



## CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN PAKISTAN

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### **Abstract**

*A complex interplay of socioeconomic factors, including poverty, gender inequality, and lack of education, fuels human trafficking in Pakistan. Vulnerable populations, especially women and children, are targeted by traffickers who exploit their desperation for a better life. The effects are devastating, encompassing physical and psychological trauma, loss of freedom, and perpetual cycles of exploitation. Pakistan's porous borders and insufficient law enforcement contribute to the problem, allowing traffickers to operate with impunity. Additionally, cultural norms and societal stigma often hinder reporting and prosecution. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach involving legal reforms, economic empowerment, and awareness campaigns to dismantle the root causes and support survivors. The battle against human trafficking demands international collaboration, stringent law enforcement, and sustained efforts to dismantle the networks profiting from human misery.*

**Keywords:** Cultural norms, law enforcement, poverty, trafficking, vulnerability



## **Introduction**

The issue of human trafficking in Pakistan is multifaceted and influenced by economic, social, and political elements. Widespread poverty, regional inequalities, and a lack of economic prospects create an environment ripe for exploitation (Narminio, 2023). Vulnerable populations, particularly women and children, become ensnared in trafficking networks due to economic desperation exacerbated by gender inequality. Pakistan's economic landscape, characterized by widespread poverty and limited prospects, heightens vulnerability to trafficking (Page, 2023).

Gender disparities further exacerbate this vulnerability, placing women and girls at heightened risk of exploitation. Economic desperation drives people into the tangled world of trafficking, continuing a cycle of mistreatment and exploitation. The impact of human trafficking runs deep and lasts long, extending beyond the initial phase of exploitation (Boukli, 2023). Victims endure severe physical and psychological trauma as their autonomy is systematically eroded (Laura et al., 2023). Trapped in a grim reality, escape and recovery become arduous endeavors. This cycle of abuse perpetuates a grim reality for individuals ensnared in trafficking networks, leading to long-term suffering and hardship (O'Neill, 2023).

Pakistan faces numerous obstacles in its fight against human trafficking, including porous borders, ineffective law enforcement, and entrenched corruption, which empower trafficking syndicates to operate without fear of repercussions. Additionally, cultural norms and societal stigma discourage victims from reporting their plight, further hindering prosecution efforts (Mary & Donna, 2022). Lack of political will and resources exacerbate these challenges, complicating the eradication of trafficking. Human trafficking records illustrate it is as ancient as whatever is disturbing or deceptive Common issues and illegal issues (Abdullahi et al., 2021).

Tackling the underlying reasons behind human trafficking necessitates a holistic strategy. This includes enacting legal reforms, promoting economic empowerment, and implementing educational programs to combat trafficking effectively (Chisolm-Straker & Chon, 2021). International collaboration is crucial to strengthening law enforcement and dismantling trafficking networks. Eradicating poverty, promoting gender equality, and fostering a protective environment for vulnerable populations are integral to the battle against human trafficking in Pakistan (Stephanie, 2021).

Human trafficking involves depriving individuals of their freedom to exploit them for illegal gains, constituting a criminal activity aimed at generating illicit profits through exploitation (Zahid et al., 2022). Trafficked women coerced into prostitution and forced labor are believed to come from, pass through, and ultimately end up in Pakistan (Khan et al., 2022). Pakistan has not successfully combated human trafficking by the U.S. Trafficking Victims Protection Act, according to the U.S. State Department's report on trafficking in persons (U.S. Department, 2021).

This offense infringes on victims' human rights and has undesirable effects on the source country, the transit, and the destination countries (Yousaf, 2018). The various types of human trafficking occur in all parts of the world but often target vulnerable people. It also reveals that about 80% of human trafficking cases are primarily associated with sexual exploitation (Punam &



Sharma, 2018). Not a lot of work has been carried out on the real origins of violence in terms of labor and sexual exploitation (Kiss et al., 2015).

This failure is a result of a mix of political will worsened by leadership incompetence. Moreover, to this day, no government Representatives have ever kept records of the women trafficked (Wilson & O'Brien, 2016). Throughout all points from recruiting to reintegrating, the women in these circumstances have experienced psychological, physical, and even sexual abuse (Ottisova et al., 2016). These people are usually found in the most destitute areas with little to no options (Hepburn & Simon, 2013).

