

MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT



Annual Issue 2023-2024

DEVELOPMENT NEWS

MARGINALIZATION

Since the wake of the pandemic, there is an increasing realization that our hyper-connectedness from globalization would also show itself when disasters struck, resulting in a long overdue emphasis on sustainable development but also on the need to make the process more inclusive. Amidst such an environment, there must be active efforts made to highlight the agencies through which, previously, individuals and groups, have been alienated and identify the ways to overcome the past shortcomings for better attempts to make the process of development participative and inclusive.



The goal of our newsletter this year is to bring forth the much-needed discussions on 'Marginalization' and how the issues under this umbrella term are the barriers to the entire concept of inclusive development unless addressed.



We have put our hearts into this Issue, to make sure that we make visible contributions to the discourse; focused to evoke our past perceptions of the marginalization of vulnerable groups, and in doing so, help reify the notions of inclusivity in its true sense. We hope that you enjoy the read as you shuffle through the pages!



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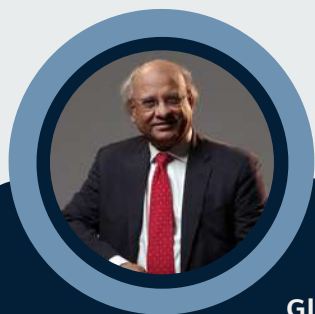
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MESSAGE FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

Prof. Dr. Ashfaque Hasan Khan

Global societies are facing the issues of neglect and exclusion of marginalized communities. Various programs and policies have been launched in different parts of the world to integrate such marginalized communities into societies. The programs and policies include creating employment opportunities for them, giving access, and imparting skills' training and empowering them to become entrepreneurs or self-employed. This issue of D-News has attempted to highlight the issues pertaining to the vulnerable groups and suggested some possible measures to create an enabling environment for a prosperous future.

I am confident that you will find this issue very informative.



MESSAGE FROM OUR DEAN

Prof. Dr. Salma Parveen Siddiqui

The process of marginalization of any community reflects a society's health. If the number of people who live at the fringes of a society increases, then the disparity creates both social unrest and economic instability. It is, therefore, essential that we adopt measures that ensure economic, social, and psychological wellbeing of all segments of the population. The development index includes the productivity of the citizen of a country. Unfortunately, a good number of our population suffers despite having the potential to thrive due to economic and climate emergencies that have limited their choices. We have experienced disasters, such as earthquake and floods, and violence, both sectarian and due to extremism, which has disproportionately impacted the poor, increased their vulnerability, and caused psychological harm as well. If the gaps between haves and have nots increases, it impacts even the fortunate ones as well due to inescapable social divide and unrest. It's about time, that we raise voice and take actions for those who cannot speak for themselves. The academia has an important role to play by building bridges and filling the gap between policies and their implementation. We must adopt approaches in our academic work which are more participatory in its methodology, so that the issues and concerns of marginalized communities are accurately represented, resulting in more inclusive action plans. Access to health services, education, justice, and employment needs to be ensured if we are to build a society that is not just growing but thriving with diversity.

It is heartening therefore, that Department of Development Studies has highlighted this important aspect through its newsletter. I am sure the reader would benefit from the information and articles published here.

My best wishes for the editorial team for compiling this very important issue.



MESSAGE FROM OUR EDITOR

Dr. Umer Khayyam

This issue of D-NEWS hits very pertinent domain of understanding the word: “community” that is not an abstraction, rather it embodies the experiences, ambitions, customs, and communal settings of all the communities to live together. Such an inclusive approach automatically addresses the issues faced by the communities to live a vibrant life. It is because, the de-marginalization brings beauty and centrality to any community to move uphill. The whole interesting content of this issue is targeting to build such an inclusive community. Enjoy reading!



MESSAGE FROM OUR CO-EDITOR

Aimen Ayaz

The agencies of human societal evolution currently stand in the way of its progress, as the repetitive patterns of exploitation turn our collective fates towards regression. In times like this, the importance of contributing to the discourses acknowledging these fissures is of immense importance. With D-News Issue 2023, our focus has been to engage with the multiple forms of marginalization vulnerable groups are subjected to and bring forward the manners in which the current systems can be effectively reified to undo these cyclical alienations. We hope that you find the contents intriguing enough to get you to reiterate your own understanding of inclusive and just societies.

We have put our hearts into this, and we are looking forward to all our readers enjoying it!



MESSAGE FROM OUR DESIGNER

Komal Javed

We are delighted to present the latest issue of our D-NEWS, filled with insightful articles and thought-provoking research. It is with great pleasure that we share this publication, which represents the culmination of extensive collaboration and dedication from our contributors and editorial team.

In this issue, we have meticulously crafted to captivate and engage your visual senses. It has been an honor to be a part of this project, contributing to the overall aesthetic and creating a visual experience that complements the exceptional content within.



The Faculty's Year

CURRENT FACULTY

FALL 2023...

Dr. Umer Khayyam

Head of Department (HOD)



Dr. Umer Khayyam (HOD) is currently serving as an Associate Professor at the NUST Department of Development Studies. He is an academician and a researcher with more than ten years of experience in higher education/university, UNCCD, Mercy Corps, and PERRA. His areas of expertise and engagements are extended to Development Studies, Climate Change, Human-Environment nexus, DRR, and Sustainability.

Dr. Ammad Khan

Assistant Professor



Dr. Ammad Khan is currently an Assistant Professor at the Department of Development Studies, NUST. He is specialized in Research Methodology and Rural Development. Dr. Ammad has extensive experience both as a faculty member and as a practitioner and is currently actively engaged in curriculum design for Sustainable Development.

Dr. Arsalan Waheed

Assistant Professor



Dr. Arsalan Waheed is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Development Studies at NUST. With a PhD in Urban Development from the University of Bonn, Germany; Dr. Arsalan's area of specialization includes Urban Development, Community Development and Peace Studies. Dr. Arsalan's acumen as a Researcher also shines through and you'll find an extensive list of publications under his name.

(He is currently on Leave)

CURRENT FACULTY



Dr. Tauqeer H Shah

Assistant Professor

He has a Postdoctorate from Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS), Lahore, Pakistan, and Ph.D. in Sociology and Social Anthropology, from Ludwig Maximilians University, Munich, Germany. He has several years of teaching and research experience at HEIs both in Pakistan and Germany. His areas of expertise are Ethnography, Transnational Migration, Community Participation and Development, Social Problems etc,



Ms. Rabia Zaid

Assistant Professor

She has an MPhil from the University of Chicago in Liberal Arts and PhD in Development Studies from SOAS University of London UK, Research Cluster: Political Economy; Neoliberalism; Gender and Development. She has over 7 years of teaching and research experience at LUMS Pakistan. Her areas of expertise are Gender and Development; Feminist Political Economy; Neoliberalism; Neoliberal Governmentality; Feminist and Eco-critical Theory etc.



