywords:**
Digital Inclusion; Educational Opportunities; Digital Divide; Regional Inequality; Socioeconomic Inequality.

# COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PAKISTAN'S GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGNS (2013 AND 2018)

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**Abstract:**

Social media has become the most popular instrument for political parties to connect with the masses, influence voting behavior and communicate their vision and agendas. Same was the case in 2013 and 2018 general elections in Pakistan where social media was used as main campaigning tool by political parties to engage with the public. The research aims to focus on how social media changed voter mobilization and political communication during two general elections in Pakistan and what digital strategies were used by mainstream political parties such as Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and Pakistan People's Party on Facebook and X during 2013 and 2018 electoral campaigning. It is qualitative research where comparative research design has been used to compare role of social media in 2013 and 2018 general elections of Pakistan. Thematic content analysis has been done to identify and analyze the trends patterns and themes used by political parties during 2013 and 2018 digital electoral campaigns. The results reveal significant transformation in political usage of X and Facebook between both elections. In 2013, PML-N successfully strengthened voter's trust used both social media platforms to promote development, governance and administrative competence while using narrative of "Roshan Pakistan" and secured electoral victory. PTI was dominant in online youth engagement through viral slogans of "Naya Pakistan" and anti-corruption messaging, but still they were unable to convert this digital popularity into success in elections. PPP remained limited through legacy based emotional appeals and low digital engagement. However, 2018 general elections showcased the maturity of digital political campaigning where PTI secured victory as it effectively combined anti-corruption narratives, performance-based legitimacy and strong hashtag driven mobilization. This research concludes that social media acted as bridge in 2013 and 2018 general elections by which political narratives were converted into electoral success.

**Keywords:**

Social Media, Political Campaigns, Facebook, General Elections

# BRIDGING THE DIVIDE: DIGITAL LITERACY AS A TOOL FOR PEACEBUILDING IN DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

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**Abstract:**

The lack of online access and the economic and business opportunities that come with it is often considered the most visible cost of the digital divide, but there is another less visible cost: communities without digital literacy programs are more vulnerable to misinformation, hate speech, and the sort of polarizing content that slowly erodes social cohesion. When digital literacy is high, the communities are much better equipped to challenge negative narratives online and to foster understanding among religious, ethnic, and social groups and among individuals rather than seeking to divide. The paper evaluates that digital literacy must be understood beyond the technical and economic aspect; it is indeed a type of civic resilience that directly contributes to the objectives of peace building in a diverse society like Pakistan. The paper reviews the current community-based digital literacy programs implemented in schools, NGOs and provincial governments and their effects on fostering tolerance and dialogue between groups, while mapping their current gaps. Special attention is paid to digital exclusion faced by women and rural communities, further limiting their participation in civic life and online discourse and increasing their vulnerability. The implications for anyone planning literacy programs designed to bridge sectarian and inter-communal divisions are also taken into account, as is the role of algorithmic echo chambers in creating sectarian and inter-communal divisions. Finally, the paper suggests what a national digital literacy strategy should include if peace-building were to be considered one of its goals, in addition to employability. It also aims to add a governance-oriented voice to the debate on "bridging the digital divide" at the conference, where it seeks to emphasize that media literacy should be considered as a purposeful social infrastructure for a more inclusive, peaceful Pakistan, rather than merely an afterthought of education policy.

**Keywords:**

Digital literacy; peacebuilding; social cohesion; misinformation; media literacy policy

# USEFULNESS OF AI BASED TECHNOLOGY FOR STUDENTS WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT AT SECONDARY SCHOOL LEVEL

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**Abstract:**

The aim of the present study was to explore the usefulness of Artificial Intelligence (AI) based technology to students with visual impairment at secondary school level. The study aimed to assess the role of AI tools in supporting learning, promoting accessibility and independence, boosting academic performance, and highlight challenges encountered by visually impaired students in using AI technologies. Quantitative research design was used for this study. Population was made up of visually impaired secondary level students and a sample of 130 students was used. Data were gathered by a self-designed questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale, including the main factors like frequency of using AI, learning supports, accessibility, effectiveness, challenges, and preferences of the users. Descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) were used to analyze the collected data. The results indicated that students are regularly using AI tools in their studies, and found them very helpful for comprehension, access to learning materials, information organization, and exam preparation. Additionally, a positive correlation was discovered between using AI and students' independence, meaning that students who used AI were less dependent on others and more capable of learning independently. Moreover, students indicated that AI tools have a positive impact on their academic outcomes and confidence. But the study also revealed a number of barriers, such as a lack of training, technical issues, restricted access to devices and internet, and a demand for easier-to-use and more specialized AI capabilities. The research findings are that AI technologies are important in the promotion of inclusive education for visually impaired students. For educational institutions, it is suggested to train the teachers adequately for better access to technological tools and to develop more inclusive tools of AI to maximize its effectiveness.

**Keywords:**

Artificial Intelligence, Visual Impairment, Inclusive Education, Assistive Technology, Secondary School Students

# A FRAMEWORK FOR TECH-READINESS OF PUBLIC-SECTOR SCHOOL CHILDREN IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

In today's data-driven era**,** children in all countries of the world need to be trained for being able to cope with the ongoing technological advancements. Multitudes of Pakistani students studying in public-sector schools do not have access to computing facilities readily available in schools that cater for the affluent class. This paper presents a model framework for making students of public-sector schools tech-ready for the contemporary world. Salient features of this framework include constitution of a team of *principal trainers*, development of a course on Python for public-sector school students of grade VIII and above, master-trainers', school-teachers' and students' training workshops, a survey, and a research report. The master-trainers' workshop will be held in one of the four provincial capital cities of Pakistan in order to train school-teachers to later act as master-trainers. Video-recording of the course during the master-trainers' workshop will be highly beneficial for the conduct of school-teachers' training workshops to be rendered by the master-trainers. Selection of school teachers for the teacher-training workshops will be carried out through multistage sampling comprising selection of two to three divisions from each province of Pakistan followed by selection of two districts from each province subsequent to which two computer-equipped public-sector schools will be selected from each district. The school-teachers trained by master-trainers will train students of grade VIII and above subsequent to which the trained students will be accessed and a survey will be conducted to measure the effectiveness of the training. Finally, a research report summarizing the findings will be developed and distributed among all stakeholders. Contingent upon the success of this pilot project, widespread implementation of this framework in forthcoming months and years is likely to empower students of public-sector schools, thus assisting in bridging the digital divide between the privileged and underprivileged segments of the society.

**Keywords:**

Data-driven, public-sector, model framework, tech-readiness.

# BEYOND CONNECTIVITY: STRENGTHENING DIGITAL AND MEDIA LITERACY FOR INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES AND BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE

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**Abstract:**

The digital transformation of contemporary societies has created unprecedented opportunities for communication, education, employment, access to information, and civic participation. However, the benefits of digitalization remain unevenly distributed, as the digital divide is shaped not only by disparities in access to devices and internet connectivity but also by differences in digital skills, media awareness, education, socioeconomic conditions, gender, age, and geographic location. This paper examines digital and media literacy as critical pathways for addressing these inequalities and empowering communities in an increasingly digital society. It argues that bridging the digital divide requires moving beyond a narrow focus on technological access toward developing individuals' capacity to critically access, understand, evaluate, create, and responsibly use digital and media content. The paper explores how digital and media literacy can strengthen community capacities by enabling people to navigate online information, recognize misinformation and disinformation, protect their privacy and digital security, access educational and economic opportunities, and participate more effectively in civic and social life. Particular attention is given to marginalized and underserved communities that experience multiple forms of digital exclusion. The paper further considers the roles of educational institutions, government agencies, civil society organizations, and community-based initiatives in developing inclusive and context-sensitive digital literacy programs. It concludes that digital and media literacy should be approached as a social empowerment strategy rather than merely a technological skill. Strengthening these capacities can contribute to more equitable digital participation, informed citizenship, social inclusion, and resilient communities.

**Keywords:**

Digital Literacy; Media Literacy; Digital Divide; Social Inclusion; Community Empowerment

# FROM COKE STUDIO TO THE WORLD: MULTILINGUAL REPRESENTATION AND CULTURAL SOFT POWER IN PAKISTANI MUSIC

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**Abstract:**

Since it began in 2008, Coke Studio Pakistan has become an important cultural show that presents the country's linguistic and regional diversity through music. Instead of using only one national language, the show brings together singers and languages from across Pakistan, giving smaller regional languages a place next to more widely spoken ones. Over its fifteen seasons, from 2008 to 2024, the show has changed under four different producers, each with a different way of showing Pakistan's regional voices. This paper uses purposive sampling and focuses on three seasons that mark important turning points in the show's history: Season 1, which set the original format of the show; Season 11, called "The Sound of Nation," which focused on national diversity; and Season 15, which gives space to Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, Balochi, and Saraiki, moving away from one dominant language toward a multilingual and multiregional style. Together, these three seasons act as clear markers of how the show's approach to language and region has changed over time. This study employs a qualitative approach, combining close audiovisual and lyrical analysis of selected songs, comparative analysis of regional artists' representation, and audience reception data (social media commentary and news coverage), supported by a review of existing literature on Pakistani music and cultural identity. Using this method, the study looks at how steady multilingual representation across these three seasons helps different language communities feel seen and recognized. By comparing how regional languages are used from Season 1 to Season 15, the paper argues that Coke Studio acts as a form of soft cultural power. It offers a softer, alternative picture of Pakistan that is different from the political image that is more often seen abroad. This early study is meant to be the first step of a larger project that will later look at the other seasons of the show as well, building a fuller picture of how music has shaped Pakistan's cultural image over time.

