



The Intersection of Patriarchal Chains and The Natural Disasters: Exploring the Impact of Flood on Women in The Rural Areas of Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

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The current study aims to unfold the multifaceted impacts of flood disasters on women in the socio-economic sphere. The universe of the present venture was the rural areas of Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan. The research questions of the study were: What are the adverse impacts of disasters on the livelihood of women in rural areas of district D.G. Khan? What is the role of women in uplifting the socio-economic status of livelihood in the rural areas of D.G. Khan? The researcher interviewed 19 female respondents by using purposive sampling. The data was gathered through an interview guide using the face-to-face technique. The data was analyzed through thematic analysis and the following themes were identified: impact of flooding on women, women's health and food security, women's health and malnutrition, women and economic insecurity, workload in the family and their burden, shelter problems and women, intimate partner violence and feminization of poverty. The study concluded that women are vulnerable in different ways. Firstly, women are suffering from nutritional deficiency; secondly, women must work at home and in the fields with men; thirdly, women are not allowed to get an education; and fourthly, women lack access to information.

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Introduction

Since the inception of human societies, one of the serious threats that humans have always faced has been natural disasters. Though natural disasters have always been a challenge for human society in every era, over the past few decades, the damages and losses in terms of mortality and economy throughout the globe have intensified severely. If we look at the numbers gathered by several reports, in recent times (from 1992 to 2002), the material or economic loss has been more than seven times what it used to be back in the 1960s (UNDP 2008). The natural disaster has been a global problem, but the reality is that its impact and severity depend on different factors, including the type of society, i.e., the impact of the natural disaster varies from country to country and community to community (Jeeban Panthi 2015). Just like development, natural disasters occur unevenly, especially in third-world countries, i.e., those areas that are less developed in terms of infrastructure and specifically fighting the catastrophes caused by natural disasters. Thus, these less developed countries, which are not equipped with modern infrastructure, are less likely to cope with the aftermath of disasters (UNDP 2008). In most cases, these countries with poor infrastructure are not even able to withstand the initial disaster shock. In such cases, these countries have in the past and will in the future face way bigger losses in comparison to those countries that have better infrastructure to fight disaster shocks, even with disasters of the same magnitude (Noy 2009).

While in such less developed countries, it is always the rural areas and communities that are at most risk of asset losses, thus presenting a serious threat to the livelihoods (which are solely reliant on natural sources) of these agrarian communities and even greater risk to the livelihoods of women in these communities. These agrarian communities are at high risk for the fact that they are less likely to be adaptive or have any alternative means of production that can sustain their livelihood in such disastrous times (Skoufias E. 2011). Yet numerous researchers and experts have admitted that only a handful of studies have been conducted to analyse this situation quantitatively, let alone qualitatively, which could help policymakers counter or at least minimize the severity of natural disasters in these communities (Paxon 1992, Kocher 1999, T. Owens 2003 and Hoddinott 2006). Pakistan is one of the most vulnerable countries to natural disasters, which have been struck by different catastrophic events in recent decades. In the economic survey report for 2018–2019, it has been warned that the average temperature in Pakistan is to rise higher than the average global temperature. That will naturally result in higher and more severe natural disasters, i.e., droughts, heat waves, flooding, erosion, changes in the rain cycle, etc., that will have an adverse effect on the economic growth of the whole country, specifically the communities that are relying on agricultural and livestock means. The climate change will directly disturb the living pattern of the region near lower Sindh to southern Punjab, i.e., mostly relying on agricultural activities, whether it be growing edible crops or raising livestock (Achakzai 2019).

The South Punjab region, specifically the district of D. G. Khan, has been severely affected by these disasters due to a lack of basic infrastructure, thus leaving the region unable to cope with the above-mentioned natural disasters. As in the D. G. Khan district of South Punjab, an estimated

1.1 billion people lack access to safe drinking water, 2.5 billion people have no access to proper sanitation, and more than 5 million people die each year from a water-related disease. This leaves communities in this region at the highest risk in case of any natural disaster (Ali 2018). In the event of natural disasters hitting the region, women and young girls are supposed to be the most endangered, accounting for almost seventy percent of the total displaced population (IPCC 2007). Moreover, in recent natural disasters such as the floods of 2010 and 2012 in D. G. Khan, it was evident that most of the programmes and policies formulated to fight disasters were not gender-neutral (J 2012).

