

Voices Unheard: Exploring the Challenges & Frustrations of Males in Post-Flood Reconstruction Efforts in Pishin

Muhammad Abdur Rehman¹, Syed Hasanat Ur Rehman², Sadaf Awan³ and Hasnain Raza⁴

Abstract

The focus of most disaster writings is on the helplessness of the women and the children, the position of men in patriarchal societies such as Pakistan have not been addressed adequately. The paper reviews the male victims of the 2022 Pishin floods in Balochistan process of recovery following the floods and highlights the loss of economic resources and livelihood, mental health issues and the lack of care and compassion by the institutions. A qualitative methodology was used to collect two sets of data that comprised of in-depth interview of seven, purposely selected, male participants (farmers, shopkeepers, and professionals), on-the-field observations conducted in flood-affected villages, and institutional responses analyzed through application of thematic analysis. The outcomes include severe economic depression in which the income is largely used to pay off debts leading to poverty in the subsequent generation and child labor and high degree of psychological distress, including untreated PTSD and social isolation which are encouraged by cultural perceptions of masculinity and the seeking of help. Institutional failures were in the form of corrupted distribution of aid, accumulation of debts approximately of PKR 1.8 million, recovery policies that failed to consider the specific needs of men, and coping strategies that were founded primarily on religious orientations. This study indicates the significance of gender sensitive disaster recovery planning in response to the vulnerability of men including being transparent in their help programs, community based mental health programs and non-discriminatory economic rehabilitation programs.

Keywords: Masculinities and catastrophes, reconstruction after a disaster, economic vulnerabilities, psychological well-being, institutional disinvestment, Baluchistan

¹⁻²⁻³Department of Gender Studies Punjab University, Lahore – Pakistan

⁴Humanities Department Comsats University Islamabad, Vehari Campus – Pakistan

Introduction

Over the last few years, there is observed a sudden outbreak of climatic disasters in Pakistan and flood is one of the worst threats. The 2022 monsoon floods are among the historic floods recorded in the history of the country because over 33 million individuals suffered the effects and homes, livelihoods and infrastructures were ruined (Ali, Mannakkara, and Wilkinson, 2020). The area that received the most hits was the Northwestern Baluchistan and the Pishin district in particular, because it was the underdeveloped area that was poorly governed and prone to infrastructure attacks (Ahmed, Tobawal, & Kakar, 2025). Since women and children are the most vulnerable population in most cases of disaster studies and media accounts, there is minimal effort made in terms of discussing gendered views of a tribal and patriarchal community like Pishin.

In South Asia, disaster frameworks grounded in traditionally female-prioritized, male-prioritized, elderly-prioritized, and persons-with-disabilities-prioritized approaches have been developed through the traditional vulnerability lens, and traditionally represent the men as a neutral agent or as the implicit beneficiaries of patriarchy (Enarson and Pease, 2016). In this manner of working on the problems obscures the prevailing and culturally positioned vulnerabilities which are met by men in the aftermath of disasters. Masculine in Pishin has a high relationship with Pashtunwali, tribal identification, land and male breadwinner. This has been followed by more psychological and social effects on men, as well as, the risk of losing their identity, honor, and social status through the loss of land, livestock, and livelihoods through the floods (Rahim, 2024). The cultural constructs of non-examples of demonstrating feelings also contribute to the absence of discussing mental misery, which increases the possibility of depression, substance abuse, and social withdrawal.

Global recovery efforts in Pakistan in case of a disaster are technocratic and infrastructure-based where the community is very lowly involved, and psychosocial needs are not considered. The fact that rural male survivors in Pishin usually complain of being sidelined in decision-making, time-consuming bureaucracies, as well as corruption manifestations in the distribution of relief, is also a contributing factor to escalating frustrations and distrust towards the state and humanitarian agencies (De Jong, 2000). The unavailability of gender-responsive psychosocial services and sustainable economic reintegration interventions also place male survivors of the feeling of marginalization at an even greater disadvantage.