**Keywords:**

Coke Studio, linguistic diversity, regional representation, purposive sampling, soft power

# DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN PAKISTAN: BUILDING STRONGER DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan is the one of the heterogeneous state which has diverse ethnic, social, religious cultural and linguistic identities. This type of composition presents both an opportunity for democratic development and a persistent challenge to ensure inclusive governance. There is always a tussle when it comes to power sharing and fiscal division that who gets what, when and how. Therefore, the mechanism of federation and representative governance with constitutional guarantees adopted to tackle diversity and formally recognized equality and participation. However, the significant gaps remain between the principle of inclusion and its practical realization. Exclusive politics, unequal resource distribution, limited representation of marginalized communities, gender-based barriers, socioeconomic disparities, and institutional imbalance continue to influence whose voices are heard and whose interests are reflected in public policy. This paper examines how inclusion politics and public polices can strengthen democratic institutions in Pakistan and contribute to a more peaceful, participatory, and cohesive society. The study adopts a qualitative and analytical approach to explore the relationship between inclusive governance, institutional legitimacy, and democratic resilience. It focuses on the role of federal arrangements, parliament and political parties to accommodate social diversity and provide meaningful opportunities for participation. The paper argues that diversity is not a problem itself the only issue is to address the demands of every chunk of society. Democratic political culture prevails only when institutions are responsive, accountable, and capable of translating plural social interests into fair political outcomes. The more inclusive representation guarantees the stronger democratic institutions. In order to strengthen democratic institutions, it requires removing structural barriers such as politics of revenge and polarization. The promising good governance and democratic institutions can evolve through strengthening democratic norms within political parties, protecting constitutional supremacy, equality, and ensuring equitable participation at national and local levels. The study concludes that inclusive politics can enhance public trust, reduce political alienation, and promote peaceful coexistence by making democracy more representative and responsive to diverse population of Pakistan. In this way, diversity and inclusion are presented not merely as social values, but as essential foundations of democratic stability and sustainable national development.

**Keywords:**

Diversity and Inclusion, Democratic institutions, Political participation, Institutional legitimacy, Democratic resilience

# REFORMING CULTURES OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS THROUGH MAINSTREAMING THE CHALLENGED

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**Abstract:**

The research aims to explore the current educational matrix within which the challenged learners exist. Termed as especially abled, their learning happens under exclusive banners, separated from the mainstream offering(s) and induction. Official reports endorse a major percentage of the population still outside regular ambit. Research into neurodivergence signposts visual and hearing impairment, physical disability, cerebral weakness, genetic mutilation and spinal degeneration as mostly reported. Case studies at both the primary and secondary levels highlight the existing gap between special needs curricula and cultural inclusivity. The research undertaken targets three institutions in Lahore to identify the role of leadership and the sociocultural behavioral frameworks; to gauge peer support; to assess teachers' readiness and the use of appropriate tools to reduce segregation in terms of abilities. The research employs hybrid data collection against Moran, Lindsay et al. and Bennet's theories of inclusive education and cultural consciousness. Research findings establish an urgency to regulate challenged learners into mainstream education. Future practitioners can further expand on devising on-campus support strategies to counter apathy and organizational inadequacies.

**Keywords:**

Inclusivity, Neurodivergence, especially abled, apathy, readiness

# FROM DIGITAL DIVIDE TO DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT: THE ROLE OF DIGITAL LITERACY, SELF-EFFICACY, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL RESILIENCE IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Expansion of digital technology has offered various opportunities to education, employment, healthcare, communication, and participation socially. However, digital divide in Pakistan goes beyond the issue of accessibility of technology and the internet. People residing in underserved areas might have low level of digital skills, low self-confidence in using technology, limited access to credible digital information, and challenges in adjusting to the changing technological environment. Such problems might affect not only their digital engagement but also the psychological resources including self-efficacy and resilience. This research investigated the link between digital literacy, digital self-efficacy, and psychological resilience of people from underserved areas of Pakistan.A quantitative study involving a cross-sectional design was carried out on participants who were selected from underprivileged communities in Pakistan. The participants underwent tests that included the measurement of digital literacy, digital self-efficacy, and psychological resilience. This study employed descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis in order to identify the relationship between the study variables, and to find out whether digital self-efficacy mediated the relationship between digital literacy and psychological resilience.Results showed a strong positive correlation between digital literacy and digital self-efficacy, meaning that participants who had high levels of digital competence also reported high levels of efficacy when it came to dealing with digital spaces. Additionally, digital self-efficacy was positively correlated with psychological resilience. Regression/Mediation analyses showed that digital self-efficacy was a key element that played an important role in explaining the correlation between digital literacy and psychological resilience. It is clear from the results that digital inclusion needs to be taken more into account than mere access to technology.The study demonstrates the need to move away from an "access-only" approach to digital inclusion towards an "access plus empowerment" approach in Pakistan. Digital literacy programs must include not just technical skill development but it should also include elements that build self-confidence, problem-solving and resilience skills. Universities, community organizations, policy makers and education systems can help develop cultural digital literacy programs for disenfranchised communities. Digital literacy can be a means of empowerment through increased participation and psychological empowerment and resilience building.

**Keywords:**

Digital literacy; digital divide; digital self-efficacy; psychological resilience; digital empowerment; underserved communities; Pakistan.

# WEAVING THREADS TOGETHER: A COMMUNITY-LED FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATIVE IDENTITY-BUILDING THROUGH CULTURAL EXCHANGE NETWORKS

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**Abstract:**

Cultural diversity is frequently framed in terms of discrete fests, special months, or special events, whereas the lived reality of communities is that of engaging continuously with their networks to negotiate meaning, construct, and evolve identity. This paper introduces the notion of Living Archives as a processual approach to cultural diversity management. Unlike static displays of culture, Living Archives emphasize ongoing co-creation and negotiation of meaning among individuals and communities. This article investigates the role of such collaborative initiatives in enhancing identity building processes using examples from three diverse multicultural communities. This article sheds light on the type of impact such community-museum collaborations have in fostering diverse and shared identities that emerge from the interactions of different cultural groups. The study utilizes a mixed-methodology approach that combines ethnographic fieldwork, action research, and social network analysis. The study looks at cultural exchange programs in three varied settings: those involving multiple cultural associations and local government, school-university partnerships, and community-based digital archives. In each of these contexts, collaboration has enabled the production of "identity artifacts" which take the form of oral histories, intergenerational cookbooks, community murals, and digital exhibitions. These exchanges allow participants to rethink power relations in the production and presentation of culture. This study finds that those community programs which decentralized decision-making, allowed for greater participation from a variety of stakeholders, and utilized multiple platforms in their operations had better success in building sustainable shared identities. In particular, diaspora communities benefited greatly from such collaborative frameworks in negotiating their multifaceted belonging. The study offers a new theoretical framework for understanding community-cultural diversity relations. It conceptualizes such relationships in terms of "co-authorship" and highlights several indicators that cultural institutions can use to build equitable collaborative initiatives. The study contributes to the growing literature on social cohesion by emphasizing that diversity is best managed through continuous negotiation and co-creation of meaning. This study's findings have implications for how museums, libraries, universities, and local government can rethink their community engagement strategies.

**Keywords:**

Cultural diversity; collaborative identity building; community co-authorship; participatory heritage; intergenerational dialogue; social cohesion

# TRANSCULTURAL ECOFEMINISM: INSTRUMENTALIZATION OF WILDERNESS IN SOUTH ASIAN AND WESTERN LITERATURE

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## Abstract:

Through a transcultural ecofeminist lens, this paper investigates the instrumentalization of wilderness and the interconnected exploitation of women and nature. The study examines how patriarchal, capitalist, and colonial structures marginalize and commodify women and the environment through an analysis of Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* (Western novel) and Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things* (South Asian novel). Rigid caste hierarchies, honor systems, and socioeconomic vulnerabilities enable oppression in South Asia, whereas industrialization, corporate growth, and systemic sexism are giving rise to the injustices in the West. Ecofeminism can provide more inclusive resistance tactics that address both local particularities and global oppressive patterns by bridging these narratives. Ecofeminist discourse has focused on the inherent bond between women and nature, highlighting traits like nurturing, cyclicality, resilience, adaptability, mystery, and patience that are shared by both. These characteristics emphasize the marginalization and exploitation that both women and nature have experienced, in addition to defining them. This study emphasizes the need for a transcultural ecofeminist framework to oppose these global but culturally unique patterns of dominance by drawing on insights from Val Plumwood, Vandana Shiva, and Karen Warren.