Ms. Sheeba Tariq

Lecturer

She is a Lecturer at the Department of Development Studies, NUST. Her area of specialty includes Social Policy for Development, Food Security, and Community Mobilization. She also the current Research Manager for the department. Ms. Sheeba has more than 7 years of experience of teaching backed by extensive field research.

PUBLICATIONS

Dr. Umer Khayyam

Research Papers

2023

Exploring the Nexus between Land Use Land Cover (LULC) Changes and Population Growth in a Planned City of Islamabad and Unplanned City of Rawalpindi, Pakistan in *Heliyon Journal*.

2023

Hydrological and Ecological Impacts of Run-off River Scheme; A Case Study of Ghazi Barotha Hydropower Project on Indus River, Pakistan in *Heliyon Journal*.

2022

Green Urbanisation: Community Perspective on Sustainable Green Infrastructure in Pakistan in *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*.

2022

Flooding Impacts on Rural Livelihood and Economic Status of Mountainous Communities in Pakistan in *Environmental Science and Pollution Research Journal*.

Conference Papers

2023

Prevalence of Cardiovascular Disease (CAD) due to Industrial Air Pollutants in the Proximity of Islamabad Industrial Estate (IEI), Pakistan at the 11th Annual International Conference on Sustainable Development (ICSD), Columbia University, USA.

2023

Community Perspective on Green Infrastructure Planning: A Strategy for Green Urban Resilient Future in the North-West Region, Pakistan at the Dortmund Conference on Spatial and Planning Research (DOKORP). Technical University of Dortmund, Germany.

2022

How to introduce COILs into Existing Courses: Best practice from Sprint COILs around the world at the IVEC Conference, CEU Cardinal Herrera University, Valencia, Spain.

2022

Experts and Community's Perspective to Build Sustainable Urban Cities in Pakistan at the 10th International Conference on Sustainable Development. European Center of Sustainable Development, Rome, Italy.

Certification

2023

Transforming Economies for Sustainable Development from United Nations Systems Staff College, Bonn, Germany.

Dr. Muhammad Ammad Khan

Research Papers

2022

Climate Change-Induced Glacial Lake Outburst Floods in Hunza Valley of Pakistan: An Assessment of Indigenous Farming Community Perceptions and Adaptation in *Environment, Development, and Sustainability Journal*.

Research Papers

- 2023
- 2022
- 2022
- Traditional Hierarchies of Zamindars and Kammiss in Pakistani Punjab: Contemporary Contests Through Vartan Bhanji in *South Asia Research Journal*.
- Utopia of Social Distancing and Dystopia of Living in Slums: Urban Poor’s Perspectives from the Global South and the Theory of Planned Behavior in the *Local Environment Journal*.
- From Sainthood to Saintly Kinship: How Claiming Saintly Kinship Is Structuring the Social and Patronage Relationships in Rural Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*.

Books Editorial and Chapter Contributions

- 2023
- Development Discourses and Urban Poor: A Case Study of the 60 Capital Development Authority (CDA) and Katchi Abadis of Islamabad in *Pakistan at Seventy-Five: Identity, Governance, and Conflict-Resolution in a Post-Colonial Nation-State*, Liverpool University Press.

SEMINARS AND GUEST LECTURE

- 2022
- 2022
- 2022
- 2023
- Dr. Arsalan Waheed delivered a guest lecture on the topic *Developmentalism of the 1960s and Islamabad: Planning and Construction of a ‘Model City’* at the Fatima Jinnah Women University, Department of Anthropology.
- Dr. Arsalan Waheed delivered an introductory lecture on Sufism at the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, NUST.
- In August 2022 Ms. Fariha Tahir as part of the Development Studies Research Seminar series presented her research work titled, 'Impact of Parental verbal abuse on Young Adults'.
- Ms. Sheeba Farooq was a guest lecturer on the Department of Development Studies' NARDBAN talk series to talk about *Climate Preparedness and its Reparations* in the context of Floods in Pakistan in the aftermath of the 2022 floods and heatwaves.

CONFERENCES AND WORKSHOPS

- 2023
- Dr. Muhammad Ammad Khan participated in a workshop held by University of Kassel, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) and GIZ Pakistan. The workshop provided the participants, an opportunity to exchange insight to inculcate academic courses relating to climate change in graduate and postgraduate studies in Pakistan.

2022

Ms. Fariha Tahir was one of the Master trainers for *Promoting Requirements for State Officials Workshop* at Ghora Gali Forest Officers Training Academy.

2022

Dr. Muhammad Ammad Khan presented his paper titled, 'Evaluating Impact of Community-Based Micro-Hydroelectric Plants on Sustainable Development in the Gilgit Baltistan Region of Pakistan.', at the *2nd International China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Conference* held on October 26, 2022.

2022

As part of Industry academia linkages, Ms. Fariha Tahir, Lecturer Department of Development Studies was part of the panel, providing academic guidance for writing Policy briefs to the participants of the 35th MCMC at National Police Academy Islamabad, Dec 2022.

RECENT APPOINTMENTS

2022

Associate Editor – *NUST Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities* (peer-reviewed journal)

2023

Departmental Representative – *Centre of Excellence on Wellbeing and Population Studies*, School of Social Sciences and Humanities, NUST, Islamabad.

2023

Member – *South Asian Geography Association*, Bonn, Germany (Since 2021)

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENTS

2023

Dr. Arsalan Waheed participated in 5th Faculty Board of Studies Meeting as an External Member for the curriculum development of 'Sociology' at the National University of Medical Sciences (NUMS), Rawalpindi Pakistan.

2023

Dr. Arslan Waheed also served as the External Member Evaluation for the Department of Sociology at the Fatima Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan. (Since 2022)

2023

Ms. Fariha Tahir participated in a live broadcast on Wednesday 18th January 2023. The broadcast was an awareness program "Khawateen Memar-e-Amn" from FM 101. On the sixth episode of the show, she talked on the role of teachers in promoting peace and interfaith harmony.

2023

Ms. Fariha Tahir served as a policy advisor for research conducted at the MCMC NATIONAL POLICE ACADEMY.

PROJECTS WON

2023

The Climate Change and Crisis: The Pakistan Publishing and Mentoring Workshop. The initiative aims to train researchers from the Global South to fill the gap in Climate Change research through introspective inquiries into the subject. Dr. Khayyam will be joining researchers from all over Pakistan and the University of Oxford to train as a Specialist on Climate Change in Global South.