Most victims of human trafficking across international routes are migrants, for some of whom human trafficking becomes the only possible way out due to their circumstances (Pati, 2013). Trafficking humans is considered a physical abuse and an important concern for human health and the universal ecosystem (Griggs et al., 2014). The report from the U.N. Population Fund emphasizes that trafficked women often find themselves coerced into prostitution, sex tourism, commercial marriages, and jobs predominantly held by women, all as forms of exploitation (Gul et al., 2022).

Exploitation covers various forms like prostitution, sexual exploitation, forced labor, slavery, servitude, or organ trafficking (Bales, 2012). Despite this, anyone acknowledges the definition of human exploitation. Although human civilization has been enslaved for millennia, people have never succeeded in establishing a universal definition (Stockl, 2010). Boys and girls are abducted and sold, or treated like slaves while aboard ships, spread on work surfaces, and rented or sold for prostitution, or exploitation in houses and plants and work other farms and arranged to join begging gangs (Wooditch et al., 2009).

Trafficked individuals are subsequently sold on the black market and bought for various purposes (Haralanbos & Holborn, 2002). Assessing the scale of human trafficking is tricky because it operates in secrecy and is hard to define precisely (Jahic & Finckenauer, 2005). By the United Nations Palermo Protocol, human exploitation is described as the expulsion and transplantation of people from all methods, using violence, duress or re-generation, abduction, deception, or misuse for prostitution (UNODC, 2000).

#### Research Justification

It's crucial to grasp the underlying reasons and outcomes of human trafficking in Pakistan to untangle the complex factors fueling this pervasive issue. By delving into the socioeconomic factors contributing to vulnerability, such as poverty and gender inequality, the study aims to identify the root causes driving individuals, especially women and children, into the clutches of traffickers. Understanding the systemic issues, including porous borders and inadequate law enforcement, is essential for crafting effective preventive measures.

Additionally, investigating the psychological and physical effects on survivors sheds light on the long-term repercussions, informing support and rehabilitation strategies. The research's importance lies in its ability to provide direction for policymakers, law enforcement, and NGOs, guiding them toward focused interventions that can ultimately help eradicate human trafficking and safeguard vulnerable populations in Pakistan.



## Research Objectives

- 1. Examine Socioeconomic Factors:** Investigate the role of poverty, lack of education, and economic disparities in rendering individuals vulnerable to human trafficking in Pakistan.
- 2. Assess Gender Dynamics:** Look into the role of gender inequality on human trafficking occurrence by considering the norms embedded in society, leaving women and children exposed to such practices.
- 3. Explore Trafficking Networks:** Investigate trafficking networks in Pakistan, delving into their structure, operations, key players, routes, and methods. This information can guide focused law enforcement actions.
- 4. Evaluate Legal Framework:** Assess the effectiveness of existing legal measures and law enforcement mechanisms in addressing human trafficking, highlighting challenges and proposing improvements for a more robust regulatory framework.
- 5. Examine Survivor Well-being:** Research the physiological and mental implications of human trafficking among survivors to ensure comprehensive information on the requirements and strategies towards rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

## Research Methodology

This study utilized a systematic review approach to establish its research framework, with its objectives set accordingly (Komba & Lwoga, 2020). Extensive literature exploration on the topic was conducted, as indicated by the research findings being categorized based on their content (Hiver et al., 2021; Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). It was structured using headings to incorporate this classified information into the study (Gan et al., 2021; Pawson et al., 2005). The study's progression was determined by evaluating the classified information and titles (Page, 2021; Rahi, 2017), ensuring the research subject's contents' integrity (Egger et al., 2022; Victor, 2008).

### Literature Review

Human trafficking in Pakistan has been a subject of increasing concern globally, with scholarly research shedding light on various aspects of this multifaceted issue. It emphasizes how poverty and unemployment make individuals vulnerable to trafficking, particularly in regions like Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Khan et al., 2022).