1.2 Statement of Problems

In rural D.G. Khan, natural disasters cause livelihood losses, which lower women's quality of life. Dera Ghazi Khan is a less developed Pakistani region. Despite abundant natural resources, women's quality of life is unequal. Women in this region have significant socio-economic, cultural, and political disparities. Women are important in family decision-making and often need male support. Annual floods and natural disasters occur in the region. Due to heavy precipitation on the Koh-e-Suleman mountain range and Rod Kohi flowing onto the plains, the district experiences regular floods. This study aims to examine the impact of disasters on the livelihoods of women in the aforementioned locations, with a particular focus on the importance of considering the perspective of social change. It also highlights a potential path ahead by exploring the resilience and recovery capacity of women in the face of a catastrophic event. The paper encompasses various novel models, confirmations, and information pertaining to disaster positioning, considering individuals' discernment, cultural and regulatory behaviour of women, women's resilience in the aftermath of a disaster, the role of women in creating a flexible environment, women's capacity to adapt to disasters, the consequences resulting from disasters, recovery capacity, and the transformative impact of disasters on women.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the adverse impacts of disasters on the livelihood of women in rural areas of district D.G. Khan?
2. What is the role of women in uplifting their livelihoods amidst the natural disaster in the rural areas of D.G. Khan?

1.4 Objectives

1. To explore the adverse impacts of natural disasters on the livelihood of women in rural areas of District D.G. Khan
2. To assess the degradation of the quality of life of women caused by natural disasters in rural areas of D.G. Khan
3. To suggest measures to uplift the standard of women and make them less vulnerable to the impacts of natural disasters.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study's results are related to the sociology of rural growth. Rural development is a planned, organized way to improve the quality of life and economic well-being of people who live in rural areas (Moseley, 2003). This study focused on the socioeconomic situations and livelihood

methods of rural women in D. G. Khan, Punjab, Pakistan. This project aims to collect data on women's natural disaster-related challenges. Numerous natural calamities have devastated rural areas, especially women, who are especially vulnerable. (Qaisrani 2018). Even with the declining share of agriculture in the GDP of Pakistan, agriculture is still serving as the backbone of the economy, while millions of citizens—almost 45% of the total population—rely directly or indirectly on agricultural means of production in Pakistan (Shah 2005). Due to institutional patriarchal standards, women's significant contributions to the rural economy are overlooked. Across age groups, rural women work in agriculture, seed preparation, weeding, crop harvesting, and animal keeping. It is interesting that these women are often underpaid for their work (Dad et al., 2019). Policymakers often disregard women's well-being, including natural catastrophe management measures (Ishaq, 2016). This study aims to document how natural disasters affect women's socioeconomic well-being. Women's perspectives on natural disasters have been disregarded, but they must be included. For 50% of rural economic activity participants to be included, this strategy is essential. The study focuses on development and its effects on people's well-being because rural dwellers are heavily influenced by quality-of-life programs. Include this demographic in official records to ensure the long-term viability of community-focused policies, not women-segregated ones. This study documents the challenges women face following a natural disaster to educate rural development efforts. To safeguard the future prospects of this disenfranchised population, planning must include them.

2.0 Literature Review

Eaubonne argued that population growth and the depletion of resources were serious issues. She urged all women to defend humanity and the environment. Since then, ecofeminism has become popular and appealing. Liberal feminists believe women should have greater schooling to solve the environmental crisis (Merchant 1996). Marxist analysis shows that capitalism and sexism, which exploit disadvantaged groups and make people vulnerable, harm nature. Black feminists have accused them of not accepting women of diverse colours, tribes, and social backgrounds. Cross-sectional analysis divides natural disaster effects by class, race, age, handicap, and gender. Ecofeminist thinkers also discuss how women might safeguard the environment through politics. Women have remained environmentalists. Other countries have recorded these incidents, as well as the West. Women from India's sub-Himalayas formed the Chipko movement to safeguard the area's forests. It also highlighted social groups created by similar crimes (Passantino 2017).

Ecofeminism is inclusive and discusses culturally and racially marginalized communities. Ecofeminism is studied using a “quilt” theoretical framework. The quilt's borders represent women's marginalization and social classes, while the embroidery or designs within them reflect ecofeminism's diversity. It shows how women's inclusion of races, cultures, and socioeconomic vulnerabilities influences nature (Warren 2000). By weaving photos of women impacted by natural calamities and illustrating this quilt, Enarson (2017) literally applied this metaphor.