## Keywords:

Transcultural, instrumentalization, ecofeminism, wilderness

# KNOWLEDGE, CONSCIOUSNESS, AND AWARENESS IN URDU POETRY AND DIGITAL LITERACY: A STUDY OF IQBAL'S LEGACY

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## Abstract:

In the current digital age, there has been an explosion of information, which has not always led to true knowledge, requiring critical evaluation, understanding, and ethical use. As a result, digital literacy has become essential to critical thinking and social responsibility in this post-information era. This study explores the intersection between Urdu poetry and modern digital literacy by investigating Allama Muhammad Iqbal's concepts of self (Khudi), self-awareness, intellectual awakening, and purposeful action as a basis for critical consciousness. By focusing on individual, social, and contemporary consciousness, and analyzing it through the lens of modern Urdu poetry, this paper argues that poetry can be an important tool for empowering critical thinking and social responsibility in the digital age. This study demonstrates that an intersection between poetic inquiry and digital literacy can lead to critically conscious and digitally empowered citizens who can engage in meaningful discourse on complex ethical, intellectual, and digital issues facing society.

## Keywords:

Urdu Poetry, Iqbal, Digital Literacy, Consciousness, Community Empowerment, Critical Thinking

# BEYOND PHYSICAL ACCESS: A QUALITATIVE INSIGHT INTO EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES OF STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES IN PUBLIC SECTOR UNIVERSITY OF LAHORE, PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Inclusive education in higher education throughout the world is not just limited to admission opportunities for students. It includes multiple factors like dignity, equality and belongingness of all students which can be attained through overall conducive physical environment of any institution. The 2023 Pakistan census has recorded 7.45 million persons with disabilities, yet the public data on identifying correct number of students with physical disabilities remains limited. There are number of challenges the person with physical disabilities go through in the public sector universities including access to class rooms, examination related provisions, teaching pedagogy instruments and access to educational material. Beside the lack of social support and stigmatization is reported. The current study aims to see the lived experience of students enrolled in public sector universities with physical disabilities like limitations on walking and climbing. The study has investigated the certain academic institutions and social barriers for students which leave effect on the academic growth and inclusive participation.The study has adopted a qualitative research design. Data has been collected from a public sector university in Lahore using purposive sampling methods. The semi structured interviews were conducted with 28 physically disabled students including sixteen males and twelve females. The interviews were analyzed by using Braun and Clarke six steps thematic analysis.The study has identified multiple challenges and barriers to these disabled students including physical accessibility, inadequate institutional practices for people with special needs and certain social challenges. This paper has thrown light in particular to formal commitments by higher education institutions and gap that exist for such students in Public sector universities.The study has concluded that there is a need to strengthen inclusive practices in universities which provide a favorable environment to person with physical disabilities. There is a need to address gaps exist in policies and actual provision available to people with physical disabilities in public sector universities of Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Disability Inclusion; Physical Disability; Higher Education; Accessibility; Inclusive Education

# EMPOWERING WOMEN THROUGH DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP: AN IN-DEPTH STUDY OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL CHALLENGES OF WOMEN DIGITAL ENTREPRENEURS

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**Abstract:**

The use of digital media has significantly increased over the years among women for income generation and economic upgradation. Specifically in the post-COVID scenario, the effectiveness of digital media use for earning has increased. In this regard, this study aimed at exploring the role of social media in women entrepreneurship and the socio-economic and cultural challenges faced by these women entrepreneurs. A qualitative research design was adopted for this study, and by adopting the purposive sampling method, in-depth interviews were conducted with the women entrepreneurs of Rawalpindi city. The data were analysed through thematic analysis. The findings of the study suggested that social media provides an entry option to women entrepreneurs, provides them with networking opportunities, and expands visibility as well as income generation. The economic empowerment of women increased their confidence, independence, and decision-making power in the family. Women also get awareness and motivation for self-directed learning and training, awareness of women's and health issues, as well as economic mobilization of the family. The Study concluded that social media platforms create meaningful opportunities for women's empowerment, but their transformative potential is constrained by socio-cultural and technical limitations. Targeted interventions in digital literacy, financial inclusion, and social support systems are crucial to sustaining and scaling women's digital empowerment.

**Keywords:**

Digital Entrepreneurship, empowerment, women, challenges

# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN PAKISTAN: BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AND ADVANCING EQUITABLE LEARNING

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**Abstract:**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is rapidly transforming education by enabling personalized learning, adaptive assessment, intelligent tutoring, and data-informed educational decision-making. However, unequal access to digital infrastructure, technological skills, quality learning resources, and AI-enabled tools may deepen existing educational inequalities, particularly among students from underserved communities. In Pakistan, where socioeconomic, geographic, gender, and institutional disparities continue to influence educational opportunities, the inclusive deployment of AI requires careful consideration of accessibility, digital literacy, ethics, and social equity. This study examines the potential of AI-enabled education to promote inclusive and equitable learning in Pakistan while addressing the risks associated with the digital divide. Drawing on contemporary literature on artificial intelligence, inclusive education, digital literacy, and educational equity, the study develops a conceptual framework linking AI accessibility, digital competencies, inclusive pedagogical practices, and learner empowerment. Particular attention is given to how educational institutions can use AI to support diverse learners without reproducing existing social and technological inequalities. The framework also highlights the importance of teacher preparedness, responsible AI practices, data privacy, cultural responsiveness, and institutional support. The study argues that AI should not be viewed merely as a technological innovation but as a tool whose educational value depends on equitable access and inclusive implementation. A human-centred approach combining technological innovation with teacher capacity-building, digital and media literacy, accessible infrastructure, and ethical governance can help ensure that AI contributes to reducing rather than widening educational disparities. The study offers practical implications for policymakers, educational institutions, and educators seeking to leverage AI to build more inclusive, equitable, and resilient learning environments in Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Artificial Intelligence; Inclusive Education; Digital Divide; Digital Literacy;
Educational Equity

# ANALYTICAL STUDY OF GENDER EQUALITY IN SELECTED SHORT STORIES OF NEELAM AHMAD BASHIR

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**Abstract:**

This research paper presents a qualitative analytical study of gender equality as depicted in the selected short stories of Neelam Ahmad Bashir, a prominent voice in contemporary Urdu literature. Through her insightful fiction, Neelam Ahmad Bashir explores multifaceted social, cultural, and existential realities, placing female experiences and their peripheral positioning within patriarchal structures at the focal point of her narratives. This study examines how the socio-cultural dynamics of Pakistani society impact female identity, autonomy, dignity, and socio-economic rights. By critically analyzing her characterization, thematic development, and narrative techniques, the paper investigates how her female protagonists negotiate power relations, challenge traditional gender roles, and resist systemic discrimination. The study further demonstrates how her literary work dismantles normalized gender biases by advocating for equal opportunities, self-determination, and fundamental human rights for women. Furthermore, the paper aligns Bashir's artistic discourse with broader debates on gender inclusivity and social justice, emphasizing the transformative role of Urdu literature in promoting gender equity and intellectual reform. Through a close textual analysis of selected short stories, this paper highlights Neelam Ahmad Bashir's significant literary contribution toward questioning traditional gender hierarchies and promoting an inclusive narrative within contemporary Urdu fiction.

**Keywords:**

Neelam Ahmad Bashir, Gender Equality, Women's Rights, Urdu Short Story, Gender Discrimination.

# REIMAGINING LITERARY PEDAGOGY: DISABILITY, AMBIGUITY AND SENSORY SYMBOLISM IN MODERN URDU AFSANA

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**Abstract:**

Modern Urdu short stories contain sensory symbolism, narrative ambiguity, and creative modes of representing human diversity or disability that are yet to be explored in terms of teaching practices. Despite the increasing interest in educational inclusion in general, the department of Urdu appears to be using uniform methods of instruction that do not respond to the specific needs of students who need alternative ways of receiving and processing information. This study will attempt to address this gap in the literature by engaging in a three-step process. The first step will be concerned with providing a literary analysis of selected works of modern Urdu short stories, identifying the ways in which sensory symbolism, narrative ambiguity, and other strategies of representing human diversity or disability are used in these stories. The second step will shift the focus to a pedagogical application of the findings from the first part of the study. More specifically, attention will be drawn to the principles of Universal Design for Learning that call for providing multiple means of representation, expression, and engagement based on the students' needs and preferences. The analysis will be geared towards exploring how the findings from the literary analysis part can be integrated into a course design that will be proposed in the third part of the study. The proposed model will provide a pedagogical framework according to which instructors in the department of Urdu can shift from the uniform presentation of material using predominantly verbal-aural means of instruction to a more student-centered approach that will make use of various audiovisual resources. Moreover, the focus will be placed on providing the students with alternative assessment options such as recording a podcast or designing a presentation as a way of giving an oral exam. By integrating considerations from literary analysis and pedagogy, this study will demonstrate how Urdu fiction can be used as a tool for engaging students in a meaningful learning experience regardless of their educational needs and preferences.