Certain traffickers employ a range of coercive and manipulative strategies, such as deception, intimidation, false displays of affection, isolation, and threats, to exert control over their victims (Johnson, 2006). A good example is research demonstrating that in Pakistan, sex trafficking and forced labor are common in women and girls. The early marriage and social structures favoring the male gender make the female members susceptible to such deals (Punam & Sharma, 2017).

They analyze the effectiveness of Pakistan's legislative measures, highlighting gaps in implementation and enforcement (Zahid, 2022). Further, research also focused on how the trade affects the physical and mental health of trafficking victims (Mary & Donna, 2022). It highlights the trauma experienced by survivors, including psychological disorders and physical ailments resulting from exploitation (Laura et al., 2023). Pakistan continues to grapple with the challenges



posed by human trafficking, as evidenced by its country profile (UNODC, 2020).

Human trafficking is also measured as a crime with enormous worldwide reach. The estimated number of human trafficking victims is rapidly increasing, with recent assessments indicating that around 50 million men, women, and children have been affected (Castellano, 2023).

The UN protocol states human trafficking is involuntary and involves the recruitment or transport of individuals using threats, intimidation, kidnapping, abuse of authority, or the victim's susceptibility. It also entails trickery and getting money or other gains in exchange for the victim's services (Evans et al., 2022).

Human trafficking forces a grade of stress on the abused that infringes upon bodily, emotional, and sexual welfare. The COVID-19 epidemic has produced circumstances that may advance the risk of trafficking, limited enrolment of trafficked and addressed play, and made it exceptionally perplexing to deliver total services to value fighters' recuperation (Todres & Diaz, 2021).

Human trafficking has been an amplified global consideration in the previous 20 years. However, the discourse on trafficking traces its roots back to the late nineteenth century, when activists like Josephine Butler brought attention to the issue of involuntary prostitution on the global stage during the era known as the White Slave Trade (Derks, 2000).

The white authorities gland is prostitution, and like existing movements, this area of interest observed a crucial degree of publicity from the press and the cornerstone of numerous groups. Additionally, the gambler reversed civil and military domineering ill perfection (Doezema, 1999). The white enslavement movement matured out of the abolitionist tendency's yikes in an endeavor to manage England forth with Western European states and the United States in the prevention of women from primping rape (Bullough & Bullough, 1987).

## **Definitions of Human Trafficking**

### **International Law**

Transporting, sheltering, transferring, recruiting, receiving, or using force to move someone else involves, at the least, the use of threats, coercion, kidnapping, fraud, deceit, abuse of authority, or vulnerability and exploitation. Forced labor, slavery, servitude, and organ harvesting are examples of forms of exploitation. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime provides this term (UNIDOC, 2000).

### **Domestic Law**

The term "human trafficking" refers to the enlistment, protection, transportation, provision, or acquisition of another individual by coercion, deception, or force for forced labor or prostitution. By section 3 of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act of 2018, the convicted party may be sentenced to a maximum of seven years in jail, a fine not to exceed one million rupees, or both.

### **Elements of Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking is made up of three critical components, according to the Trafficking in Persons Protocol: the action, the methods, and the intent. The action is the work that one person does for another, such as recruiting, transporting, or harboring. Those methods debase, such as force, threat,



deception, or misuse of power. Finally, the intent is the humiliating benefit: forced labor, sexual slavery, or the removal of organs (Punam, 2018).

### **Forms of Trafficking in Pakistan**

Human trafficking poses a multifaceted challenge in Pakistan, encompassing the recruitment, transit, and exploitation of victims who are frequently deceived with promises of improved prospects, abducted, or even sold by their own families. With Pakistan already grappling with a shortage of employment opportunities for its population, the influx of trafficked individuals exacerbates the strain on the job market. Consequently, Pakistan is acknowledged as a major center for modern slavery (Heiner, 2002).

#### **1. Sex Trafficking**

Women and girls, especially those in agriculture and microenterprises, face sexual exploitation and enduring abuse in bonded labor with little or no pay. Pakistan's patriarchal society and gender inequality contribute to sex trafficking, with forced marriages and involvement in the global sex trade common among women from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka (Khan et al., 2022).