The paper is a critical qualitative study, which is founded on sociological, gender, and disaster knowledge to establish how men are affected by the post-flood in Pishin. It looks at the economic, emotional, cultural as well as the political dimensions of the male vulnerability, using the assistance of the in-depth interview, field observation and policy analysis. The article contributes to the existing literature on the issue of disaster masculinities as it proves that male voices are put into the foreground and calls on more inclusive and intersectional forms of disaster resilience (Enarson and Pease, 2016). It demands that the recovery must not be pegged on material reconstruction only but emotional, symbolic and identity-based recovery must be considered.

The article is contextualized in the background of literature that suggests the enormous mental health impact of floods and other extreme weather phenomena that are certain to increasingly increase with climate change (Haines et al., 2006; IPCC, AR5 2014; UK Climate Change Risk Assessment, 2017). Floods and their relationship with psychological morbidity in the short and long-term, emotional distress, stress, and anxiety have been reported to be consistent (Fernandez et al., 2015; Waite et al., 2017) The consequences of mental health have been proven to be experienced many years after the floods have taken place in various situations and case studies, i.e., in New Orleans, Banbury, and Somerset (Kessler et al., 2008; Walker-Springett et al., 2017). These are not immediate impacts, and they will be converted to both the short-term panic in times of flood and the long-term stressful elements in terms of rebuilding and institutional interaction (Tempest et al., 2017).

The research also stresses that the mental health outcomes vary across social groups and depend upon the age, the past experience, and the availability of resources (Norris and Murrell, 2008). Institutional responses may play a crucial role in recovery delivery, yet, in case they are withdrawn prematurely or perceived as unfair or inefficient, they tend to leave loopholes (Walker-Springett et al., 2017). It is important to note that institutional trust, transparency, community-led processes support are also the factors of recovery besides the degree of support (Bubeck et al., 2012; Adger et al., 2016; Babcicky and Seebauer, 2017).

However, the qualitative and person-focused research on long-term interaction between institutions and mental health is deficient (Fernandez et al., 2015). The existing research fills this gap by defining mental health as a social process of construction that is dynamic, affected by the personal, social, and environmental factors rather than being universal (Atkinson et al., 2012). The paper supports a

necessity to incorporate both localized and gender-sensitive analysis to develop sustainable and community-based resilience in Pakistan based on having inclusive disaster recovery plans, which take into consideration men as vulnerable.

The rural areas and resource poor areas are Pishin district in Baluchistan, which is socially, economically, and psychologically devastating by the floods. Feminine psychosocial and economic problems in males remain insufficiently researched despite the fact that the destruction and reconstruction of the environment is primarily considered in the other research of the post-disaster period. The Pakistani culture is patriarchal, which means that men are expected to be providers, protectors, and masculinity is regarded as powerful and unemotional (Khalid, Meng, & Khalid, 2021). These anticipations make the post-disaster stress more significant because men have to cope with the loss of livelihood, unemployment, debt, and the responsibility of cleanups with fewer resources (Enarson and Pease, 2016).

The gender-neutral institutional responses post-floods are based on the assumption of male invincibility and low psychosocial care demand which bolstered the male needs (Fordham, 2013). Male survivors are also sidelined by poor governance, inadequate mental health care, and cultural stigma of emotional vulnerability particularly in the areas such as Pishin (Qaisrani, 2020). Even though men have a leading role in reconstruction of households and community, their experiences and how they cope with the disaster is critically lacking in disaster research and policy. The paper satisfies this gap by examining the intersection of economic and social pressures and the rule of state to find out the life of men in Pishin following a flood.

This research has a significant theoretical, practical and policy implication. Theoretically, it would add to the gender and disaster scholarship because it helps to realize that there is little focus on the experiences of men in a disaster situation that could disrupt the mainstream paradigm of women as the most vulnerable group. Investigating the concept of masculinity as a social construct, especially in rural patriarchal communities, the paper will show how the traditional gender norms may serve as the cause of social limitation and mental health issues in men in the disaster cases (Enarson and Pease, 2016; Bradshaw, 2013). In practice, the study offers evidence-based data regarding the socio-economic and psychological issues of men in post-flood recovery, and the interaction of masculinities and institutional neglect, as well as its effect on recovery outcomes. This emphasis contributes to the creation of gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate models of disaster management, particularly in rural settings which are resource-limited like Pishin. On the policy front, the findings will be used to guide governments, NGOs, and local

authorities to develop initiatives on psychosocial needs of men, with the focus of creating gender-specific mental health interventions and community-based programs that help to reduce stigma and achieve long-term and sustainable recovery.