**Keywords:**

Urdu Fiction, Disability, Ambiguity, Sensory Symbolism, Literary Pedagogy

# WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND ITS ROLE IN STRENGTHENING NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Achievement of gender equality has shifted from the traditional goal of empowering women to a more modern idea that equality is a goal for both men and women. Strives for more general knowledge of the structural, social, economic and political conditions that formulate people's opportunities and participation to development. Avoiding the Pitfalls, Empowerment is a concept of re-imagining gender equality by using intersectional and inclusive development approaches. "Framework," focuses on the necessity to have a more holistic perspective of gender equality, taking into account the, Women's and marginalised communities' diverse experiences and challenges.Although Empowerment has brought attention to women rights, education, employment and decision. Responding to the issues, it does not necessarily take into account the underlying inequities faced by various social groups. The paper is based on an intersectional approach to examine gender inequality in influenced by factors such as socioeconomic background, age, disability, ethnicity, geographical Access to education and economic resources in the place. Addressing gender and development issues. Engaging with gender and development concerns. taking into account various perspectives, such as the frameworks created by UN women, UNDP and the World Bank, Poverty and social inequalities are also shaped by social institutions, the distribution of power, discriminatory norms and values, and structural violence. Rare opportunity for access to resources can compound gender inequities. In addition, this paper asserts that policies emphasizing empowerment of individuals can turn out to be unsuccessful reach those who suffer more than one, and overlapping, form of disadvantage. The paper suggests then that An inclusive development approach that takes the route beyond empowerment as the end in itself. Rather, instead puts the emphasis on changing structures that expose and perpetuate inequality. Such an resources, and the creation of opportunities for marginalised groups. This approach involves greater representation of excluded or marginalised voices, equal access to opportunities and resources, and opportunities for marginalisation. resources, meaningful involvement in decision making and increased institutional accountability. Ultimately reimagining gender equality means recognizing diversity within gender experiences and to take action that is based on their differences, rather than being single-minded. The process of achieving dimensional understanding of empowerment gender equality can become more inclusive. social, economic and institutional scales and levels across various backgrounds and circumstances.

**KeyWords:**

Gender Equality, Empowerment, Intersectionality, Inclusive Development, Marginalization

# SOCIAL MEDIA AND URDU LITERATURE: A CRITICAL STUDY OF CHANGING TRENDS IN LITERARY EXPRESSION AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

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**Abstract:**

Today, many of the old ways of communication, expression, and information sharing have been transformed by the ways that social media are used. This transformation has also had an impact on Urdu literature, which now has new opportunities for literature to be published, circulated, promoted and accessed through various social media platforms. This research paper, “Social Media and Urdu Literature: A Critical Study of the changing trends in literary expression and cultural identity” aims to explore the relationship between social media and Urdu literature and observe the transformation of the same. The main aim of this research is to explore the impact of social media on changing literary language, style of writing, preference and portrayal of cultural identity in Urdu literature. Qualitative Content Analysis and Textual Analysis will be used to analyze the selected Urdu literary content found on social media platforms. As main sources of material, Urdu poetry, literary writings, literary videos, online gatherings of poetry etc. will be explored to learn and discover new ways of literary expression and new trends. Special focus will also be placed on the application of "Roman Urdu", "short and informal" styles of writing, digital literary practices and different forms of social and cultural identity. The study aims to explore the new challenges and questions that have arisen in the realm of literary standards, language, and cultural identity in the digital space, as well as the accessibility and expressive capacity of Urdu literature on social media. This research overall seeks to add to the understanding of the evolving literary and cultural environment of Urdu in the digital era. Abductive research methodology used in this study. The methodology of this study is based on Abductive research method.

**Keywords:**

Social Media, Urdu Literature, Literary Expression, Cultural Identity, Digital Literature.

# UNLOCKING DIVERSITY IN FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS: HIGH-PERFORMANCE WORK SYSTEMS AS A MODERATOR OF GENDER AND GENERATIONAL DYNAMICS IN DRIVING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND COST MINIMIZATION

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**Abstract:**

This study will examine how gender diversity climate and generational diversity climate drive employee engagement within financial institutions. Grounded in the Ability-Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) theory, Social Exchange Theory (SET), and the Resource-Based View (RBV), this research will investigate the core moderating role of High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS) in optimizing diversity dynamics to foster employee engagement. Furthermore, it will explore how employee engagement translates into perceived cost minimization (turnover savings and operational efficiency), while accounting for the contextual moderating influence of perceived financial risk. Quantitative cross-sectional survey will be conducted from selected managers, professionals and HR officers working with financial related institutions including commercial banks, investment firms and financial service providers. Primary Likert scale (1=strongly disagreeable-5=strongly agreeable as measurement of rating) data will be collected, each construct will be measured on basis of four-item scale. Model based on Direct, Moderation/ Mediation/ Moderated mediation hypothesis will be estimated under PLS as well as PROCESS Macro (5,000 resamples for bootstrapping), to address above-mentioned aim Structural Equation Modeling will be performed. Resulting analysis will likely suggest that gender diversity climate and generational diversity climate both lead to positive change in employee engagement. High-Performance Work Systems are going to moderate this relationship by multiplying the benefits for employee engagement experienced through workforce diversity practices. Employee engagement will become a bridge which links diversity and performance since increased in financial returns can occur due to decreased in labour turnover costs and increased in efficient usage of resources. The perception of financial risk will act as contextual moderator, since higher perception of financial and labour markets risk should result in an emphasis on increasing employee engagement due to increased benefits for cost minimization of the risk. This research project will offer a blend between SHRM and Corporate Finance by developing a moderated-mediation model in which workforce diversity (mechanism) is linked with two tangible outputs: a financial one (cost minimization) and a strategic input for organisational financial sustainability (innovation). This study makes some important contributions to literature by highlighting and analysing HPWS as an enabler of diversity and perceives risk as a contextual boundary condition in such service-intensive industries; it will also make a case on how it serves as a lever for the establishment of competitive advantage and why organizations should care.

**Keywords:**

High-performance work systems, Gender diversity, Generational diversity, Employee engagement, Perceived Cost Minimization, Perceived Financial Risk, PLS-SEM

# MINORITY WOMEN IN PAKISTAN: CONSTITUTIONAL PROTECTIONS, DOUBLES MARGINALIZATION, AND THE DISPARITY BETWEEN LAW AND REALITY

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**Abstract:**

In Pakistan minority women are legally recognised with a feeling of vulnerability in the field of citizenship, religion, and gender. In the Pakistani Constitution the right to equality before the law, protection of religious freedom, and protection of minority rights are granted in Article 20, 25 and 36 respectively but there are both statutory and institutional safeguards which reflect a normative commitment to save the right of minorities such as Pakistan Penal Code and National Commission for Minorities (NCM). However, this type of assurances have not resulted in regular provision of security or substantive equality. Access to justice education is highly complex for minorities, particularly the Hindu, Christian and Sikh minorities with access to justice, participation in political sphere, access to body autonomy and access to property are all complex education issues. These vulnerabilities would be discussed in this paper as the double marginalization (marginalization based on gender plus the religion). It would also be under the scope of minority raised as well as gender equality. In the existing law and constitution in Pakistan, the issue of law scholarships are treated separately and interaction between these and law scholarship is not given attention. Critically this study analyze whether the problem arises from weak enforcement solely or from the shortcomings of a formally universal legal framework that fails to properly acknowledge vulnerabilities unique to intersections. This paper also examines that how institutions contribute, how religious discrimination contributes as well as how patriarchy and poor access to effective action on the ground can contribute to substantive disadvantage in context of formal equality.The study takes a doctrinal and analytical approach to evaluate the effectiveness of the institutional mechanism, statutory safeguards, and constitutional guarantees of practical efficiency. It espouses for a constitution that is intersectional and addresses intersectional structural interaction between gender and religious disadvantage, and for the recognition of minority women as independent right holders. So apart from enforce guaranties, rights sensitive legal changes, easily available remedies, and the strengthening of institutional accountability, are needed to make constitutional equality real equality.

**Keywords:**

Minority Women; Double Marginalization, Intersectionality; Constitutional Equality; Minority Rights

# CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN PAKISTAN: THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES IN PROMOTING INTERPROVINCIAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITHIN THE CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

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**Abstract:**

As a matter of fact, Pakistan is a culturally diverse state where powers are distributed between center and provinces that is a multifaceted sort of social, political, and administrative dialogues for the democratic countries. The examination of this paper is to promote the cultures of four provinces: Sindh, Punjab, Balochistan, and KPK, and exchange of their cultures through schools, colleges, and universities. Pakistan as a multicultural country comprises different sub-cultures that are promoted by universities through education, business, travelling, and social events. Educational institutions foster cultural diversity through interprovincial culture exchanges such initiatives are supported by the Constitution of Pakistan and its legal framework. Distinct provinces have different identities, traditions, languages, customs, and cultural practices. The doctrinal and qualitative research methodology is adopted to examine appropriate constitutional provisions, educational policies, and institutional frameworks with respect to cultural rights and preservation of cultural diversity. The universities are considered as center for cultural interactions, student exchange, academic collaboration, cultural events, and conservation among communities. Consequently, the study facilitates positive outcomes to strengthen interprovincial understanding, cultural knowledge, and constitutional guarantees regarding cultural rights. The constitution protects cultural diversity but implementation, at university level, is still remain because there is need of decision-making bodies, committees, and student councils. People in Pakistan are closely associated with cultural boundaries but all provinces presented similar cultural nature with slight difference. Ultimately, apart from cultural growth, universities also stimulate cultural exchange and peer-to-peer interaction in the disciplines of literature, education, and tourism to create opportunities and increasing collaboration among provinces in a more open way.