#### **2. Forced Begging**

Major cities in Pakistan are notorious for kidnappings targeting women and children for begging. Disabled individuals, including children, are also trafficked both domestically and internationally for begging purposes. Traffickers exploit vulnerable families or kidnap children, renting them out to beggars. Additionally, women and children from Pakistan are trafficked abroad for begging and food-related activities (Khan, 2006).

#### **3. Forced Marriage**

Human trafficking in Pakistan thrives on forced or deceptive marriages, exploiting traditional views on matrimony. Young women, seen as commodities, are coerced or deceived into marriages, often to settle disputes or protect traffickers from legal consequences. Exploitative practices, including bride prices and human smuggling, target economically deprived regions. Minors are particularly vulnerable, with cases of girls trafficked overseas for marriage and exploitation often reported in the media (Yousaf, 2018).

#### **4. Forced Child Labor**

In Pakistan, children are trafficked into domestic labor due to poverty, lack of access to education, and high unemployment rates. This exposes them to different kinds of abuse and exploitation, including sexual abuse and organ trafficking. Some are abducted, while others are sold off to repay debts. Around two million children are employed in brick kilns, enduring harsh conditions without adequate legal safeguards (Mendoza & Robin, 2016).

#### **5. Bonded Labor**

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Bonded labor, a type of modern slavery, happens when individuals are forced to work to repay debts to landlords or factory owners. This practice goes against laws and conventions like the ILO Convention 29. Despite legal measures, exploitation persists, especially in regions like Sindh, affecting marginalized groups disproportionately. Human trafficking exploits their vulnerability, with instances of liberation facilitated by organizations like HRCP. Women and girls face heightened risks of sexual exploitation, emphasizing the urgent need for intervention (Malloch & Rigby, 2017)

### **Root Causes of Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking, a growing global crime, involves both sex and labor trafficking. Understanding why individuals become victims is crucial. Factors contributing to human trafficking are diverse, spanning political, economic, environmental, and cultural dimensions. In Pakistan, various push and pull factors underpin its root causes. This study will focus on critical causes contributing to human trafficking in Pakistan (Hawkins, 2003).

#### **1. Exploiting Vulnerability**

Traffickers exploit vulnerabilities like poverty, lack of education, and political instability to coerce individuals into labor or sexual exploitation. Deceived by false promises of jobs and stability, victims are trapped in situations they never intended. Vulnerable migrants fleeing hardship or conflict are prime targets for trafficking abuse (Makisaka, 2009).

#### **2. Vulnerability of Women and Children**

Moreover, human trafficking preys on the weak and vulnerable embodied in women and children and is made worse by the lack of respect from society and harmful traditional cultural behaviors such as early marriage. Worldwide, 98 percent of victims are females sold for sex slavery and continental migration in search of jobs or education. These statistics reveal the need to address the root causes to eliminate trafficking (Khan, 2006).

#### **3. Demand for cheap labor**

Human trafficking is exacerbated by the need for cheap labor, especially in industries such as services, production, farming, and housekeeping. In the name of good labor standards, workers deem victims deserving way less the minimum wage, and minimal or no rights afforded (Mendoza et al., 2016).

#### **4. Political unrest: A Catalyst for Human Trafficking**

Political unrest, characterized by instability and violence, creates conditions ripe for human trafficking. Displacement and breakdown of governance structures exacerbate vulnerabilities, making individuals susceptible to exploitation. Traffickers exploit the chaos to coerce victims into labor and exploitation. Addressing root causes and protecting vulnerable populations are crucial in combating trafficking in such contexts (Laura et al., 2023).

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## **5. Profit Motive and Economic Vulnerability: Fueling Human Trafficking**

In agreement with data collected by the International Labor Organization (ILO), human trafficking is reported to yield an annual revenue of \$150 billion. The primary source of this income is identified as commercial sexual exploitation. Positioned as the runner-up in the realm of criminal activities worldwide, this nefarious pursuit is predominantly driven by financial gain, paying little heed to moral or judicial considerations. The deceitful enticements orchestrated by traffickers lure a multitude of individuals into a realm of promise, only to ensnare them in the harsh realities of the commercial sex industry (Page, 2023).