In this present research, an inter-sectional analysis of feminism has been adopted. The region of Dera Ghazi Khan has been selected, which is a remote region of Punjab province in

Pakistan. The focus has been placed on the differences in the lived experiences of the women with respect to climate change and natural disasters. The flooding affects the lives of the women in Dera Ghazi Khan in such a way that they face the issues of nutritional deficiency, increasing workload, lack of shelter, economic insecurity, lack of education, lack of information, feminization of poverty, intimate partner violence, and lack of information (Cannon 2000, Hines 2007, Rai 2021 and Dasgupta 2010).

3.0 Methodology

The primary focus of this study is to investigate the profound impact of disasters on the livelihoods of women living in rural communities. Throughout the course of this research, the researcher made diligent efforts to gain a deep understanding of the cultural and contextual nuances inherent in various communities of DG Khan, with a special emphasis on those communities that have grappled with disasters and the myriad challenges they entail. Furthermore, this study sought to explore the unique perspective of women within these communities, as they play a pivotal role in addressing the multifaceted challenges posed by disasters and, in doing so, strive to restore economic equilibrium in their lives.

A total of 19 respondents were selected for this research, employing a purposive sampling technique to ensure that the participants could provide valuable insights into the subject matter. To facilitate the data collection process, an interview guide was utilized, and face-to-face, in-depth interviews were conducted in the local context. These interviews allowed the researcher to engage with the respondents directly, gaining a deeper understanding of their experiences and perspectives.

Subsequently, the collected data underwent a rigorous analysis process using thematic analysis techniques. This approach enabled the identification and categorization of recurring themes and patterns within the data. Through this analysis, several key themes emerged, shedding light on the intricate relationship between disasters, rural communities, and the resilience and strategies employed by women to address the economic imbalances brought about by these challenges. The resulting themes serve as valuable insights into the unique experiences and perspectives of these communities and, more specifically, the vital role that women play in their response to disasters and their efforts to restore economic stability.

4.0 Results

Nature disasters disproportionately affect the poor. Men suffer less from natural disasters than women. According to African and South Asian research, women should be encouraged to work in agriculture more than men. The woman must rear child and elderly while farming and housework. So, natural disasters affect women more than men. Women suffered economic, social, and gender issues from the 2004 Indian tsunami and Bangladesh floods.

Dera Ghazi Khan was harmed by two types of storms. In hilly areas, underground Rodkohi watercourses cause torrential floods. Flooding comes from the nearby riverbank. Riverine residents are prone to soil erosion. Soil erosion reduces farmland. Both storms destroy crops, wildlife, and homes. Remote Dera Ghazi residents are poor. Floods worsen victims' poverty.

4.1 Impacts of Natural Disaster on Women Livelihood

In developing countries, women must do the domestic work and the work outside their home along with their male counterparts. In the case of Bangladesh, women usually lose household essentials to do their domestic work (Cannon, 2002; Rahman, 2013). In South Asia, the patriarchal setup is prevalent, which inhibits the movement of women outside of their homes or without their male family members. The economic activities of women in the rural context of the developing world mostly depend on the economic activity that is linked to their home. In this manner, the woman is left with the option of either working with her husband on the farms or engaging in cattle rearing with her husband. In Bangladesh, when the flood hit the villages, the crops were destroyed, and the animals were lost (Rahman 2013). In the case of South Asia, women's income is mostly derived from informal economic activity such as farming or cattle rearing. The natural disaster adds to the economic vulnerability of women. They lost the economic activity that they had before the natural disaster. In the report of the Asia Development Bank, it is mentioned that almost 95% of the women who are the breadwinners of the family are suffering from poverty. The economic insecurity of women increases in the wake of natural disasters; their workload increases due to the disaster; and women require more time to recover from the damages caused by natural disasters (Rahman, 2013).

4.2 Impact of Flooding on Women of Dera Ghazi Khan

The natural calamity has serious consequences for women in the global south, particularly in rural Dera Ghazi Khan, Pakistan. Women in rural Dera Ghazi Khan face many challenges during heavy RodKohi or riverine flooding. Women lose their livelihood—cultivable land, crops, and cattle. They work more and recover slower since they cannot earn more from off-farm activities. Women consume fewer calories than males worldwide. Records show that women have chronic energy shortage. Because women have different nutritional demands. The woman must eat more throughout pregnancy to nourish the baby and more once the baby is delivered to the nurse. The feminization of poverty-maintained gender inequity and male dominance. However, the nutrition needs of the women are somehow better in the developed global north compared to the global south. It is recorded that in the case of South and Southeast Asia that almost eighty percent of the women who are pregnant are suffering from deficiency of iron (Davis 2005).