The paper examines the gendered vulnerability of men regarding post-flood recovery in Pishin, Balochistan with the struggle of exposing the existing disasters discourses where the main victims are women and children. It is sensitive to the interaction between economic disruption and the socioculturally constructed ideal of masculinity and failure of institutions to impact on the lived experiences, coping and long-term recovery outcomes of men. The study is theorized with the Disaster Masculinities Theory according to which the traditional masculine role of providers and protector of the male gender is destabilized by the crises leaving men in a vulnerable situation (Enarson and Pease, 2016). The combined effects of the factors of class, occupation, age, and rurality on the marginalization of the post-disaster conditions are explained using the intersectional approach. Besides, structural violence is a concept that is used to analyze how the inability of the systems to govern effectively, corruption and lack of policies worsen the misery that men experience in their quest to heal (Galtung, 1969).

<i>Construct</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Relevance to Study</i>
Gendered Vulnerability	The struggles of men that are ignored because of the expectations of the society that they should be stoic and provide.	Describes the reasons why male trauma is not reported and addressed within the aid systems.
Economic Disintegration	Destruction of livelihoods, debt traps and informal labor survival.	Since streams how nervous floods feed intergenerational very little (e.g. child labour, asset depletion).
Cultural Masculinity	Rules of Pashtunwali that connect the identity of males to ownership of land, act of honor, and holding in their hearts.	Exposes obstacles to asking help and stigma on mental illness.

Institutional Betrayal	Corruption, absence of participation in the decisions making, and absence of male focused aid.	Illustrates systemic breakdowns which increase recuperation.
-------------------------------	--	--

The study conceptual model links existing vulnerabilities, which involve poverty and bad infrastructure, with outcomes of floods, which include the loss of livelihood and psychological trauma, and structural barriers, which involve the absence of gender-sensitive policies and cultural stigma. The above culminates in further cycle of self-inflicted suffering, loss of agency and community hardiness. The study has significant contribution to the literature gap in disaster since it relies on the experience of male in tribal patriarchal society and in addition, it challenges the homogenization of recovery efforts. It connects forces that occur at a macro-level, e.g. climate disasters, governmental failure with those at a micro-level, e.g. psychosocial health and survival, and turns a disaster recovery into not only physical reconstruction but dignity, mental health and just institutional provision.

Review of the Literature

The event of natural disasters is extremely destructive to social, economic, and psychological structures that have the propensity to evoke and aggravate preexisting inequalities. It is particularly the floods that devastate livelihoods, disrupt communities and dismantle social integrity by demolishing infrastructure and essential facilities. According to the initial disaster scholarship approach, the issue of vulnerability was mostly seen through the lens of gender that emphasized the fact that women and children were exposed to the risk, and men were commonly portrayed as self-sufficient participants and the last resort who did not require much assistance (Enarson, 2000; Neumayer and Plumper, 2007). Although this focus had a very crucial role of bringing structural gender inequalities much needed attention, it also contributed to making the weaknesses of men in terms of disasters relatively invisible because of scholarly research and the policy realm.

The recent literature is also recognizing that the experiences of the men who are victims of disasters are predetermined by the deficit of institutional focus, financial pressure, and restrictive gender roles that demand suppressing emotions and being always available to relatives (Khan, 2018; UN Women, 2020). The forces are experienced more in the less developed and cultural conservatives such as the Pishin district in Balochistan where patriarchal systems and poverty are amalgamated with poor climatic factors to form some sort of bad governance. This is a literature review

of gender and disaster recovery specifically on male experience, masculinity and institutional reaction on patriarch and rural situation. It puts the present study within the framework of bigger arguments in the gender, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and post-disaster recovery and identifies the gaps pursued by the study.

The mainly dominant theme in the early literature on disaster was the theme of women as the most vulnerable population due to their higher exposure to poverty, care giving burden, risks on reproductive health and gender-based violence during and after the disaster (Enarson, 2000; Ariyabandu and Wickramasinghe, 2005; Cutter et al., 2003; Neumayer and Plumper, 2007). The feminist disaster scholarship was radical in that the gender blindness of the prior disaster scholarship was confronted and it also revealed how disasters have amplification effects on the gender disparity that exists within socioeconomic structures and cultural norms (Enarson and Morrow, 1998).