## **6. Social and Cultural Factors**

Existing within diverse societal frameworks, prevailing norms and attitudes perpetuate the marginalization and exploitation of female individuals, particularly women and girls, thereby leaving them in vulnerable circumstances. Hemmed in by a dearth of avenues for advancement and a backdrop of societal deprecation, these individuals emerge as prime targets for human trafficking operations, confronting enhanced vulnerabilities to exploitation and maltreatment (Gul et al., 2022).

## **7. Impact of Conflict**

Armed conflicts frequently lead to mass displacement, leaving many individuals, including orphans and street children, without adequate protection and support. These vulnerable populations become prime targets for traffickers, who exploit their precarious circumstances. The loss of family members or involvement in conflict exacerbates their vulnerability, making them even more susceptible to trafficking and exploitation (Kangaspunta, 2003).

## **8. Challenges in Identification: Hindrances to Combating Human Trafficking**

Identifying human trafficking cases is challenging due to concealed victims and their reluctance to cooperate with law enforcement. Traffickers and consumers also contribute by concealing their activities, perpetuating the clandestine nature of trafficking. These challenges facilitate trafficking operations, making detection and intervention more difficult (Simon, 2016).

## **9. Begging**

Begging served as a cause of human trafficking through exploitative practices like coercion and manipulation. Victims, often coerced by family members or traffickers, face abuse and deprivation of rights, trapping them in cycles of exploitation. The use of infants from impoverished families exacerbates this vulnerability. These conditions facilitate further exploitation and trafficking, highlighting the interconnectedness of begging and human trafficking (Petticrew & Robort, 2006).

### **Effects of Human Trafficking on Victims**

#### **1. Physical Effects of Human Trafficking**

The physical health challenges encountered by individuals subjected to human trafficking





encompass a spectrum of issues stemming from their exploitation, such as afflictions like sexually transmitted infections, HIV/AIDS, pelvic distress, and complications concerning reproductive health like pregnancy and sterility. Additionally, they face the risk of infections or mutilations due to unsanitary medical procedures conducted by traffickers.

Prolonged exposure to hazardous working conditions exacerbates their health problems, leading to chronic ailments like back pain, hearing impairments, and cardiovascular or respiratory issues. Inadequate lighting in sweatshops further contributes to eye strain, while substance abuse may develop as a coping mechanism in response to their dire circumstances (Chitrasen, 2006).

## **2. Psychological Effects of Human Trafficking**

The emotional ramifications of human trafficking on its victims are profound and enduring in nature. A considerable number of survivors endure severe trauma, which includes but is not limited to conditions like despondency, anxiety disorders, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This trauma not only jeopardizes their inherent rights and familial ties but also sustains cycles of distress that have repercussions on broader communities. Women who are subjected to trafficking for sexual exploitation endure amplified levels of trepidation, seclusion, and trauma, often culminating in elevated incidences of violence, amnesia, and cranial injuries.

Conditions such as despondency, anxiety, and PTSD are rampant among survivors, particularly among females, while dependency on substances emerges as a prevalent mechanism for coping. Recent research even suggests the potential development of Stockholm syndrome among sex trafficking victims, highlighting the complexity and severity of the psychological effects endured by those exploited in human trafficking networks (Desphande & Nour, 2013).

### **Various Reports on Human Trafficking**

#### **1. Trafficking in Person Reports**

Thirty-two thousand eight hundred six instances were investigated by the government, of which 29,344 had to do with sex trafficking, 1,723 with forced labor, and 1,739 with unclassified crimes. Fourteen thousand six hundred forty-eight cases were brought to trial; 11,404 of those included sex trafficking, 1,623 involved forced labor, and 1,621 involved miscellaneous matters. In addition, 31 people were convicted for sex trafficking and 22 for labor trafficking under the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) (U.S. Department, 2023).

Pakistan's activities to confront the TIP have been on the ups and downs in the last few years. Although, the new anti-trafficking laws were introduced in 2018, which made Pakistan into a Tier 2 country for a short period, thus, the persistent problems of the prosecution of sex trafficking and forced labor cases, together with the lack of resources for victim support, move Pakistan to the Tier 2 Watch List for the second year (U.S. Department, 2021).