When a natural disaster happens, it usually takes women a while to get better. The main reason for this delay is that women are confined to their homes. The women don't have many options because their children are expected to follow the gender-based roles of women from a young age. There are several cases of women not receiving relief fund funds during natural disasters (Hines, 2007). Natural events, especially floods, make it harder for women to do their housework. A woman loses domestic food-making tools. Women's economic dependence is largely on household tasks (Khondker, 1996).

4.3 Impact of Gender Socializations

Gender socialization is the process by which men and females acquire thoughts and ideas about what it means to be a man or a woman. This approach frequently creates and reinforces existing gender stereotypes in diverse societies. Females learn what it means to be "lady-like" from a young age, whereas men learn what it means to be "manly." These gender socializations, together

with patriarchal taboos, have resulted in a rigid division of labor and gender expectations in rural communities. Women in Pakistan's riverine belt were taught not to climb trees. Climbing trees by women was considered acting "like a boy." When the storm hit the coastline, many women who were trying to escape could not get high enough to help themselves. They just lacked the necessary skills and competence (Oxfam International, 2005).

4.4 Impact of Patriarchal Society

Patriarchal norms and expectations make women more vulnerable to disasters as well. Patriarchal constraints are seen in the way they perpetuate the stereotype of a weak, unfit woman. Such practices undermine female empowerment and frequently come at a cost to women. Traditions and taboos in the rural community kept women from going out into the water. Many women didn't know how to swim because they couldn't go into the water. This kind of restriction hurt both the women who stayed by the water to wait for their husbands and the women who stayed inside to do their wifely chores. A lot of people didn't know how to swim, so they couldn't get to safety when the storm hit (Oxfam International, 2005).

In Dera Ghazi Khan, women and men work in fields and raise livestock. A patriarchal society forbids women from going outside without their male family members. Ghee and butter are made from animal milk by women, who also embroider. Flooding forces women to care for family members who are impacted or sick with typhoid, chickenpox, or hepatitis. Nearly 95% of family breadwinner women live in poverty, according to the Asia Development Bank. Women are less financially secure after natural disasters, they have more work to do, and it takes them longer to heal from the damage caused by natural disasters (Dasgupta 2010)

Dera Ghazi Khan's patriarchal system prevents women from going outside alone. *"We must work with our male family member if we work outside the home. We cannot go to the market alone either. Our male family members handle market duties alone". (Respondent A)*

"As the women are not allowed to go to the market, they are not allowed to engage in non-farm economic activities outside our house, and their family men are not present in Dera Ghazi Khan. It is due to this reason that we are unable to find employment once the flood destroys our cultivated crops." (Respondent B)

Despite the fact that women are barred from going outside their homes, they can still work inside their homes to feed their families in Dera Ghazi Khan. *"We are engaged in the work of embroidery, which is then sold by our men in city markets. Even though the work of embroidery does not pay enough money to us, we are still contributing to the family income despite the dominance of the men in selling our items and bringing money for us." (Respondent C)* Moreover, the relief funds also do not reach the people in the village. The ownership of the relief funds by the women is a far cry. Some non-governmental organizations (NGO) distributed relief funds to their members in the regions, but those members of the NGO did not give that money to the local population.

4.5 Women's Health and Food Security

Men and women around the world are thought to have different amounts of calories. Records show that women have a chronic energy shortage. Because women have different

nutritional demands, the woman must eat more throughout pregnancy to nourish the baby and more once the baby is delivered to the nurse. When it comes to nutrition, though, women in the developed global north have better needs than women in the global south. Nearly 80% of pregnant women in South and Southeast Asia have iron insufficiency (Rahman 2013).