**Keywords:**

Cultural Diversity, Interprovincial, Cultural Exchange, Universities, Constitutional Law

# IMPACT OF INDIRECT TAXES ON POVERTY IN SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES

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**Abstract:**

To determine the impact of indirect taxes on poverty in panel of SAARC countries, four countries including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are selected based upon data availability. Results are estimated for the data from 2000 to 2024. Three independent variables used in study include; indirect taxes, school enrollment and access to electricity. Poverty headcount ratio is used as a dependent variable. Fixed effect model is selected for the given model and multi-collinearity is not present. Existence of serial correlation and heteroscedasticity is detected. Generalized Least Square (GLS) is used to get unbiased results based upon the panel of four SAARC countries from year 2000 to 2024. According to estimations, indirect tax has significant positive impact on poverty. Other variables including; school enrollment and access to electricity shows significant negative effect on poverty. This research also aligns with the conference theme of gender equality, peace, harmony, social cohesion, diversity, and inclusion by highlighting the importance of reducing poverty and economic inequality. Inclusive taxation, improved access to secondary education, and electricity can create greater opportunities for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including women and low-income households. By addressing economic disparities and improving access to essential resources, the study contributes to building a more inclusive and cohesive society where individuals from diverse backgrounds can participate equally in social and economic development. In this way, poverty reduction can support greater equality, social harmony, and peaceful coexistence within South Asian societies.

**Keywords:**

Poverty headcount ratio, Indirect taxes, School enrollment, Access to electricity, Fixed effect model

# IMPACT OF EDUCATION ON REMITTANCE INFLOW: A PANEL STUDY OF FOUR SAARC COUNTRIES

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**Abstract:**

Remittance inflow plays an important role in developing economies, while education, unemployment, life expectancy, and inflation are important socioeconomic and economic factors that may influence remittance flows. Higher education can increase access to employment opportunities abroad, while unemployment may encourage migration and increase dependence on remittances. Despite existing research on education and remittances, limited evidence is available on this relationship in SAARC countries, with previous literature providing mixed findings. This study examines the impact of literacy rate, unemployment, life expectancy, and inflation on remittance inflow in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka. Secondary panel data for 2005–2024, comprising 80 observations, is obtained from the World Development Indicators. Linear panel regression is conducted using STATA. The Hausman test indicates that the Fixed Effects Model is appropriate, while heteroscedasticity and serial correlation are addressed through cluster-robust standard errors. The results show that literacy rate has a significant negative effect on remittance inflow, unemployment has a significant positive effect, life expectancy has an insignificant effect, and inflation has a significant negative effect. The negative relationship between literacy and remittance inflow may reflect brain drain, as educated and skilled individuals migrate abroad and may permanently settle with their families, weakening their financial ties with their home countries. The study concludes that improving education should be accompanied by decent employment and productive opportunities within home countries to retain skilled individuals. It recommends investment in local businesses and SMEs, creation of better employment opportunities, and maintenance of stable price levels. Such inclusive policies can reduce brain drain, strengthen social cohesion and inclusion, and encourage skilled individuals to contribute to peaceful and sustainable development in their home countries.

**Keywords:**

Literacy Rate, Unemployment, Inflation, Remittance Inflow, Fixed Effects Model, Hausman Test, SAARC, SMEs

# PERCEPTION OF VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENTS ABOUT FACILITIES AVAILABLE FOR THEM AT ELEMENTARY LEVEL

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**Abstract:**

The current survey research was conducted to examine the perception of visually impaired students about facilities available for them at elementary level. The research questions were aligned with research objectives; investigating the availability of educational, physical and support facilities provided to visually impaired students and understanding their perception of classroom resources, mobility training and teacher support. A sample of 5 visually impaired female students (N=5) from three special education institutes of Lahore (Government Allama Iqbal Town School for the Blind, Aziz Jehan Begum Trust and Rising Sun Institute) was selected. A structured interview protocol was developed and conducted to measure the study variables. The data were analyzed using qualitative thematic analysis. The results showed high student satisfaction regarding free transportation, Braille reading materials, embossed models, orientation and mobility training and supportive teacher relationships, while identifying a clear lack of hostel facilities across most institutions. On the basis of key findings, it was concluded that while basic academic and mobility services are well-provided, structural provisions like hostel accommodation need significant improvement. The findings also revealed that modern assistive tools such as advanced Braille embossers, electronic refreshable Braille displays and automated reading and writing technologies are currently absent in these special education schools of Pakistan; adopting these technologies is vital to significantly enhance the educational progress and independence of visually impaired students. This research is beneficial for special education faculty, school administrations, educational authorities, instructors and researchers in the field of visual impairment.

**Keywords:**

Visually Impaired Students, Educational Facilities, Elementary Level, Perception, Special Education, Modern Assistive Technology.

# EXPLORING MATTER, MATERIALITY, AND SITES OF NARRATIVITY IN SHADAB ZEEST HASHMI'S BAKER OF TARIFA

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**Abstract:**

Within an increasingly evolving society and the literary narratives it is producing, it has become essential to approach texts with a nuanced and innovative analytical lens. Literature has now evolved into a multifaceted field focusing not only on human relationships, but also on nonhuman, environmental, social, and cultural relationships to name a few. This research study aims to study intra-active relations between human and nonhuman agents in Shadab Zeest Hashmi's poetry collection *Baker of Tarifa*. Using theory of new materialism as proposed by Serenella Iovino and Serpil Oppermann in "Material Ecocriticism: Agency, Materiality and Models of Narrativity", the research study proposes that the interaction between human and nonhuman agentic capacities gives way to constructive and non-dichotomized imagination. Matter, thus, acts as a site wherein meanings materialize, therefore, fostering a mutual connection between the human and nonhuman entities. The objective of this research study is to examine the cultural artefacts and edible items which are incorporated by Hashmi in her poetry so as to understand the significance of these nonhuman agents in fostering meaningful interactions with their human counterparts by acting as sites of narrativity. This research study analyzes Hashmi's poetry to understand the complex relationship between human beings and nonhuman artefacts, their confluent dynamic, and their impact on each other. In doing so, this research study contributes to the evolving field of ecocriticism by addressing the materiality of nonhuman agents, their immense impact on human thought and imagination, and the construction of a cooperative site where cultural creativity can take place.

**Keywords:**

Intra-active relations, Agentic capacities, Non-dichotomized imagination, Matter, Materiality

# MEDIA LITERACY AND THE FIGHT AGAINST MISINFORMATION: EMPOWERING CITIZENS IN THE DIGITAL AGE.

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**Abstract:**

This research examines how media literacy can serve as a tool for combating misinformation in digital age particularly as citizens face difficulty in distinguishing reliable information from deceptive content ,along with providing easy access to information digital platforms have also made it easier for unverified information, misleading narratives and propaganda to spread, media literacy therefore is required. Misinformation and propaganda can influence public perceptions leading to wrong narratives and potential political polarization and manipulate citizens' decision making. This research employs a qualitative approach through critical analysis of existing literature policy frameworks and UNESCO and OECD reports and institutional reports. Media literacy helps digital consumers to recognize bias , question sensational claims and verify sources . Media literacy combined with critical thinking is a significant tool to countering misinformation .This analysis demonstrates that to minimize the spread of manipulative propaganda and unverified information through social media platforms public awareness through campaigns , platform responsibility, responsible digital behavior i.e. to verify information before sharing, training of people to identify bias , propaganda and non credible sources are necessary measures to be taken in this regard to promote media literacy and empower citizens in the digital age.

**Keywords**:

Political polarization, deceptive content, bias, manipulative propaganda, critical analysis.

# HARMONIZING DIFFERENCE: COKE STUDIO PAKISTAN AND THE NEGOTIATION OF CULTURAL & NATIONAL IDENTITY

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**Abstract:**

Sectarian, ethnic and regional fragmentation has long been a defining feature of Pakistan's national discourse and formal political and policy interventions have frequently failed to create uniform identity. Existing scholarship on *Coke Studio Pakistan* has focused on its commercial success and diplomatic value, but relatively few studies have examined its cross-regional artist pairings through a combined postcolonial and nationalism-theory lens, and none have narrowed their scope to a single set of collaborations rather than treating the platform's seasons as a monolithic whole. This paper fills that gap by providing a close reading of a small number of cross-regional and cross-generational pairings, *Kana Yaari, Dilruba Na Raazi, Harakley and Tu Jhoom*, arguing that these collaborations develop a musical counter-narrative to national fragmentation and generate a plural Pakistani identity built through collaboration rather than uniformity. This study will look through the lens of two theoretical perspectives. The first is Homi Bhabha (1994) idea of the 'third space' to explore these performances as sites to produce hybrid, negotiated cultural identities that are separate from the discrete traditions being synthesized. The second is Benedict Anderson (2006) theory of 'imagined communities' at the national level, positioning the show's mass broadcast format as a ritual that enables a geographically and ethnically dispersed audience to imagine itself as a uniform cultural identity. This paper provides the first sustained application of hybridity and nationalism theory to this set of pairings. In doing so, it argues that *Coke Studio Pakistan* does not merely represent existing diversity but rather performs and produces an inclusive vision of Pakistani identity, thus adding new insight to conversations on media, nationalism and cultural integration in deeply divided societies.