Batch of 2022





Dr. Lucio Renno from the University of Brasilia, Brazil delivered a guest lecture on the "Role of BRICS in the changing Geo-strategic Environment: A Brazilian Perspective."



Students of MS Development Studies (2K22) along with students of MS Career Counseling and MS Clinical Psychology (2K20) on an educational exposure visit to Pakistan Sweet Home Orphanage led by Dr. Muhammad Ammad Khan



Dr. Muhammad Ammad Khan arranged a workshop with Software Analyst Muhammad Usman to equip the MSDS 2k22 students with basic skills to perform statistical analysis using SPSS.



This year the batch of 2K22 was able to complete their Research Proposal Defenses, getting ready to kickstart their thesis journeys successfully.



Planning in Germany and Pakistan: Responding Challenges of Climate Change through Intercultural Dialogue

The project 'Planning in Germany and Pakistan: Responding Challenges of Climate Change through Intercultural Dialogue' is spearheaded by the Department of Spatial Planning, TU Dortmund in collaboration with 3 Pakistani partner universities- National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST), Islamabad, with two departments: Architecture Department (SADA) and Development Studies Department (S3H) University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore, Department of City and Regional Planning; Lahore College for Women University (LCWU), Department of City and Regional Planning. The DAAD funded project, led by Dr Umer Khayyam, aims to stimulate dialogue between students and young academics from the higher education institutes of Pakistan and Germany to exchange ideas, inculcate research skills and supplement their research ideas pertinent to climate change.

A team from NUST attended the Summer Workshop under the leadership of Dr Umer Khayyam. The team consisted of three Master's students; Sumayya Ijaz, Ihtesham-ul-Haq, and Rabia Zafar from the Department of Development Studies, S3H and two bachelor's students Aiza Imran and Hamna Riaz from the Department of Architecture, SADA. The 7-day workshop focused on the development of the students' research ideas under the overarching theme of climate change and making resilient communities. Their initial ideas were shared with peers and refined under the guidance of mentors. The workshop also included an elaborate training session on academic presentation which aided the students in formulating their topic presentations. Towards the end of the workshop, the students presented their research ideas to a panel of mentors and received useful and informative critique to polish their research.



CONVERSATIONS

ON MARGINALIZATION



Spread of Radicalization Among Marginalized Communities

By Ms. Fariha Tahir

Marginalization is “a spatial metaphor for a process of social exclusion in which individuals or groups are relegated to the fringes of a society, being denied economic, political, and/or symbolic power and pushed towards being ‘outsiders.” Such a group is denied involvement in mainstream economic, political, cultural, and social activities. Marginalization builds feelings of social exclusion. Then, as a social process, it deprives the excluded group of its democratic and constitutional access towards productive resources of the society and gain prosperity. Usually, marginalization and social exclusion is suffered by social groups/clans/ethnicities or communities who are seen to differ from perceived norms.

Social exclusion, as a resultant effect of marginalization, leads to the subordination of one section of the society (have-nots) as another (haves) enjoy economic, social, and political dominance and the perks and privileges of being the blessed ones. Affected groups, though not always but are usually socially illiterate, uneducated, and reliant on others. They are poor and lack necessities of life, including access to law, income earning skills and opportunities, good healthcare, quality education, disaster preparedness, food insecurity, and having no voice in policy making by the state. Theoretically, these marginalized groups can include the poor, working children, victims of gender inequality, disabled people, and persons speaking a minority language, to name a few; as marginalization is a global phenomenon, not limited to just one group, locality, or nationality. Marginalization as a process affects a community at two levels: macro and micro. When individuals are denied access to affordable formal education, equal employment, or gender-related opportunities, it is macro marginalization. This inability of

access to the official power structure and restrictions in decision-making processes is very harmful to the all-encompassing development of a society and state.

Secondly, manifestations of micro-level, exclusions are visible in income discrepancies, occupational status, and social networking. As per Frances Stewart, it gives birth to Horizontal and Vertical inequalities in any social group, race, community, or gender.

The relationship between poverty, social, marginalization, exclusion, and violent extremism is extremely complex. Though poverty by itself does not necessarily lead to a rise in violent extremism, societal exclusion, and marginalization. But the feeling of victimization, helplessness, and abundant vulnerability are resultant effects of poverty. These feelings of deprivation can have a significant capacity to push the deprived ones to manifest violent behaviors and extremism in any society (Cooney, 2019).

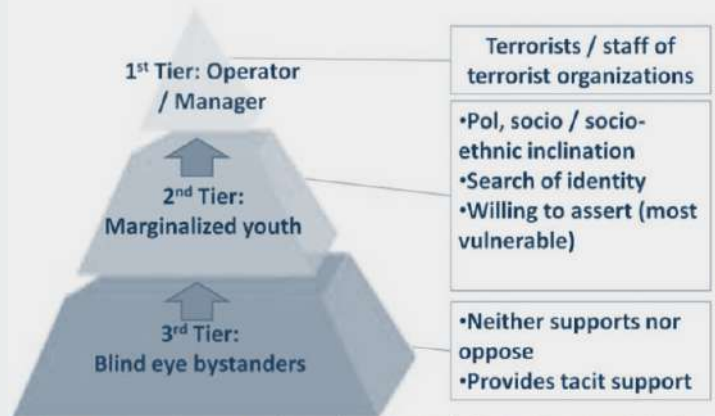
Social exclusion can be split into two broad categories: Negative and positive Exclusions. Social exclusion involves negative attention and ostracism which is social exclusion involving a lack of attention (Wesselmann et al., 2016). Both forms, but especially ostracism, are accompanied by tremendous psychological stress for individuals and groups. According to the temporal need-threat model by K.D Williams (2009), ostracism is the individual or group experience of pain and threat to four fundamental needs: belonging, self-esteem, control, and meaningful existence. Extremist groups have been successful in exploiting these feelings in areas where poverty and inequality exist. To prevent radicalization, it is important to reduce extreme poverty and build a just and inclusive society.

Radicalization is a three-layered process generated from the roots of a society (Figure-1). The progression starts when at the third tier the whole or at large society turns a blind eye to extremist narratives being floated by a radical agent among the socially deprived ones, by exploiting their feelings of deprivation and marginalization. This provides tacit support to the process of radicalization. On the second tier, the young, marginalized group emerges willing to go to any lengths in search of their “Quest of Significance.” As this group already, due to its strong political, social, and economic division, has a widespread feeling of being a victim of circumstances and marginalization. Finally, amongst the alienated group, terrorists and their managers emerge at the top tier of the radicalization pyramid.