Women in impoverished countries are already malnourished; thus, natural disasters worsen their nutritional demands. Alam wrote in (2017) about how rains in Bangladesh wear away at the land along rivers. The author shows how natural disaster victims are trapped in a cycle of poverty. He said floods have eroded cultivable land, trapping impoverished farmers in poverty. Farmers lose food as floodwaters wash away their land. Since the farmer no longer has the option to work in farming, he has to do other jobs that don't pay enough for him to buy food. As a result, if the family's overall food requirements are not satisfied, the lady will become energy deficient. Women are sometimes positioned at the bottom of the food chain in several South Asian civilizations, resulting in them receiving less food (Rahman 2013). Terry Cannon (2002) covers flooding in Bangladesh and its impact on women in another study on Bangladesh. He claims that women in Bangladesh are energy deficient as a result of malnutrition and that health facilities are also unavailable to women in comparison to men.

Revathi I. Hines (2007) explores the aftermath of the tsunami's impact on women in southern India, he claims that when the tsunami struck the coastal districts, the local fishery community was impacted. Women were not provided with adequate medical care during the rescue efforts, which were primarily focused on food supplies. The conditions of Dera Ghazi Khan are also similar to the broader context of South and Southeast Asia. The women in Dera Ghazi Khan are also suffering from malnutrition; as one respondent said, *"Yes, we are suffering from the nutrition deficiency." (Respondent D)*

However, the case of Dera Ghazi Khan differs from that of Bangladesh and India as women in Bangladesh have less access to health care than men. In the instance of Dera Ghazi Khan, however, there is no health care center in the rural area, even for men. As one respondent put it, *"The issue of women's access to health care facilities becomes obvious. The local politician never came to our regions. If someone becomes ill and our men transport him to the hospital, he may die in the process since the hospital is too far away from our hamlet. There is no health care facility near our community, therefore we must drive a long distance." (Respondent E)*

The respondent blames the government for their inability to provide proper health care in their Dera Ghazi Khan village. In the case of India, food supplies were available, at least for women, if medical services were not unavailable (Hines, 2007). Similarly, in Bangladesh, men have access to health care whereas women do not (Cannon, 2002). In the instance of Dera Ghazi Khan, there is no health care center for men, and chronically ill patients frequently die on the route to the hospital.

4.6 Workload in the Family and Their Burden

In developing countries, women are required to undertake both domestic and external labor alongside their male counterparts. In the context of Bangladesh, it is commonly observed that women tend to forego access to necessary home resources in order to fulfill their domestic

responsibilities (Cannon, 2002; Rahman, 2013).

The South Asian region is characterized by a prevailing patriarchal system that restricts the mobility of women, limiting their ability to venture beyond their households or engage in activities without the accompaniment of male family members. In the rural environment of the developing world, the economic endeavors undertaken by women are predominantly dependent upon the economic activities associated with their household. In this case, the lady is presented with the choice of either collaborating with her spouse in agricultural activities or participating in livestock husbandry alongside her spouse. According to Hines (2007), women need to travel considerable distances in order to procure safe water to drink.

The occurrence of floods in Dera Ghazi Khan bears certain similarities to the occurrence of flooding in Bangladesh. The agricultural produce of Dera Ghazi Khan is susceptible to loss, mostly as a result of two factors: firstly, the inundation caused by the river leading to soil degradation, and secondly, the flooding originating from Rodkahi. Typically, individuals predominantly acquire water for agricultural purposes from either rivers or the Rodkahi. According to one participant,

“Crop cultivation is carried out using water sourced from Rodkahi. Our farming relies on the water supply from Rodkahi. This holds great significance for us”. (Respondent F)

The well-being of the population is dependent upon agricultural production and livestock husbandry, as indicated by one participant who stated, *“The predominant livelihood of the community is closely tied to farming and raising cattle.”* (Respondent FA)

This is the manner in which the inhabitants sustain themselves in our locality. A group of individuals have established a modest retail establishment offering a variety of goods, alongside engaging in agricultural activities for crop growing. According to a participant's statement, *“the primary source of sustenance for the local population is predominantly derived from agricultural activities, supplemented by a limited presence of a general shop. However, it was noted that the male members of the community tend to occupy the general store while adhering to the norm of purdah (veiling), whilst the female members do not engage in the operation of such establishments within our locality.”* (Respondent GA)

Women actively participate in agricultural activities and livestock management, collaborating with their male counterparts. In societies characterized by a patriarchal structure, women are typically prohibited from venturing outdoors unaccompanied by male family members. However, a number of male participants acknowledged throughout the interview that women face significant challenges in their lives. According to one participant,

“Indeed, the simultaneous engagement in domestic chores, childcare responsibilities, and participation in agricultural and livestock activities is a considerable challenge for us. We are currently experiencing significant challenges in our daily existence.” (Respondent GB)