**Keywords:**

Culture, Identity, Collaboration, Diversity, Inclusion

# HOMELAND IN EXILE: THE MYTH OF NATION IN SOUTH ASIAN POETRY

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**Abstract:**

This research paper investigates the notion of nation as mythical homeland for writers who face exile and displacement as a result of literary resistance against South Asian socio-political scenario. It examines how exile and displacement in form of diaspora for activist writers can just be a mythical homeland that subverts the idea of nation fixed with geographical boundaries. The objective of the research determines how the literary endeavors by Fahmida Riaz in *The Body Torn and Other Poems* (Tahira Naqvi, 2020) and other poets, who face these circumstances, generate a discourse that triggers the spatial frontiers of homeland and builds a transnational and transcultural concept of national and geographical boundaries to reimagine them as a cosmopolitan space in terms of resistance against various existing socio-political, cultural and religious captivities precisely in South Asia. The textual analysis of the primary text *The Body Torn and Other Poems* (2020) with some other South Asian poetic references investigates its findings to evaluate the myth of nation with a need to re-conceptualize the idea of homeland in capacious expression of transnaitonality.

**Keywords:**

Diaspora, displacement, transcultural, homeland, nation

# INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATIVE INITIATIVES FOR PROMOTING IDENTITY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY THROUGH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Pakistan's educational system plays a central role in the formation of students' identities and social cohesion and in the appreciation for cultural differences within society. This study demonstrates how institutional collaboration can help to support these objectives through enforcing interaction between institutions, specifically universities, colleges, and schools and other student bodies. It emphasizes curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities which offer students exposure and interactive opportunities that allow recognition and appreciation of other national, regional, linguistically, and culturally diverse students. Emphasis is placed on the formal Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) that connect institutions, inter-institutional student exchange programs, jointly run academic and cultural programs, Model United Nations activities (MUNs), competitive programs, seminars, and academic events that allow student participation in institutional commemoration days and festivals. The study argues that institutional connections may systematically encourage both inclusive identity production, through cultural mediation, and in the same manner can challenge the notion of cultural isolation to engender shared mutual respect, communication and social responsibility. Frequent interactions that the institutions encourage, either through an annual cultural exchange program that operates as one year-long cultural program, or through cooperative cultural fairs that are scheduled annually, give students the chance to express themselves, promote themselves, and engage constructively with others. To maintain its implementation, the plan requires support of institutional commitment, comprehensive program development, concrete exchange structure and frequent cooperative programming to ensure consistent implementation. Ultimately, strengthening inter-institutional collaboration the education system of Pakistan can contribute to building national solidarity, cultural recognition and responsible social citizens with cultural awareness.

**Keywords:**

Institutional Collaboration; Inclusive Identity; Cultural Isolation; Mutual Respect; Educational System

# A STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF HARASSMENT CASES IN PUNJAB: TEMPORAL AND REGIONAL PATTERNS

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**Abstract:**

Harassment remains an important concern for women's safety, equality, and participation in society. Understanding how reported cases vary across time and place can provide useful evidence for strengthening institutional mechanisms that address harassment. This study examines harassment cases handled by the Women Ombudsperson in Punjab, Pakistan, using district- and division-level data from 2016 to 2024. The analysis investigates temporal trends and regional variation in reported caseloads across Punjab and explores how these patterns have changed over the study period. The study examines temporal and regional variation in reported cases, while GIS-based mapping is used to visualize their geographical distribution across Punjab. Geographic Information System (GIS) techniques in QGIS are used to map the spatial distribution of reported cases and to identify areas with comparatively higher or lower recorded caseloads. The spatial analysis also helps illustrate changes in geographical patterns over time and supports a clearer interpretation of regional variation. The study is limited to cases handled by the Women Ombudsperson and does not treat recorded cases as a direct measure of the prevalence of harassment. Regional differences may reflect multiple factors, including population size, awareness of institutional mechanisms, reporting practices, accessibility, and use of available redressal mechanisms. The study therefore interprets reported caseloads as an indicator of institutional reporting and engagement rather than as a direct measure of underlying harassment prevalence. By identifying temporal and regional patterns, the study seeks to provide evidence that can support discussions on women's protection, gender equality, and equitable access to institutional mechanisms. The findings can inform policy discussions on strengthening institutional responses to harassment and contribute to efforts to create safer and more inclusive environments for women in Punjab.

**Keywords:**

Harassment, Women, Punjab, Statistical Analysis, GIS

# SCROLLCTRL: PERSONALIZING THE FIGHT AGAINST DOOMSCROLLING

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**Abstract:**

Our attention has become one of the rarest resources we own. Today, the smartphone is where most of it is given away to, staying with us from the dawn of our morning to the late hours when we try to wind down. At times, a quick check of a message can turn into hours long worth of endless scrolling that was never the original goal. This repetitive loop is what we have all come to recognize as doomscrolling. Most applications today are one-size-fits-all and make use of rules that are quite generic. These include strict screen-time limits and a notification that most clear away. These do not take into account that different solutions apply to different people. This leaves a huge portion of people to face difficulties in forming healthy digital skills. ScrollCtrl aims to help people step back from the chaos of the endless feed and break the cycle of mindless consumption. It is a hybrid mobile system designed to detect doomscrolling as it happens and step in using personalized interventions. It tracks behavioral indicators, such as scrolling activity, application usage, time of day, and for users with a wearable, heart rate and HRV, to estimate when the user is entering a doomscrolling session. ScrollCtrl's architecture combines safeguards for when the application is calibrating itself to the user, with a continuously adjusting machine-learning model trained on their history. Instead of using fixed thresholds for everyone, the system learns what is normal for a specific user and presents interventions when patterns deviate from that. ScrollCtrl, in turn, respects the differences in our habits and needs and helps bring self-awareness to interact with technology with mindfulness.

**Keywords:**

Doomscrolling, Personalized Interventions, Digital Literacy

# THE PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF ONLINE TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A CASE OF QAED APP OF PUNJAB GOVERNMENT

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**Abstract:**

This mixed-methods study investigated the perceived effectiveness of online training for primary school teachers' professional development using the QAED app in Punjab, Pakistan, particularly its initiatives such as the Single National Curriculum (SNC) English as Subject for Teachers and Educators (EaSTE), designed to promote inclusive, universally accessible professional learning. A convenience sample of teachers completed a questionnaire (n = 272) and interviews (n = 11). An adapted research questionnaire was used for quantitative data collection, while a semi-structured interview was conducted for qualitative data analysis. Data for the quantitative approach were collected physically and online by sharing the link to an online questionnaire, accommodating teachers with varied access. For the qualitative approach, telephonic and face-to-face interviews were conducted to suit participants' differing needs. Validity was checked by expert opinion and read-aloud activity for both methods, respectively. Reliability of the quantitative data was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The reliability of qualitative data was checked by sharing the analysis report with participants. Quantitative findings showed that primary school teachers' pedagogical, technical, and classroom management skills and knowledge improved after the online training. Participants also reported moderate to high satisfaction with online training (M=3.81). Thematic analysis of qualitative data revealed four major themes: distinctive features of the QAED app, professional development, challenges, and suggestions regarding the effectiveness and inclusivity of online training through the QAED app. Qualitative data highlighted areas for improvement toward more universally designed training. The study concludes that online training is an inclusive and effective initiative, but needs enhancement to address teachers' challenges and suggestions. The findings of this study recommend that administrators and resource allocators play their role in improving the quality of online training and providing sufficient, equitable resources to teachers.

**Keywords:**

Online training, professional development, QAED APP, SNC, EaST

# THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PROMOTING INTERFAITH HARMONY AND SHARED HUMAN VALUES IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Social media has become an important tool for communication between people from different backgrounds. It can create opportunities for dialogue, mutual understanding and the promotion of shared human values such as respect, tolerance and peace. Although social media can connect different religious communities, it can also spread religious hatred, misinformation and extremist content. The research problem is to understand whether social media can be used more effectively to promote interfaith harmony and reduce religious intolerance in Pakistan. This research is based mainly on secondary data collected from academic research papers and studies on social media and interfaith relations in Pakistan. The study examined social media usage, religious tolerance and interfaith harmony using statistical analysis. The research shows that social media can contribute positively to interfaith harmony by exposing people to different religious perspectives and encouraging communication. However, its benefits depend on responsible use, digital literacy and controlling harmful content. Education was also found to strengthen the positive relationship between social media use and religious tolerance. Social media can be leveraged to strengthen interfaith harmony when it is used to encourage respectful dialogue, challenge stereotypes and promote shared human values rather than division.

**Keywords:**

Social Media, Interfaith Harmony, Religious Tolerance, Digital Dialogue, Shared Values

# NUTRITIONAL INEQUITY IN THE DOMESTIC SPHERE: ADDRESSING GENDER DISPARITIES IN HOUSEHOLD DIETARY INTAKE AND WOMEN'S HEALTH

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**Abstract:**

Gender equity and health resilience are closely linked to patterns of intra-household food distribution in developing countries. In many traditional Pakistani households, socio-cultural norms may influence the prioritization of food, with male members and children often being served first, potentially leaving women and young girls with smaller or less nutrient-dense portions. This paper explores the intersection of socio-cultural gender dynamics, household food allocation, and gender-related nutritional disparities, with particular attention to maternal anemia, micronutrient deficiencies, and nutrition-related fatigue among women. Through a community nutrition perspective, this paper examines how patriarchal expectations, economic constraints, and limited dietary literacy may contribute to gender-based nutritional vulnerabilities within households. It further highlights the importance of strengthening women's nutritional autonomy and its potential contribution to family health, child development, and overall societal productivity. The paper emphasizes the need for gender-inclusive public health strategies and community-led nutrition counselling that promote equitable meal distribution within families. Addressing nutritional inequity at the household level is therefore an essential component of advancing gender equality and women's health.