If as a society our aim is to tackle marginalization then first, will have to promote education and awareness about the horrible social and economic consequences of marginalization, or discrimination against any community. Build community outreach programs and support public education initiatives. Secondly, nip the evil in the bud by addressing the root causes of marginalization, such as poverty, inequality and exclusion, discrimination, and targeted hatred. Thirdly, such policies and programs should be introduced that promote economic development by providing accessible equal opportunities for all, resulting in the social inclusion of all those who are cornered, marginalized, and deprived. Additionally, build a culture of respecting diversity and differences. It is also important to create a civil society as a safe space by providing and protecting our constitutional guarantees, enshrined in the Constitution of 1973.

Last but not least, protect socially marginalized communities, by using your privilege as a development professional to call

Figure-1: Generalizing Process of Radicalization



Source: Magnus Ranstorp, *Understanding Violent Radicalization: Terrorist and Jihadist Movements in Europe* (London, Routledge, 2010): 23

out all kinds of injustice and discrimination. Please do not forget that being a victim of discrimination and oppression is totally unforgiveable. Let us be the voice of the oppressed and build a peaceful society.

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Ms. Fariha Tahir is a development practitioner.

The Turbulent

Relationship b/w Media and Inclusivity

By Sara Mustasim

Marginalization, a fluid concept, challenges status quo understandings and representations of individuals throughout the world. To marginalize individuals is to fail to accord them the full rights and status of citizens – to define them as falling short of the norm, subsequently disempowers them and exclude them from the mainstream of society (Pamela Abbott, 2019). Thus, perpetuating a cyclic process of social exclusion that transpires when individuals or groups are denied access to resources, opportunities, and decision-making processes, and are treated as inferior or less important than others (Minarik, 2017). Marginalization can be seen in many different contexts, including the media, where certain groups are often unheard, unseen, and misrepresented in the national discourse.

Pakistan, as a developing state, has experienced rapid growth in the prevalence of marginalized communities, vulnerable to discrimination, prejudice, and exclusion based on ethnic, religious, and cultural grounds (Mughal, 2020). These marginalized groups include refugees resulting from the 1947 migration, settlers, minorities, women, transgender people, and persons with disabilities, pushed to the peripheries by the traditional socio-political culture (Muhammad, 2012). Media plays a significant role in building perceptions around marginalized groups in Pakistan, as it remains embedded in the social, economic, and political contexts, it often reproduces and reaffirms the exclusionary practices, practiced as part of a wider social narrative.

One of the most glaring examples of media marginalization in Pakistan is the neglect of ethnic and linguistic diversity. The dominant Urdu-language media often overlooks the concerns, cultural richness, and achievements

of smaller linguistic groups, such as Baloch, Sindhi, and Pashtun (Pakhtun) communities. These communities face a significant communication gap, hindering their representation and participation in the public sphere. By disproportionately focusing on Urdu-speaking regions, the media inadvertently perpetuates the marginalization of these communities, reinforcing a sense of alienation and cultural inequality.

Pakistani media also continues to perpetuate gender biases and objectification, further marginalizing certain groups such as women and transgender people through misrepresentation. Women are often portrayed as mere objects of desire, reducing their worth to their physical appearance rather than their intellect, achievements, or potential contributions. This objectification not only undermines the progress made toward gender equality but also reinforces harmful stereotypes and hampers the empowerment of women. The underrepresentation of these groups in key decision-making positions within the media industry perpetuates this bias, limiting diverse perspectives, and leading to subsequent misrepresentations and media invisibility. Women and transgender people often experience media invisibility or misrepresentation. Women are often reduced to a lower social status as compared to their male counterparts with limited access to opportunities and social mobilities through their portrayal in media, while transgenders are often presented as a lesser gender or a dangerous deviant, this leads to dehumanization and promotes violence against these marginalized groups based on their gender identities (Terry, 2014). Through these negative and stereotypical portrayals, the media fails to provide a platform for open dialogue hindering progress toward acceptance, inclusion, and equal rights for all.

Media outlets in Pakistan further contribute to the process of marginalization and social exclusion of the less privileged by preserving stereotypes and reinforcing class divides. The elite class receives disproportionate attention, while the struggles and concerns of the lower socioeconomic strata remain largely invisible.

The undertones of VIP culture, elite glorification, and selective coverage amplifies socioeconomic disparities and undermines efforts toward creating a more inclusive society. Time and again the media perpetuates a cycle of inequality, by ignoring the voices of the marginalized.

Religious minorities, such as Christians, Hindus, and Ahmadis, face critical marginalization within Pakistani media. They are often depicted through a narrow lens, either as victims or as threats, creating an atmosphere of fear and discrimination. Their skewed representation fosters a divisive environment that deters social cohesion and denies these communities equal rights and opportunities. In the year 2021 alone, sixty cases of forced conversions were reported, of which 70 percent were girls under the age of 18 years. However, rather than highlighting this as a sheer violation of human rights and an ever-weakening justice system, the media reporting remains minimal, mirroring the accepted social norms and the fear of backlash from religious fanatics. Additionally, the media's focus on sensationalized news stories that exacerbate religious tensions and maximize viewership further deepens the sectarian divide, and endorses overt and covert violent religious expression, while social integration and cohesion take a backseat.

There are several news media campaigns across the globe that aimed and successfully tweaked the balance in favor of marginalized groups and serve as leading examples for the country. "The Black Lives Matter campaign" spearheaded by New York Times in 2020 is one such example, it aimed to address the historical underrepresentation and misrepresentation of Black people in mainstream media while providing accurate and comprehensive coverage of the Black Lives Matter movement. This campaign generated a significant impact on public discourse and sparked conversations about racial inequality, police reform, and social

justice. While inspiring individuals to engage in activism and allyship, leading to a broader movement for racial justice in society.

Media in Pakistan wields significant rather unmatched power to shape public opinion and influence societal norms at a similar scale. It is crucial to recognize and address the inadvertent marginalization created and reinforced by the industry. This can only be achieved by giving voice to marginalized communities, ensuring diverse representation, and promoting inclusive narratives, the media can become a catalyst for positive social change. Stakeholders, including media regulatory bodies, journalists, and civil society organizations, must work collectively to foster a media environment that upholds the principles of inclusivity, equity, and social justice, creating a more harmonious and progressive Pakistan for all.

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Sara Mustasim is a student of MS Development Studies (2k22). She is an avid reader and a history enthusiast. Her research work aligns with her passion to explore human rights violations and their repercussions for society, with the hope to propel positive change.