In 2020, provincial law enforcement authorities documented 32,022 cases of trafficking victims, indicating a significant increase from the 19,954 cases reported in 2019. However, the government did not provide details regarding the factors contributing to this notable rise. Out of the people who were found to be victims, 15,255 were women, 9,581 were men, 6,937 were



children and 249 were transgender individuals. However, the number of bonded labor victims identified in 2020 plummeted to just 30 cases, a stark contrast to the 760 cases reported in 2019 (U.S. Department, 2020).

## **2. Federal Investigation Agency Report**

According to data from the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), human trafficking has surged in Pakistan over the past three years, affecting men, women, children, and transgender individuals.

Reported cases increased significantly in Punjab and Sindh, with a remarkable 3,517% and 7,000% increase, respectively, from 2020 to 2022. However, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (K-P) experienced a decline, while Baluchistan reported fluctuating numbers. The FIA documented 1,300 cases between 2020 and 2022, impacting approximately 7,000 individuals as of October 2022 (Rasheed, 2022).

## **3. United Nations Office on Drug and Crime Report**

According to the UNODC, an estimated 300,000 individuals are trafficked annually from Pakistan, with children being the most vulnerable to exploitation. Bonded labor is prevalent in Sindh and Punjab, affecting around 1.8 million individuals. Women and girls face heightened vulnerability to trafficking, including forced marriages, domestic servitude, and involvement in prostitution (World Bank, 2021).

### **Laws in Pakistan**

In 2018, Pakistan passed two important laws: The PTPA 2018 and the prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Act 2018 are the two acts that are mentioned in the paragraph. This was done to meet the standards set by the Palermo Protocol and to improve its Tier 2 Watch List status. These laws are designed to address human trafficking and migrant smuggling comprehensively by establishing a legal framework. According to the PTPA, individuals trafficked for exploitation within Pakistan or brought into Pakistan from other countries are recognized as trafficking victims (Coomaraswamy & Satkunanathan, 2006).

### **Bonded or Forced Labor Laws**

#### **1. Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1992**

This Act, applicable in Islamabad's capital territory and Baluchistan, was also adopted by Punjab in 2012 to eradicate bonded labor in the area. The law forbids forcing people or families to work to pay off debts, ensure their freedom, and prevent exploitation. It has rules and punishments to safeguard workers' rights and dignity.

#### **2. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 2015**

This Act is the tool to get rid of the bonded labor in the province. It prohibits bonded labor, sets up means to identify, access and support workers, details how to free them legally and punishes those who violate the laws. In a nutshell, the act is meant to halt the exploitation and safeguard the rights and the dignity of the workers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

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### **3. Sindh Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 2015**

This Act is designed to put an end to bonded labour in the province of Sindh. It bans the practice, gives the plans for rehabilitation, lists the ways of identifying and releasing Laborers, and enforces the punishment of the offenders. Hence, the act is aimed at eradicating exploitation, safeguarding rights, and maintaining the dignity of the laborers in Sindh.

### **4. Prohibition of Child Labour at Brick Kilns Act, 2016**

The Act is supposed to forbid child labor in brick kilns all over the province. It sets the age limits for employment, imposes the sanctions on the offenders, and includes the provisions for the rehabilitation and the education of the children who are involved. The law is aimed at the protection of children's rights and their well-being by abolishing the child labor in the brick kilns of Punjab.

#### **External Trafficking: FIA Legal Clauses**

##### **1. Emigration Ordinance, 1979**

The Emigration Ordinance of 1979 in Pakistan regulates emigration to prevent human trafficking risks. It establishes procedures, documentation requirements, and monitoring to safeguard emigrants' rights and prevent exploitation. The ordinance empowers authorities to take action against trafficking and exploitation, ensuring the well-being of individuals seeking to leave Pakistan.

##### **2. Passport Act, 1974**

The Passport Act of 1974 in Pakistan regulates passport issuance to combat human trafficking. It establishes procedures, verification processes, and penalties to deter trafficking-related offenses and protect individuals' rights.

##### **3. Exit from Pakistan (Control) Ordinance, 1981**

This Ordinance regulates international travel to combat human trafficking by monitoring departures and imposing restrictions to prevent exploitation abroad.