**Keywords:**

Gender Equity, Household Nutrition, Dietary Disparities, Women's Health, Maternal Anemia.

# THE ILLUSION OF INCLUSION: PERCEIVED DIVERSITY AND ALGORITHMIC POLARIZATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Social media platforms have become a source of inclusion for communication, representation and public participation across cultures, communities and religions. In Pakistan, where different ethnicities and socio-cultural diversity exist, all social media platforms play an important role in building individuals' political beliefs towards diversity. This paper emphasizes the study of how people of different ages perceive the idea of inclusion and diversity through the exposure of social media. Furthermore, this paper explores the role of social media in promoting diversity and inclusion by providing the right to individuals to express their political views on different agendas.This paper also examines how these platforms can build advanced narratives of individuals from marginalized communities, minorities, women and persons with disabilities), who have received limited representation in public spaces. By giving access and making digital space for interactions social media plays a pivotal role for better socio-political awareness, and mutual understanding. Along with all these positive roles of social media in creating inclusion and diversity, this paper also focuses on the drawbacks of how all these easily accessible platforms become a tool for misinformation, political threats and social divisions.So, in conclusion, this paper argues the gap between the potential of media platforms in creating social cohesion, engagement across different groups and spreading misconception and false information by filtering algorithms.

**Keywords:**

Social media algorithms, digital inclusion, echo chambers, political polarization, Pakistan

# BONDING OR BELIEVING? EMOTIONAL AND COGNITIVE ROUTES FROM PERCEIVED ANTHROPOMORPHISM TO DECISION SATISFACTION IN SKINCARE INDUSTRY

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**Abstract:**

AI chatbots have become a common feature of online shopping in Pakistan, and retailers are designing them to feel increasingly human. Whether this actually helps the customers is far less clear. Some studies find that human-like chatbot improves satisfaction, while other report that they cause discomfort or reduce it, which leaves consumers and retailers without reliable guidance. This study examines how a consumer's perception of a chatbot as human-like affects her satisfaction with the purchase decision she reaches, and it argues that this happens through two different routes rather than one. Drawing on Dual-Process Theory, the study purposes an emotional route, through Parasocial interaction, and practical route, through perceived task-solving competence. It further examines two conditions that may shape these routes: perceived cognitive empathy, which concerns whether the chatbot understands the person, and conversational intelligence, which concerns whether it understands the message. Data will be collected through a survey of 250 women in Lahore who have used an anthropomorphic chatbot while shopping for skincare online, and will be analyzed using PLS-SEM in SmartPLS alongside SPSS. Skincare was selected because it is a high-involvement purchase in which buyer's hold incomplete information and must decide whom to trust. The findings are expected to show which of the two routes matters more, and under what conditions one works. This research will contribute to digital literacy by helping consumers and developers distinguish between a chatbot that appears helpful and one genuinely assist's a person in making a good decision. It will also offer local retailers and software developers' evidence on whether to invest in a chatbot's warmth or in its ability to understand what a customer is asking, which is particularly relevant as more Pakistani women rely on AI assistance in everyday online purchases.

**Keywords:**

Chatbot anthropomorphism, Parasocial interaction, Decision satisfaction, Digital literacy, Skincare e-commerce

# CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE: MEDIATING CORPORATE REPUTATION AND MODERATING STAKEHOLDER PRESSURE IN PAKISTAN'S BANKING SECTOR

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**Abstract:**

This study aims to investigate the impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on financial performance and examine the mediating effect of corporate reputation in the banking sector of Pakistan. Specifically, it explores whether CSR contributes to improved financial performance indirectly by strengthening an organization's corporate reputation. A quantitative, non-experimental, and correlational research design was adopted for the study. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire from banking professionals in Pakistan using convenience and snowball sampling techniques, with a targeted sample of 260 respondents. The study is underpinned by Stakeholder Theory, which explains how organizations can create value by addressing the interests and expectations of their stakeholders through socially responsible practices. In this context, CSR is expected to strengthen corporate reputation, which may subsequently contribute to improved financial performance. The collected data were analyzed statistically to assess the proposed relationships and the mediating role of corporate reputation. Stata was used for data analysis, while SPSS and Hayes PROCESS were employed for hypothesis testing and mediation analysis. The study is expected to provide practical implications for banking professionals by highlighting the strategic importance of CSR and corporate reputation in enhancing financial performance. It may also assist policymakers and regulators in developing policies that encourage responsible business practices within the banking sector. Furthermore, the study contributes to the existing literature by providing context-specific insights into the CSR–financial performance relationship in Pakistan's banking sector and offering a basis for future research in this area.

**Keywords:**

Corporate Social Responsibility, Corporate Reputation, Innovation, Financial performance, Stakeholders pressure, Stakeholder Theory

# DIGITAL SPACES, REAL-WORLD PEACE: LEVERAGING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR INTERFAITH HARMONY AMONG PAKISTANI YOUTH

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**Abstract:**

Social media has become an important space for communication, information exchange, and interaction among young people. In a religiously diverse society such as Pakistan, these platforms can create opportunities to promote interfaith understanding, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence. At the same time, social media can facilitate the circulation of religious misinformation, intolerance, hate speech, and divisive narratives. This dual nature raises an important question: how can digital spaces be utilized more effectively to strengthen interfaith harmony among Pakistani youth? This study explores the potential of social media as a tool for promoting interfaith harmony and shared human values among Pakistani youth. The research examines young people's exposure to religious and community-related content, their perceptions of social media's role in fostering interfaith understanding, and the challenges posed by online religious intolerance and misinformation. The study employs an exploratory approach combining primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through a Google Forms questionnaire circulated among respondents, while secondary research draws upon relevant academic literature and institutional sources. Preliminary responses indicate frequent exposure to religious and community-related content and a generally positive perception of social media's potential to promote interfaith harmony. However, respondents also reported encountering religious hate speech, intolerance, or misinformation online. Interfaith awareness campaigns emerged as a prominent suggested approach for using social media constructively. The study argues that social media should not be viewed solely as a source of polarization but also as a potential platform for dialogue, awareness, and peaceful engagement. Strengthening digital literacy, encouraging responsible content creation, and developing meaningful interfaith awareness initiatives can help transform online spaces into platforms that support social cohesion and peace in Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Social Media, Interfaith Harmony, Pakistani Youth, Digital Literacy, Peace Building

# DIGITAL INCLUSION AND SOCIAL MEDIA VISIBILITY AMONG ELITE AND NON-ELITE WOMEN CRICKETERS IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

This study examined the relationship between digital inclusion and social media visibility among women cricketers in Pakistan, with particular emphasis on differences between elite and non-elite athletes. A quantitative, cross-sectional, comparative survey design was used, with data collected from 20 women cricketers, comprising elite (n =10) and non-elite (n = 10) players. Data were gathered through a structured, closed-ended instrument evaluating digital access, digital literacy, social media platform engagement and visibility metrics. Comparative analyses highlighted significant differences between the two groups, with elite players demonstrated significantly higher levels of digital access and digital literacy than non-elite players. In terms of visibility, elite players maintained a drastically larger presence, averaging tens of thousands more Instagram followers and significantly higher weekly posting frequencies than their non-elite peers. Multiple linear regression further indicated that digital access and literacy significantly predicted social media visibility overall with digital literacy exerting the single strongest influence on an athlete's online reach. The findings confirmed that digital inclusion is a primary determinant of online visibility and personal brand building for women cricketers in developing sports ecosystems. Elite women cricketers leverage superior access and skills to drive substantially greater public engagement. Conversely, domestic women cricketers faced systemic digital barriers that hinder their exposure and commercial potential. To bridge this divide and optimize athlete welfare, sports governing bodies must implement targeted digital infrastructure and capacity-building literacy initiatives tailored specifically for domestic-tier athletes.

**Keywords**:

Digital inclusion, Social media visibility, Women's cricket, Digital literacy, Sports marketing

# REIMAGINING INCLUSIVE PEDAGOGIES AND CIVIC LITERACY THROUGH UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstarct:**

Pakistan's education system is split into three main parts elite English schools, public Urdu schools and religious seminaries (known as madrassas).These different systems produce students with very different views of the world levels of knowledge about civic responsibilities and attitudes toward living in a diverse society.In 2020 the government tried to fix this by introducing the Single National Curriculum (SNC) which aimed to bring all these systems together.But this effort failed because of strong opposition from different groups problems in putting the plan into action and disagreements over religious content that was supposed to be included in a centralized way.This paper says the SNC failed not because of poor planning but because it tried to change everything at once instead of focusing on a common set of basic civic skills.Using ideas from modular curriculum design.the paper suggests a simpler approach called a **civic core** module.This module would focus on understanding the constitution, basic rights and how to think critically.It is designed to be easy to introduce within the existing education frameworks set up after the 18th Amendment and it avoids the conflicts and barriers that stopped the SNC from working.This new idea could help create a stronger sense of unity and social harmony.We may study in different systems and have different backgrounds but we all have same constitutional rights , responsibilities and a role as citizens of Pakistan.