Transgender-Inclusive Disaster Response and Recovery

A KEY TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

By Maryam Dogar

The frequency and severity of climate-related disasters, such as floods, droughts, and heatwaves, have increased recently in Pakistan. These tragic occurrences have had a significant impact on the nation's sustainable development objectives. While initiatives for disaster risk reduction (DRR) are essential for mitigating the effects of such catastrophes, it is also critical to ensure inclusivity and address the vulnerabilities that marginalized populations experience. Socially disadvantaged groups are usually overlooked in disaster response and recovery. Thus, it is critical to recognize the significance of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in crisis situations (Neupane & Pant, 2022). However, the Khawaja Sira Community in Pakistan are excluded from government assistance efforts during disasters despite the progressive legislation that on paper safeguards their rights.

Transgender rights in Pakistan have reportedly made significant improvements in recent years. The Transgender Persons Act, of 2018 provides the population with fundamental safeguards. These laws prohibit harassment and discrimination against trans people and ensure their rights to safety, respect, property, and inheritance. However, being a trans person in Pakistan still presents many difficulties. The community lives in fear of violence, harassment, and severe financial burden since they have been ostracized by their families and society. Their situation is made worse by the intersection of these inherent vulnerabilities with the threats posed by climate-related catastrophes. They are more likely to be left out of rescue operations, experience harassment, assault, and discrimination in evacuation centers, as well as have trouble entering gender-segregated facilities, such as restrooms and makeshift shelters. The degree of sexual violence that transgender people experience in a crisis is



Floods 2022 Mingora Swat, Pakistan. Photo by Kamran Khan/iStockphoto

exceptional because they are easy targets and are already seen as sexual objects. While the authorities claim to treat everyone equally during times of crisis, they failed to create a designated area for the transgender community during the floods of 2022 (Ebrahim, 2022), not recognizing that they are unable to stay with the other displaced people due to the hostility towards them.

Due to social isolation and difficulties finding steady employment, the community is forced to live in isolated areas and slums, where the absence of adequate infrastructure makes them more vulnerable to extreme weather events. The difficulties many trans persons encounter while trying to receive government assistance after natural disasters exacerbate this vulnerability. An official identity card, which most trans individuals in Pakistan lack, is a requirement for receiving assistance and compensation (Saeed, 2023). According to Pakistan's 6th Population & Housing Census

of 2017, there are 10,418 transgender persons living in the country. However, a study conducted by Trans-Action Pakistan and the nonprofit organization Blue Veins indicated serious concerns about the underrepresentation of the trans community due to insensitive and non-inclusive data collection mechanisms. This lack of representation manifests itself in disaster management planning and damage assessments, in which Pakistan's trans population is frequently ignored.

The fact that the term "transgender" only appeared twice in the recently released **NATIONAL DISASTER MITIGATION PLAN - PAKISTAN REMODELLED NDMP-II 2023**, and that was in the section titled "1.4.10. Limited Educational Facilities," speaks volumes about the government's failure to recognize the urgent action needed to protect the transgender community. Moreover, the chapter **Proposed DRR Strategy & Implementation Framework** has no reference to the trans community, demonstrating the inadequacy of the government to address the community's vulnerability during disasters in the future. This demonstrates the critical necessity to protect transgender people's rights and well-being in the face of climate-related crises. Failure to do so perpetuates systemic inequalities and undermines sustainable development efforts. By explicitly considering and addressing the unique challenges faced by transgender individuals, Pakistan can build more resilient communities and promote inclusivity and equity in disaster response and recovery, which is a crucial component of any country's development.

Pakistan must adopt and execute regulations that explicitly respect and safeguard the rights of transgender individuals in disaster situations. If disaster preparedness is to be strengthened, planning, policymaking, and capacity-building activities must take transgender perspectives and needs into consideration. Transgender community leaders, organizations, and activists must be

included in DRR projects, ensuring that the requirements of diverse populations are satisfied. Moreover, by incorporating their knowledge and perceptions, Pakistan can improve its capacity for disaster response and make sure that the issues unique to transgender people are effectively addressed. This involves actions like creating policies for inclusive aid distribution, creating safe and gender-affirming spaces within evacuation centers, running awareness-raising and training programs for concerned stakeholders, and implementing other essential measures to ensure the well-being of the trans community.

In conclusion, transgender-inclusive disaster risk reduction is critical for Pakistan's long-term development. We can develop resilient and sustainable communities by recognizing and addressing the unique vulnerabilities encountered by the transgender community during climate-related disasters. Promoting inclusivity, preserving human rights, and involving transgender people in disaster risk reduction efforts would pave the way for a more sustainable future. This approach builds social cohesion, empowers transgender communities, and contributes to long-term development in the face of calamities.

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Enhancing Access to Education for Marginalized Students

By Taimoor Abid

AN ANALYSIS OF EHSAAS PROGRAM'S EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

Introduction:

Access to quality education according to Article 25 A of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a fundamental right of every citizen. However, some student groups, particularly those from socioeconomically challenged backgrounds, frequently encounter major obstacles to pursuing their education, perpetuating the cycle of poverty and inequality (Khan, 2023). In response to this challenge, the Ehsaas Program in Pakistan aimed at poverty alleviation has implemented various educational initiatives, including scholarships for females and financial support for underprivileged students. The article intends to explore the impact of these initiatives in addressing the educational disparity among disadvantaged students and fostering inclusive development.

Key Area of Initiatives:

The Ehsaas Program focuses on tackling important issues like gender disparity in education and focusing on student dropouts. The program seeks to create a more inclusive educational environment by addressing these areas.

Scholarships for women:

Scholarships for women are one of the key initiatives that the Ehsaas Program supports. The program acknowledges the pervasive gender gaps in opportunities for education and works to eradicate them. This effort seeks to remove financial barriers that prevent women from seeking education because it recognizes the significance of empowering women and decreasing gender disparities. The program enables women to prioritize education over early marriages and gives them opportunities to actively participate in the workforce by providing financial aid for tuition fees and other educational expenses (HEC, 2022).

Financial Support for Underprivileged Students:

Among disadvantaged students, early dropout is frequently caused by financial

difficulties, lack of support, and paucity of resources. To combat this, the program offers financial aid and other forms of support to encourage students to remain enrolled in educational institutions. The Ehsaas Program intervenes in two key areas:

Addressing the financial barriers that disadvantaged students face: The program recognizes that financial barriers frequently prevent disadvantaged students from pursuing higher education. The program seeks to bridge the education gap, lower dropout rates, and ensure that underprivileged students have access to high-quality education.

Promoting inclusivity and gender equality: The program strongly emphasizes expanding women's education by allocating 50% of the scholarships to female students allocating 50% of the scholarships to female students, the program strongly emphasizes expanding women's education. To promote diversity, 2% of scholarships are also given to students with disabilities. The program aims to level the playing field and empower underprivileged students by tackling gender inequity and providing equal opportunity.