4.7 Lack of Education

In South Asian culture, women are typically prohibited from pursuing educational opportunities. Being the victim of a natural disaster worsens the existing challenges faced by women in accessing education. The case study on floods in Bangladesh documents the

phenomenon wherein young girls are responsible for doing domestic household tasks. However, during a natural disaster, the magnitude of their workload escalates to such an extent that they are compelled to abandon their education and assume additional responsibilities inside the household (Dasgupta, 2010). According to Cannon (2002), women are responsible for attending to the needs of both youngsters and the elderly in addition to their regular household duties during periods of natural disasters. According to Dasgupta (2010), women who possess less literacy and education face challenges in accessing favourable work prospects, which subsequently affects their ability to influence home decision-making dynamics.

In addition, women have fewer job opportunities because they can't get enough schooling. The absence of government initiatives in Dera Ghazi Khan to mend the flood-damaged school infrastructure is clear. According to a participant, *"We are not allowed to leave the premises of the house; we cannot go to the market; we are not allowed to go to school. We just know the skills of mat making; we are not literate, so it is not possible for us to work in the formal sector. In this way, we have limited opportunities for employment outside the house."* (Respondent I)

It is important to note that Dera Ghazi Khan is not like other South Asian countries where women are sometimes barred from education or forced to quit after a natural disaster. Dasgupta (2010) found that many Bangladeshi adolescent girls have stopped education due to floods, mostly because of their domestic duties.

"The school was destroyed during the flood, and the government has not paid attention to reconstructing the schools. It is due to this that our children are deprived of the educational facilities." (Respondent IA)

Therefore, women in Dera Ghazi Khan experience a dual marginalization as a result of both poverty and patriarchy. Females and males are situated in the periphery.

Certain communities in Dera Ghazi Khan possess educational institutions that have withstood the ravages of floods or other natural calamities; nevertheless, regrettably, their offspring are unable to avail themselves of the educational opportunities provided within.

"The school building is there, standing in front of us, but we are unable to get an education because the local influential people use it for their cattle's", "I have never seen a teacher coming to school or any other staff; the local influential use it." (Respondent IA)

The combined effect of poverty and a lack of government attempts to support education in the rural areas of Dera Ghazi Khan has resulted in the deprivation of local pupils' fundamental right to get an education. In this particular environment, it is evident that the lack of educational opportunities in Dera Ghazi Khan is not limited to girls alone. Both boys and girls have challenges in accessing education, primarily resulting from the inadequate presence of teaching staff and infrastructure. The educational facilities in Dera Ghazi Khan are insufficient for the girls in this context.

4.8 Shelter Problem and Women

The impact of natural catastrophes on residential constructions in South Asia presents significant issues for women in the region. In South Asian society, there is a prevalent practice of limiting women's mobility beyond their homes. Women face a multitude of difficulties when they

are required to vacate their homes during a natural disaster (Nasreen, 2010). The research conducted in Bangladesh unveiled that women in this context are socialized to abstain from engaging in autonomous outings due to the significant emphasis placed by their families on preserving their honor. Within this specific context, it is seen that women primarily remain restricted to domestic spaces, and as a result of the flood, their residences are severely damaged, leading to the loss of their lives. Cannon (2000) asserts that women residing in relief camps are driven to interact with male individuals because to the limited degree of privacy afforded by these camps. The establishment of relief camps in India following the 2004 tsunami might be likened to a similar scenario. In the aftermath of the tsunami, the establishment of relief camps presented a challenge for women in terms of privacy (Hines, 2007).

The interviews conducted with Dera Ghazi Khan did not yield any documented instances of privacy concerns or sexual assault. The absence of relief camps in the flood-affected district of Dera Ghazi might be attributed to the government's failure to create such facilities. During the flood season, the majority of villagers show a preference for seeking refuge at the residences of their relatives. As indicated by one participant, *"Our relatives live near the Indus Road when the flood came and destroyed our home; we took asylum in our relatives house"* (Respondent IC)

The villagers have to decide whether to move to where their relatives live or to move to a city to find work in businesses outside of agriculture. As one respondent mentioned that,

"We must relocate on every monsoon season due to the flooding we either go to the city or to the home of a relative" (Respondent J)

Researchers in Bangladesh and India have already found problems with camp life (Nasreen, 2010; Hines, 2007; Cannon, 2002), but they haven't been found in Dera Ghazi Khan. One could say that the fact that women's privacy hasn't been invaded in Dera Ghazi Khan isn't just because women are treated differently. As was already said, Dera Ghazi Khan's social and cultural framework is based on a patriarchal system that doesn't allow women to work outside of their homes. The fact that there were no relief camps in Dera Ghazi Khan after the floods means that women's privacy was not invaded.