**Keywords:**

Pakistan's Education System, CivicCore Module, Constitutional Knowledge, Critical Thinking

# BEYOND CELEBRATORY HYBRIDITY: FRAGMENTED IDENTITIES AND TRANSCULTURAL ANXIETIES IN SELECTED SOUTH ASIAN FICTION

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**Abstract:**

This study explores the psychological and emotional effects of transculturation in selected South Asian narratives, questioning the prevailing tendency in transcultural studies to regard hybridity as inherently beneficial and empowering. The primary texts include Monica Ali's Brick Lane, Jhumpa Lahiri's The Namesake, and Mohsin Hamid's Exit West, and the analysis posits that crossing borders often leads to emotional instability, traumatic anxieties, and an ongoing sense of not belonging rather than cultural satisfaction. While current transcultural scholarship, particularly Homi K. Bhabha, highlights hybridity as a space for negotiation and the formation of new identities, this article shows that migrants' realities often involve psychological fragmentation and inner conflict. The research employs qualitative textual analysis, drawing on the theoretical frameworks of Cathy Caruth, Homi K. Bhabha, and Frantz Fanon, as well as other relevant theorists. Through detailed analysis, this paper demonstrates how migrants experience identity fragmentation, cultural alienation, emotional instability, and disquieting selves as a result of power dynamics within transcultural environments. It argues that South Asian literary works offer a more authentic portrayal of migratory hybridity compared to celebratory theoretical frameworks, highlighting the emotional toll of displacement. Ultimately, the study suggests that transcultural studies should move beyond narratives of cultural unity to recognise the mental distress, fractured sense of belonging, and embodied pain that often accompany cross-cultural movement.

**Keywords:**

Transculturation; Transcultural Anxiety; Hybridity; Trauma; South Asian Literature; Border-Crossing; Identity Crisis

# INVISIBLE WOUNDS: HOW FAMILY EMOTIONAL EXPRESSIVENESS SHAPES EMBITTERMENT, DISSOCIATION, AND MENTAL HEALTH IN YOUNG ADULTS WITH TRAUMA

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**Abstract:**

This study explores the relationship between family expressiveness, embitterment, dissociative experiences and mental health issues in young adults with trauma. The data was gathered from a total of 302 young adults aged 18-25 years. Using a cross sectional correlational research design, the study employs a Family Expressiveness Questionnaire (FEQ), an Embitterment Scale (ES), Dissociative Symptoms Scale (DSS), and the Depression, Stress, Anxiety Scale (DASS21). Data is analyzed using the latest version of SPSS, employing both descriptive and inferential statistical methods. It was hypothesized that there will be significant correlation between mental health issues and family expressiveness, embitterment, and dissociative experiences. The findings revealed negative family expressiveness ($r=.17^{**}$, $p<0.01$), embitterment ($r=.36^{**}$, $p<0.01$) and dissociation ($r=.52^{**}$, $p<0.01$) to be significantly correlated with mental health issues. Linear regression analysis identified positive submissive family expressiveness, embitterment and dissociation to be significant predictors of mental health issues. Mediation analysis also revealed that both embitterment and dissociative experiences mediate the relationship between family expressiveness and mental health issues. This study emphasizes the importance of healthy family expressiveness and coping mechanisms in reducing mental health issues. The findings provide insights for practitioners, clinicians, counselors, and educators to incorporate the findings in trauma informed interventions and support awareness campaigns to effectively reduce mental health issues in young adults with trauma.

**Keywords:**

Family Expressiveness, Embitterment, Dissociation, Mental Health Issues, Young Adults, Trauma

# DIVERSITY TO UNITY: REDUCING PREJUDICE AND BUILDING RESPECT

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**Abstract:**

Cultural diversity is one of the important aspects of the social knowledge, collective identity, creativity andstrength of a nation. However, if there is no opportunity for meaningful interaction, misunderstandings andpolarization can take place regarding ethnic, linguistic, religious, traditional and regional differences. In this context, a policy for cultural diversity should take into account and protect cultural identity, while at the same time encouraging a sense of community. In this paper attention will be paid to the role that collaborative projects play in the field of cultural identity, intercultural understanding and social cohesion and national integration.It examines the conceptual and analytical issues of how governmental institutions, educational institutions, civil society, cultural institutions, the media, youth organizations and local communities can cooperate to create inclusive cultural exchange spaces. Traditions, experience and perspectives of the people and communities can be shared through cultural festivals, inter-community dialogue, educational exchanges, collaborative arts and heritage initiatives, youth engagement initiatives,and digital platforms. Such interactions can challenge stereotypes, reduce prejudices and build respect andhelp to maintain communities in their own cultural identity.The paper emphasizes not to be ‘culturaluniformity' in cultural integration but a rather, sustainable integration can be achieved if there aremechanisms to allow for all communities to equally engage in social, cultural and national life. Specialfocus is placed on the part that young people can play in intercultural dialogue and the value of inclusivepolicies in institutions to ensure representation and value of diverse voices. In the paper it is proposed thatco-creative cultural practices are able to achieve a transformation of the polarity of difference and divideinto dialogue and solidarity, towards a collective development. Last but not least, cultural cooperation canplay a role in fostering social harmony, continuity of cultural heritage, assertion of one's national belongingand the promotion of an inclusive, peaceful and resilient society.

**Keywords:**

Cultural diversity, Collective Identity, Inclusivity, Cultural uniformity, Inter-Cultural Dialouge

# GENDER, SOCIAL ORDER, AND INTERPROVINCIAL IDENTITY IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

Gender in Pakistan is a particularly sensitive subject, not merely because it concerns the relationship between men and women, but because that relationship is deeply embedded in the country's social identity, traditions and institutions. This paper argues that patriarchy is best understood not as a system of male authority but as a thought form: a framework through which social values, traditions, norms and conventions have been organized, and rarely named. The vocabulary of izzat, ghairat, sharam, pardah, ghar, namus and khandan carries that structure. Turning to interprovincial harmony, it suggests that the provinces are not the deepest basis of a shared identity; the strongest common framework is Pakistani nationality, existing alongside diverse ethnolinguistic and regional identities that need not be exclusive. Population dynamics complicate this, as migration, labour mobility and urbanization alter the balance between regions and communities. Examining women's position within that structure, the paper argues that women's economic contribution cannot be understood merely through formal employment: a rural woman may contribute enormous unpaid or under compensated labour while remaining statistically invisible, and contribution and ownership are not the same thing. Sex-disaggregated labour, unpaid-work and property evidence is reported in support, and Sen's notion of entitlement, read with Nash's equilibrium concept, distinguishes a formal claim from what a claimant can actually command. Finally, it argues against expecting harmony among women as such: competition is often a rational response to scarcity, and the objective is not to make women peaceful but to let them compete, inherit, work, lead and participate on the basis of their abilities.

**Keywords:**

Patriarchy, Gender and Social Identity, National Integration, Women's Economic Contribution, Entitlement and Agency

# NATURAL GAS CONSUMPTION AND INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION IN SOUTH ASIA: EVIDENCE FROM PAKISTAN, INDIA, AND BANGLADESH

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**Abstract:**

Accessible and reliable energy is necessary for sutained industrial activity, economic growth and development. This study anqlyzea the impact of natural gas consumption on industrial production in three South Asian countries incliding; Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh from the year 2002–2024. Comparative analysis of countries gives evidence that share regional development challenges while differing in their energy structures and industrial conditions. Secondary data is extracted from the World Development Indicators and the U.S. Energy Information Administration. By estimating panel data, study examines industrial production as a function of natural gas consumption, alternative energy use, real interest rate, and unemployment. Pooled OLS is used with robust standard errors to remove heteroscedasticity. Significant positive relationship is indicated between natural gas consumption and industrial production, emphasizing importance of energy for better industrial performance. Significant and negative effect is detected in case of alternative energy use and real interest rate. Unemployment exhibits statistically significant and positive impact on industrial production. Findings of the study indicate the need of policies that help in industrial expansion with the use of reliable, affordable and accessible energy sources for production purposes. This study explores diversity and inclusivity in development by focusing on shared industrial and energy problems in Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Industrial growth can be facilitated by improving energy security, technological progress and skill based investment projects that not only provide greater workforce but also enhance labor productivity. The results stressing the possible advantages of regional collaboration in dealing with energy limitations and promoting sustainable and widely distributed economic potential across South Asia.

**Keywords:**

Natural Gas Consumption; Industrial Production; Inclusive Development; Energy Policy; South Asia

# THE AI GAZE: CULTURE, MISREPRESENTATION & DIGITAL LITERACY IN PAKISTAN

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**Abstract:**

In the age of information, the digital world is highly saturated with AI. According to a survey, Pakistan has been ranked among the world's top five users of artificial intelligence (AI) tools. The exponential rise in AI-generated content; images, memes, videos, and audio, has possibly transformed how cultural representations are created and propagated on social media. However, readily access does not promise AI literacy. Inadequate technological familiarity might distort the cultural realities circulated through AI and may introduce a challenge in evaluating AI-generated content. This study adopts a qualitative methodology to closely examine recurring and prevalent content for media literacy. AI-generated media has a tendency to portray stereotypes, exclusive activities, and derogatory cultural markers and may propagate marginalization. This study aims to show that the demonstration of Pakistani identity and culture through AI can be fruitful but may continue to overlook Pakistan's social diversity and cultures. This study stresses the educational and technical interventions to assess authenticity and differentiation between what's real and what's not real. Greater cultural inclusivity demands critical cultural literacy to empower the communities.

**Keywords:**

AI-generated content, cultural inclusivity, AI literacy, social media, marginalization, cultural representation

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