Key initiatives in this regard:

The program seeks to bridge the education gap, lower dropout rates, and ensure that underprivileged students have access to high-quality education by offering financial assistance, such as coverage and stipends. Agriculture, the arts and humanities, business education, engineering, the medical and physical sciences, the physical and social sciences, and other fields of study are all included. The project seeks to uplift poor students and bring about positive changes in communities while also addressing financial constraints and placing an emphasis on women's education and diversity (HEC, 2022; PIDE, 2022).

Intended Impact on Bridging the Education Gap and Inclusive Development:

The educational initiatives implemented under

the Ehsaas Program have significantly impacted bridging the education gap among underprivileged students and promoting inclusive development. By focusing on scholarships for females, the program has successfully increased the enrollment and retention of females in schools. (Ehsaas Taleemi Wazaif Program, 2020). This not only contributes to achieving gender parity but also enhances the overall educational attainment of marginalized communities.

Moreover, through the provision of financial support to underprivileged students, the program has effectively reduced the barriers to education caused by poverty. It has enabled students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to access formal education, thus improving their prospects for the future. This, in turn, contributes to breaking the cycle of multidimensional poverty and creating a more equitable and inclusive society.

The Program objectives mainly focused on Increasing enrollments, reducing Dropout, and improving school attendance. The program enrolled 9.6 million students and spent Rs. 39.86 billion from its commencement till June 2022. In this group, 5.1 million of the students were males and 4.5 million were girls, mostly in primary school. The admittance verification rate was 94%, while the attendance compliance percentage was 93%. However, dropout rates continue because early marriages cause girls to drop out and parents frequently favor boys as the family's breadwinners. There are ongoing efforts to lower dropout rates and guarantee equal educational opportunities for every student (BISP Taleemi Wazaif Annual Report FY21-22, 2022).

Drawbacks & Way Forward:

Due to the government's failure to operate Waseela-e-Taleem (WET) successfully, WET and the subsequent Ehsaas School Stipends program faced institutional capacity issues and relied on NGOs. Concerns about a conflict of interest and contractual difficulties emerged. The paper-based system's poor verification and monitoring resulted in mistakes, fraud, and the enrollment of ghost pupils. Due to the previous program's inadequate stipend, female education and

school dropout issues were not incentivized. It excluded many students because it was restricted to a small number of districts and only targeted fifth graders. Building institutional capacity, implementing an end-to-end digital system, expanding program coverage, strengthening partnerships, maintaining compliance monitoring, evaluating, and improving, and addressing obstacles like distance and teacher availability through infrastructure development and training are some recommendations made to strengthen the program (The News, 2022; Pakistan Today, 2022).



Launch ceremony of the Ehsaas Education Stipends programme in Islamabad. Photo courtesy PMO.

Conclusion:

Access to education is a primary entitlement that ought to be accessible to every child, irrespective of their socio-economic status or gender. The educational initiatives under the Ehsaas Program, including scholarships for females and financial support for underprivileged students, have played a vital role in enhancing access to education for marginalized students. These efforts have not only bridged the education gap but also fostered inclusive development by empowering marginalized students to reach their full potential. However, there is still a huge space for improvement. Continued investment and effective monitoring and evaluation in such initiatives are vital to

guarantee that education becomes a catalyst for social change and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which strives to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

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Book Review by Damisha Salim

The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a planet in crisis

Author: Amitav Ghosh

With a doctorate in anthropology from Oxford, Amitav Ghosh is a USA-based Indian translingual author. Honored with the 54th Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary honor, in 2018 for his "outstanding contribution towards literature" (The Indian Express, 2019),

he is renowned for his well-researched and finely crafted works of fiction and non-fiction.

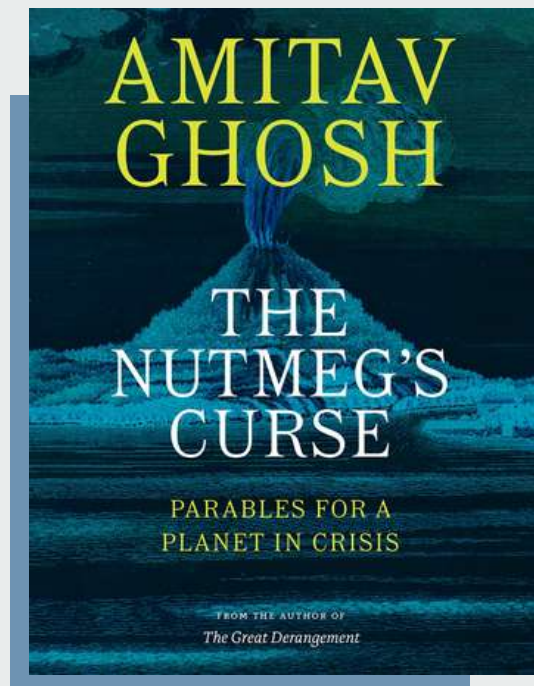
In The Nutmeg's Curse, Ghosh takes the nutmeg (Urdu: جائفل), the seed derived from the lemon-colored fruit of the evergreen tree

known as *Myristica fragrans* or the fragrant nutmeg, as his focal point. Nutmeg is one of the two spices obtained from the fruit, the other being mace. The spice, coveted for its preservative, flavoring, and aphrodisiacal properties, attracted the Dutch, in 1595, to the Banda Islands (now part of Indonesia) in whose volcanic soil the nutmeg tree grew and thrived. The Dutch East India Company intent on achieving a monopoly in the nutmeg trade was willing to go to any extent. The history of the nutmeg, therefore, is blotched with horrific episodes of invasion, destruction, genocide, and looting.

Narrating the story of the nutmeg and the fate of the Banda Islands as a parable for the unfolding planetary crisis, Ghosh, in this meticulously researched book, traces the roots of climate change to extractive, exploitative, and racialized European colonialism. It indeed is a treat to witness how the tiny nutmeg becomes a gateway for narrating the stories that ought to be told amidst a rapidly changing climate.

“Taking the nutmeg out of its fruit is like unearthing a tiny planet,” writes Ghosh. This sentence does far more than just depict his literary aptitude. Describing nutmeg in planetary terms rightfully blurs the distinction of the scale on which the story is being narrated – though the author is narrating the history of the nutmeg, it is not the history of the nutmeg alone. In it lies the history of devitalizing the earth, environmental degradation, racial violence and subjugation, and extractive and settler colonialism. While the book weaves a plethora of themes and narratives together, I would like to focus on one of them for the purpose of this review: the exclusionary nature of the European colonial project is at the heart of climate change.