4.9 Lack of Information

In South Asia, women are often not allowed to have a voice in how decisions are made in their own homes. There are problems for women when it comes to getting information. Through the patriarchal system, women have been limited and mostly kept to their homes, where they are at risk of drowning during floods. In India, where the tsunami did a lot of damage, women who were inside their homes died when the water came in. In the same way, the women who were waiting for their husbands to arrive met tragic ends (Hines, 2007).

Some people have talked about how the lack of schools in Dera Ghazi Khan's faraway towns makes it hard for boys to go to school in these places. In this case, women are not getting nearly as much schooling as they should be. This is similar to the idea of making information easy to find. The men don't have much access to schooling, so they don't know much about the impending disaster. This means they can't properly prepare for it. One respondent put it this way, *"How can we have information when the males do not have information about the approaching*

floods?" (Respondent JA)

Women in Dera Ghazi Khan are especially vulnerable to the disaster because they don't know about it. Also, men tend to work outside the home, which gives them more chances to find safe places to hide when they think a flood is coming than women do.

4.10 Women economic activism

Women have, however, sometimes taken on tasks that were usually done by men, like planning meals for the family. The tsunami had an effect on the southern parts of India. The women who lived in fishing towns started the process of buying boats. In South India, they were against the male system that was in place and took an active role in the job of fishing. It's important to note, though, that the situations listed above are thought to be exceptions. Most of the women, on the other hand, were forced to get married young, and some were married because their families had to pay for things after the storm (Oxfam, 2005).

In Dera Ghazi Khan, women are subject to restrictions that confine them within their households, however, they are able to engage in domestic work as a means of providing sustenance for their family. The women are actively involved in the craft of needlework, producing mats, and rope, and occasionally engaging in pottery as well. Due to restrictions imposed on women's access to the market, men typically assume the responsibility of transporting and selling these goods in urban marketplaces, as one respondent said,

"We are unable to earn more money. We usually do the work of embroidery and ropemaking, and the men sell it in the markets". (Respondent JB)

The women can't make more money than they need to live because the things they make don't sell for much more than what they cost. The rural areas of Dera Ghazi Khan are geographically far from the urban centers, resulting in limited access to larger city marketplaces. The men residing in rural areas of Dera Ghazi Khan engage in the sale of goods produced by women in their communities to local markets, primarily as a consequence of this underlying factor. The individuals who engage in the acquisition of these commodities subsequently distribute them to larger markets at significantly inflated rates, resulting in inadequate remuneration for the item's original creator. The remuneration provided by non-agricultural endeavors in the rural areas of Dera Ghazi Khan is insufficient for the local populace. As one respondent said,

"The items we produce are not sold at higher prices, because our men have access to local markets only. In this way, the money that we earn from the sale of mats is mostly used for household expenses." (Respondent JC)

Additionally, the government is doing nothing to promote the Dera Ghazi Khan region's traditional pottery, rope, mat, and embroidery production. One potential strategy for enhancing the value of cultural artifacts in various places is through government promotion. The rise in the value of these commodities would correspondingly augment the income of impoverished households engaged in their production. By implementing this approach, the cessation of the middleman's exploitation, wherein they acquire goods from impoverished individuals and resell them at inflated rates in urban markets, would be achieved.

4.11 Intimate partner violence

Natural disasters make intimate partner violence (IPV) more common. Nevertheless, this phenomenon is neither exclusive to the developing world nor limited to South Asia. Intimate partner violence (IPV) persists within the context of natural disasters, even in developed nations. According to reports from New Zealand, the incidence of intimate partner violence (IPV) had a notable increase of 53% in the aftermath of the Canterbury earthquake. The incidence of violence against women in the United States had a significant surge of 98% in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. The occurrence of intimate partner violence (IPV) during a natural disaster is similarly observed in regions classified as the global north (Parkinson 2019) A recent study by Dera Ghazi Khan found a similar trend in IPV after natural disasters. Pakistani society, like Indian society, is patriarchal, limiting women's freedom and participation outside the home. Women traditionally handle domestic duties, while men handle market matters. Flooding in riverine areas or from the Rodkahi caused significant crop losses for the male population. Soil erosion in riverine areas permanently degrades cultivable land. In this way, the male residents of Dera Ghazi villages lose their main source of income, reducing their status as household heads and decision-makers. After a natural disaster, women often provide financial support for their families despite being indoors. She makes embroidery, mat, rope, and pottery at home. People then sell these goods in the market. The women reported an instance of domestic violence in the wake of the flooding.