#### **Foreigners Act, 1946**

The Foreigners Act of 1946 governs the arrival, residency, and mobility of foreigners within Pakistan as a measure to combat human trafficking. It requires valid travel documents, facilitates the identification of trafficking suspects, and enables law enforcement to prosecute traffickers (Mirza, 2010).

#### **Punishments in Pakistan Penal Code 1860**

- **364-A. Trafficking by way of kidnapping or Abduction:** "Punished with death or imprisonment for life or rigorous imprisonment for a term that may extend to fourteen years and not less than seven years.
- **366-A. Procurement of Minor girl:** "Imprisonment, which may extend to ten years and shall also



be liable to a fine.”

- **366-B. Importing a girl from a foreign country:** “Imprisonment may be extended to ten years and shall also be liable to a fine.”
- **369. Kidnapping or abducting a child less than ten years with intent to steal from its Person:** “Imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine.”
- **370. Buying or disposing of any person as a slave:** “Imprisonment of either description for a term which may Extend to seven years and shall also be liable to fine.”
- **371. Habitual dealing in slaves:** “Imprisonment for life or imprisonment of either description for a term not exceeding ten years is also liable to a fine.”
- **371A. Selling person for purposes of prostitution:** “Imprisonment, which may extend to twenty-five years, and shall also be liable to fine.”
- **371B. Buying person for purposes of prostitution:** “Imprisonment, which may extend to twenty-five years, and shall also be liable to a fine.”
- **374. Unlawful compulsory labor:** “Imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to 154[five years] 154 or, with a fine, or with both.”
- **341. Punishment for wrongful restraint:** “Simple imprisonment for a term, which may extend to one month, or with a fine, which may extend to 138[one thousand five hundred rupees] 138 or with both.”
- **342. Punishment for wrongful confinement:** “Imprisonment of either description for a term, which may extend to one year, or with a fine which may extend to 139[three thousand rupees] 139, or with both (Pakistan Penal Code, 1860).”

## **Discussion**

The article delves into the intricate web of human trafficking in Pakistan, meticulously addressing its various forms, root causes, and legislative measures. It intricately underscores the issue's complexity, emphasizing its multifaceted character and the significant hurdles it presents to vulnerable groups, especially women and children. Different aspects like forced labor, sex trafficking, forced begging, forced marriage and bonded labor are discussed which explain the prevalent exploitation existing in the country.

Emphasis is placed on the pivotal role of legal measures in addressing the issue and the imperative need for comprehensive strategies targeting both internal and external trafficking. Insights into the scale of trafficking in Pakistan are provided through statistics and reports from governmental and non-governmental sources, underscoring the alarming rise in reported cases and the urgent need for concerted efforts to combat this heinous crime.

In summary, the article thoroughly examines the intricate phenomenon of human trafficking in Pakistan, presenting valuable perspectives on its diverse aspects, legal measures, and obstacles. It insistently stresses the necessity of the constant watch, preventive measures and partnership among the concerned parties to fight trafficking and to secure the human rights of all people.



Drawing from the provided material, the discussion elaborates on the socioeconomic disparities, gender inequality, and political instability as primary drivers of trafficking. It also highlights the profound effects on victims, including physical and mental health issues, perpetuation of cycles of poverty, and social marginalization. It's crucial to adopt a comprehensive approach that includes prevention, victim protection, prosecution of traffickers, and addressing underlying socioeconomic factors to effectively combat human trafficking in Pakistan.

### Conclusion

Human trafficking in Pakistan involves an intricate interaction of economic, social, and political elements. Widespread poverty, coupled with regional disparities and limited economic opportunities, creates fertile ground for exploitation. Vulnerable groups, particularly women and children, are ensnared in trafficking networks due to economic desperation, exacerbated by gender inequality. This exploitation leads to profound and enduring consequences for victims, including severe physical and psychological trauma, as their autonomy is systematically eroded.

However, Pakistan's efforts to combat human trafficking are impeded by numerous challenges. Porous borders, inadequate law enforcement, and systemic corruption enable trafficking networks to operate with impunity. Moreover, cultural norms and societal stigma discourage victims from reporting their plight, hindering prosecution efforts. The lack of political will and resources further complicates the eradication of trafficking.