Ghosh identifies two ‘great’ European projects of that time: the conquest of the Americas and the African slave trade. The two projects rendered the non-European, non-white humans into mute resources to be used and into brutes who, according to the Europeans, probably were not fully humans. That the Americas, during the brutal European conquest, were deemed “a world without



humans” suffices as evidence of the exclusion and marginalization of all and everything non-European and non-white. King Charles V of Spain even summoned a conference in 1550 at Valladolid to settle the question of whether the Amerindians were fully humans.

Over time as the meaning of the term “brute” broadened, it converged with the concept and meaning of the term ‘Nature’ and the two concepts co-evolved. Since, the humanist dichotomy of nature-human espoused by the Europeans deemed nature as exterior to humans, the non-European, non-white brutes were enmeshed in the category of nature and excluded from human civilization altogether. However, the story of exclusion does not end here. Within this context, the colonial project brewed the mechanistic vision of the Earth.

Rendering majority of the humankind as mute and brute, writes Ghosh, “enabled the metaphysical leap whereby the Earth and everything in it could also be reduced to inertness.” Thus, a planet with living, breathing, and interdependent ecosystems was reduced to “a vast machine made of inert particles in ceaseless motion” (Merchant, 1990, p. 226). Earth: not “a living tapestry,” (Singh, 2022) but a mechanical clock – as absurd as it could be. The Nutmeg’s Curse, by taking nutmeg, a tiny seed, as its main protagonist poses an ideological challenge to such a narrow understanding of the planet.



Ghosh contends that the planet is much more than a mere resource base for humans and that the earthly materials have meaning, voice, and agency of their own. This idea, however, is not new as the book narrates. “I wonder if the ground has anything to say?” asked a Native American chief in 1855 when he refused to sign a treaty with the Europeans because he believed that it excluded the voice of the land. Similarly, the Bandanese (inhabitants of the Banda Islands) believed that their mighty volcano, the Gunung Api, is alive and meaningful, not a mere mechanical component of the clockwork universe. But these native and Indigenous beliefs and modes of thinking were rendered obsolete and backward. Their voices were silenced. And with them was silenced the Earth. This silencing and exclusion, Bilgrami (2014) maintains, was the tactic that the European colonial project employed to justify its misdoings to the planet and to facilitate the process of economic extraction.

How is this story, this history relevant today? Let me put some synthesizing capabilities of the human mind to use here and weave the past and present together (they are not separate anyways). The colonial silencing, marginalization, and exclusion of the non-human planet and non-European humans are at the heart of environmental degradation and climate change. Therefore, for any present climate action to be fruitful, it must be inclusive and representative. The voices of those historically silenced must be heard. It means that Indigenous communities, people of color, former colonies, women, and all other

marginalized groups must have the opportunities and forums to vocalize their grievances, stance, and demands. It means valuing their knowledge, skills, and expertise.

Most importantly, it means humbling for the planet and respecting its sanctity. It means putting our ears to the ground, listening to its laments, and deciphering its whispers of warning and counsel. This is what Ghosh calls “vitalist politics” as he quotes examples of indigenous movements from across the world that have achieved success, both popular and legal, “by underscoring the sacredness of mountains, rivers, and forests, and by highlighting the ties of kinship by which they are bound to humans.”

There is much more that this book brings to the foreground by reckoning with history, etymology, literature, metaphysics, empire, genocide, warfare, politics, climate change, and, of course, the nutmeg: uncovering the nutmeg indeed unearths the planet. The book is eye-opening, insightful, and urgent. I would highly recommend it to anybody looking for a lucid, comprehensive, and well-crafted read on our current environmental predicament.

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Damisha Salim is a graduate student (2k22) at the Department of Development Studies. Majoring in the field of Climate Change & Development, her research revolves around a pivotal form of creative climate change communication i.e. climate change fiction, often shorthand as cli-fi.



Pakistan at Seventy-Five: Identity, Governance and conflict resolution in a Post Colonial Nation State

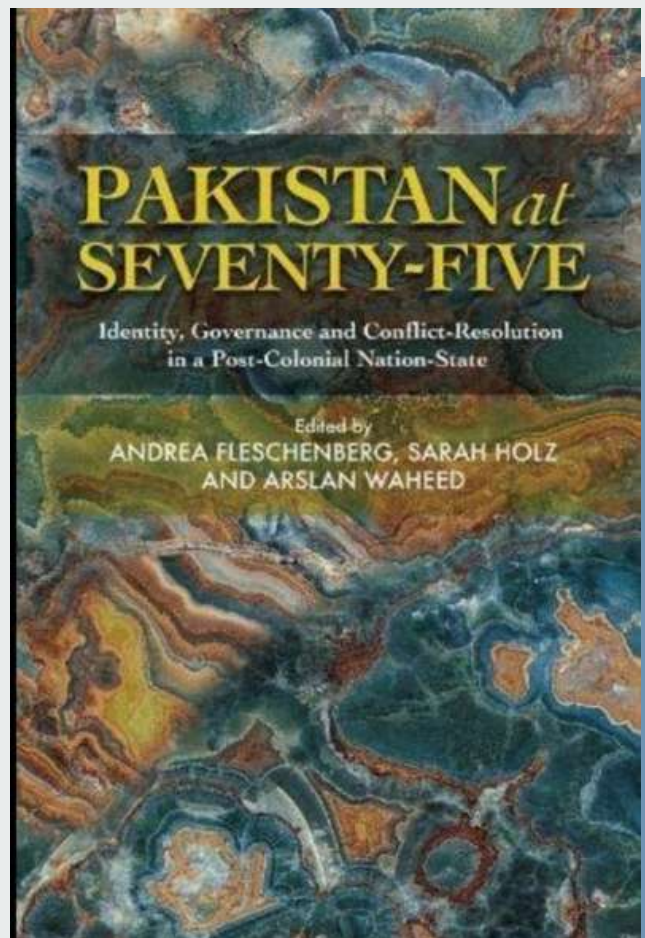
Edited Book by Andrea Fleschenberg, Sarah Holz and Arslan Waheed

Book Review by Ms. Fariha Tahir

Development studies is a new field that emerged in the mid-20th century. One reason Development studies is an interdisciplinary field is that it draws on its intellectual wealth from economics, political science, anthropology, and other disciplines. So, to explore a comprehensive book covering all aspects of the field is an uphill task. However, there are still many excellent books available covering themes of this emerging field.