“I prepare food, I wash the clothes, and I take care of the elderly and the children at home, but still, when my husband comes home, he uses to beat me and ask for money. He does not earn a single penny, but still he wants to assume control of the financial resources”. (Respondent JD)

Women actively participate in creating marketable goods to help pay for household expenses, but this hasn't led to a major shift in society. Without income, men assert their decision-making authority.

“My husband has died; I make mats, and my brother-in-law usually takes them to sell in the market. Whatever income comes to the home, my brother-in-law has control over that money. I do not have control over the money that I have earned. If I ask for the money, he used to beat me with a stick.” (Respondent JB)

Sometimes the husbands of these women die, leaving them dependent on their father- and brother-in-law. The female individual may be harassed by her spouse's relatives, resulting in her lack of financial control. Domestic violence can be committed by the father-in-law and brother-in-law, not just the husband.

4.13 Feminization of poverty

Estimates show that many women worldwide live in poverty. This makes this group more vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters (Dasgupta 2010). The women are coordinating all household food resources to feed the family. Boserup (1989) argues that the man should not be the sole food provider. Women and children are especially vulnerable to natural disasters due to poverty. Poverty exacerbates environmental degradation, according to Durning (1989). The current research shows that women are more vulnerable to poverty than men after flooding events, whether RodKahi or river-induced. Despite earning income off-farm, women suffer poverty. Rope, mat, pottery, and embroidery are mostly made by women, while men sell them. Women contribute

to household income, but men make financial decisions. Therefore, women must subordinate themselves and follow male orders, as one respondent said.

“Before the flood, we had our cattle and our agricultural land. We used to work with our men to feed our family, but now the flood has taken away all those things. Now the men in our house do not work; rather, they are subsisting on what little we earn by making rope. We did not have control over financial decisions before, and we do not have control over financial decisions now. We are powerless when it comes to decision-making. We were poor, and we are poor”.
(Respondent KL)

In this manner, it could be seen that even the women are earning the money, but control over their financial decisions rests with the men. In this way, the poor are still women, and the natural disaster has further worsened the situation.

5.0 Conclusion

The study found that natural disasters harm rural communities across age groups and socioeconomic classes. Unfortunately, these disasters affect everyone in the community. Low-income women in certain communities are more vulnerable. This vulnerability stems from gender roles, social obligations, and economic insecurity. NGOs that serve women in various situations have grown and developed over time. Existing NGOs have matured, and new ones have emerged, demonstrating this progress. However, NGO projects in D. G. Khan are prohibited. This ban leaves a vulnerable demographic of women helpless during natural disasters. Under current conditions, the government and its institutional framework are the best way to improve women's well-being, particularly their livelihoods and economic security.

Governments often use pre-existing programs to create post-disaster rehabilitation programs that don't meet rural women's needs. These programs often don't fit the affected population's social dynamics and gender. Women are neglected by governments in rural areas, according to D. G. Khan. The authorities' apparent disinterest in connecting social issues to rural women's lives. Legislation without a gender analysis shows a lack of awareness and understanding of gender issues. A study found that this lack of consideration has had a domino effect on various issues. Disasters can have serious consequences for women. Malnutrition and a lack of medical services are common. They may also be overlooked in fund distribution, relief, and rebuilding programs. These factors make them more vulnerable.

Engaging rural women in multi-stakeholder dialogues early and throughout the process is essential to meeting their needs. This collaborative approach allows for customized programs. Women's vulnerability can be reduced by actively participating in government decision-making with officials. This will help create a disaster relief and prevention culture in the future, empowering and holding women accountable.

Shahid Hussain: Problem Identification and Model Development

Ahmed Khan: Data Collection, Results and Analysis

Abid Hussain: Research Model and Hypothesis testing

Conflict of Interests/Disclosures

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