Dealing with the underlying factors of human trafficking requires a holistic approach. It includes legal reforms to strengthen anti-trafficking measures, economic empowerment initiatives to alleviate poverty and create opportunities, and educational programs to raise awareness and prevent exploitation. International collaboration is essential to enhance law enforcement efforts and dismantle trafficking networks operating across borders. Eradicating poverty, promoting gender equality, and creating a protective environment for vulnerable populations are integral to the battle against human trafficking in Pakistan. Only through concerted and sustained efforts can Pakistan hope to combat this pervasive and devastating crime effectively.

### Recommendations

1. The implementation of comprehensive awareness campaigns to educate communities about the dangers and consequences of human trafficking should be applied.
2. Strengthen the law enforcement efforts to prosecute traffickers and dismantle trafficking networks.
3. Enhancement is required to border control measures to prevent the illegal movement of trafficked individuals.
4. Establish and fully equip specialized task forces or units dedicated to combating human trafficking.
5. Law enforcement, judiciary officials, and social service providers should undergo specialized training to identify human trafficking networks effectively.
6. Try to make possible implementation of victim-centered strategies to support survivors and facilitate their rehabilitation in society.
7. Moreover, collaborate to share public and private agencies regarding information mechanisms.
8. Funds and resources allocated to anti-trafficking initiatives.



9. Methods and inclusive strategies will be introduced to ensure legal frameworks criminalize all types of human trafficking and offer sufficient protection to victims.
10. Coordination between national and provincial authorities to ensure a unified response to human trafficking.
11. Developed shelters and initiated support services programs for trafficked individuals, including psychological aid, medical care, counseling, legal assistance, and donations.
12. Holders should be taking responsibility for financial support to abbreviate the dire consequences of disposed trafficking.
13. Start a research and collect the data to get a better idea of the scale and the complications of human trafficking in Pakistan.
14. To strengthen the relations with the neighbors to combat cross-border trafficking and, at the same time, to develop the district assistance and collaboration.
15. The empowerment of civil society and organizations to a greater extent in the prevention of human trafficking and support of victims will be the result.

#### Research Limitations

1. **Data availability:** Limited access to comprehensive and reliable data may hinder research accuracy.
2. **Underreporting:** Victims may hesitate to report experiences, leading to skewed findings.
3. **Sampling bias:** Research samples may not fully represent affected populations, introducing potential biases.
4. **Ethical considerations:** Ensuring participant safety, confidentiality, and informed consent presents challenges.
5. **Language and cultural barriers:** Differences in language and culture may limit communication with stakeholders.
6. **Access to vulnerable populations:** Difficulty accessing trafficked individuals due to safety concerns.
7. **Reliance on secondary sources:** Heavy reliance on secondary data sources may affect research reliability.
8. **Longitudinal studies:** Challenges in conducting long-term studies limit understanding of trafficking's long-term effects.

#### Research Implications

1. **Policy Development:** Inform evidence-based policies and strategies to combat trafficking.
2. **Prevention Initiatives:** Identify risk factors and vulnerabilities for targeted prevention programs.
3. **Victim Assistance:** Guide to practical assistance and rehabilitation programs.
4. **Capacity Building:** Support training for law enforcement and social service providers.
5. **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Facilitate coordination among government and non-governmental entities.
6. **Public Awareness:** Raise awareness and advocate for anti-trafficking efforts.



#### Future Research Directions

1. **Longitudinal Studies:** Track trafficking victims' experiences over time for insights into long-term effects and support effectiveness.
2. **Comparative Analysis:** Compare trafficking patterns with those of other regions for targeted interventions.
3. **Intersectional Analysis:** Explore how factors like gender and ethnicity intersect with trafficking risk.
4. **Technology's Role:** Investigate how technology aids trafficking and its potential for prevention.
5. **Community Engagement:** Involve local communities in understanding trafficking dynamics and solutions.
6. **Policy Assessment:** Evaluate anti-trafficking policies for effectiveness and reform advocacy.
7. **Demand-Side Research:** Study factors driving demand for trafficked persons to disrupt trafficking networks. These directions can enhance understanding and inform better prevention, intervention, and support.



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