Pakistan is a post-colonial nation-state because it was a British colony until 1947. The creation of Pakistan was a result of the partition of the sub-continent, based on the two-nation theory, along religious lines. In the post partition and post colonization period, as a state, Pakistan has been shaped by its historical and colonial legacies, which have had a lasting impact on its politics, economy, and society. Resultantly, Pakistan has undergone political changes and struggles for power, with several military coups and interventions since 1947. These complexities of Pakistani society are reflective in the key challenges being faced during the process of post-colonial state-building by this young nation.

"Pakistan at Seventy-Five-Identity, Governance and Conflict Resolution in a Post Colonial Nation State," edited by Andrea Fleschenberg, Sarah Holz and Arslan Waheed, is a book published by Liverpool University Press, in 2023. Currently, this is one of the finest and the most updated compilations of failed and successful attempts of a very young nation in the pursuit of



"Nation Building."

For a development practitioner and academician, it is always an uphill task to get a hold of any credible, updated and interrogation styled book based on empirical research by some of the finest brains of Pakistan Studies, however, in this book, within the limited scope of seven individually written chapters by seven different researchers /authors, the thorny journey of a young state,

the role of state, political parties and socio-political environment is described in a pen picture fashion.

The first chapter is by one of the editors, Arslan Waheed. The focus of the whole discussion is on 'Narrative of Development' in urban slum settings. The debate around what is actually "development" in Pakistani setting is worth reading.

The second chapter by Aftab Nasir, is about language and our complex of English vs National Language. After spending 75 years as an independent nation, we are unable to come out of English Complex. This linguistic dimension of English Vs Urdu is one of the main hurdles on the road towards Nation Building. Though, as a nation we are free, we take pride in the language of our Colonial Masters. Independent nation with slave language? Sooner the better, decide which language, as nation we wish to speak and communicate on our way to be a successful and free nation.

Sana Alima, an expert of Muslim civilization and urban migration trends is the author of the third chapter. She in her own unique style has raised and tried to explore answer to some tricky questions around Afghan Diaspora. Anyone interested in Migration studies from a gender perspective, this chapter is for you.

The fourth chapter is about the brain waves, perceptions, and negotiations among youth of Quaid a Azam University. This chapter is a penning work of Wajiha Tahir. A young researcher and scholar with a key focus on growth of democracy in Pakistan.

Chapter five is by one of the esteemed authors Sarah Holz and is an attempt to explore answer a very critical political debate; "Is the council of Islamic ideology a platform for

consensus building or dividing." Salman Rafi Sheikh's scholarly work around the theme of Baloch Nationalism and identity is very well known by any student of state and security, not only locally but globally as well. This chapter has all my recommendations to all brains delving into peace and conflict studies.

Finally, the topic of Gilgit Baltistan, identity crisis of a historic ethnicity vs Garrison state, resilience, struggles of nation building is authored by Shoaib Bodla. He is a political anthropologist studying anthropology from an activist's lens and a Marxian perspective.

The conclusion is penned by Dr. Fleschenberg, a long-term guest professor at different universities of Pakistan, including department of Development Studies at NUST. A scholar, researcher, and a Co-editor of some of the finest works on gender, politics, and contemporary social movements,' Andreas's chapter is a compulsory read to understand the issue of nation building from a maestro's analytical perspective. It is highly suggested that as a reader if you do not have time to read the whole book, please do not skip her chapter. This is the crux of the whole intellectual debate and arguments.

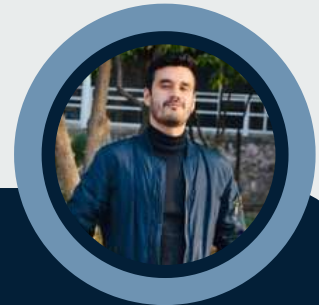
This book is worthy of reading as it provides answers to some of the most sought out questions on Pakistan's socio-political history. Overall, a well-written, engaging, and thought-provoking compilation. With a unique perspective on the subject matter this book is one of those few ones that challenge the reader's beliefs and expands their worldview. Overall, a five-star recommendation for every student of Pakistan and Development Studies.

Damisha Salim is a graduate student (2k22) at the Department of Development Studies. Majoring in the field of Climate Change & Development, her research is focused on gauging the audience impact of climate change fiction (cli-fi).



ALUMNI TESTIMONIALS

Meet some of our alumni who testify to the praises we have sung so far. Our department is lucky to have witnessed batch after batch of hardworking individuals who are trying to make this world a better place. We have mentioned here only a handful of so many.



Junaid Akbar (MSDS 2020)

Gracias to the faculty of Development studies for serving competent guidance, remarkable support and facilitating such a positive learning environment. The experience studying development studies has been incredible. During my degree tenure, the teachers helped me to stepped forward with flexibility, resilience, and determination to explore my area of interest further and accomplishment of my research work. I'm very happy to have chosen Development Studies as my postgraduate degree and I'm very confident to look forward



Hafsa Hassan (MSDS 2020)

I joined the Department of Development studies in 2020 with hope and skepticism. Hope that the degree program I chose was the program I was looking forward to since long and skepticism because "what if I can't make it". Moving from semester to semester built my confidence and the main motivators behind all of this being my faculty. After spending time in the Department of Development Studies I realized regardless of what set of mind you have come with, if you meet the right teachers and you also have self-motivation they both go hand in hand.



Javeria Nisar (MSDS 2020)

I have had a great and invaluable experience studying in Department of Development Studies at NUST. I credit this program with providing me with a new and enthralling perspective on social sciences. My success in life and all my endeavors are the result of immense and unconditional support provided by my professors, parents and peers.



Amina Saeed (MSDS 2020)

Studying at the Department of Development Studies has been a remarkable experience. Under the guidance of competent and supportive faculty I was able to explore my area of interests further and execute my research smoothly. Not only was I encouraged to be creative but was given multiple platforms to engage in. I am very contented to have chosen Development Studies as my postgraduate degree and I am excited take a step further.



Maida Shahid (MSDS 2020)

The two years that I spent in the department of Development Studies of S3H, NUST was filled with amazing learning experiences and memories. The teachers guided me every step of the way, preparing me for the future ahead. My classmates motivated and inspired me to become a better version of myself. This degree and the people that I met here contributed in one way or another to not only help me achieve my academic goals but also become the confident and self assured person that I am today.



Class of 2021

We couldn't have concluded this Newsletter without bidding adieu to the Class of 2K21, who will be graduating this year. We wish them the very best in their future endeavors.

THIS DEPARTMENT SHALL FOREVER BE HERE TO HELP THEM ALONG
THEIR JOURNEY!

Annual Issue (2022-2023)



Inclusivity: A catalyst for change, a tapestry of strength. Together, we break barriers, uplift voices, and create a world where all belong. Join us on this journey of compassion, understanding, and equality. Celebrating the power of diversity, one story at a time.

DNEWS