Empirical evidence of big disasters supported this point of view. A 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami, Hurricane Katrina (2005) and Haiti Earthquake (2010) outlined individual research found more women died, displaced, and lost their means of livelihood, which was often attributed to the cultural constraints on female mobility, swimming, and access to resources (Oxfam, 2005; Enarson, 2012). These outcomes made a tremendous influence on the global policy, and the gender mainstreaming was being introduced into such documents as the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015), which aimed to involve women in the disaster risk reduction plans and actions (UNISDR, 2015).

However, critics add that this kind of richness, on the contrary, caused feminization of responsibility, because women were in some sense depicted as victims, but the main sources of resilience which strengthened the traditional gender roles, rather than destroyed them (Bradshaw, 2015). In addition, the analytical capacity of disaster scholarship was also limited to the preference of a Western binary view of gender (women were weak and men strong) (Enarson and Pease, 2016; Gaillard et al., 2017).

More recent theorizing has addressed these limitations by suggesting a shift towards inclusion and intersectional theorizing that embraces the vulnerabilities of men and possibilities of women (Alston, 2013; Peek and Fothergill, 2008). According to the disaster masculinities theory, male roles, which are created by society, are destabilized in the case of a crisis, particularly those related to breadwinning,

protection, and authority, and this leads to the development of certain vulnerabilities (Enarson and Pease, 2016).

The empirical studies revealed that men are always more likely to be killed during a disaster than women due to risk behavior, at work and due to their concentrations in high-risk occupations such as construction, firefighting and emergency services (Peek and Fothergill, 2008). At the same time, men are less likely to receive psychosocial assistance due to the stigma of experiencing the feelings of vulnerability and high rates of untreated post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and substance abuse (Alcántara-Ayala et al., 2022). The post-tsunami data in Japan demonstrated that the number of males who committed suicide under the impact of unemployment, debts, and embarrassment of failure to perform the role of a breadwinner increased (Orui et al. (2014)). However, in most instances, men are excluded in the relief programs and psychosocial interventions based on findings because the post disaster relief programs are found to be more oriented towards women and children (Fordham, 2004; Alston, 2013). Such rejection is related to an ongoing belief in male power and self-remedy that obscures the needs of males and interrupts the entire healing procedures.

Economic insecurity and masculine identity have been researched on one another and these articles offer valuable information applicable in disaster studies. Weis (2003) further demonstrates how the redefining of the masculinities in the working classes by the changes in the macroeconomic also causes identity crises by dismantling the traditional labor roles. Similarly, Mills (2008) indicates how gender relations of power and classes support the reign of men and limit men in low resource regions respectively.

Elliston (2004) also offers the process of how masculinity is socially negotiated during labor, tradition and politics struggle and how economic dislocation can cause identity reconfiguration and psychological stress. On top of the disaster context, these researches suggest that the post flood loss of livelihood is not merely causing material deprivation but also threatening the sense of worth, power and sense of belonging to society among the male gender.

Inability to make a living is often accompanied by shame, withdrawal and internalized distress which are supplemented by the cultural norms of not showing emotions (Ariyabandu, 2009; Khan, 2018). The recovery mechanisms do not even consider such gendered economic pressure, which will strengthen the process of

marginalization and deterioration of mental health. Intersectionality, Policy and Institutional Vacuity.

Intersectional approaches in contemporary scholarship of disaster are becoming increasingly a popular method of researching the relationship between gender and class, age, occupation, race, sexuality, and rurality (Dominey-Howes et al., 2016). Although this is a massive leap towards a better place, there are massive gaps. The issue of the life of non-binary and LGBTQ in the case of disaster is not actively studied and gendered statistics are not uniformly presented by the systems of disaster reporting (Waite et al., 2017; Enarson, 2012).

Institutional responses are also given much value when it comes to recovery outcomes. It has been found that aid is not the single element that influences the recovery; instead, the perceptions of fairness, transparency, and institutional competence are also influential (Fordham, 2004; UNISDR, 2015). Absence of trust in the institutions complicates the psychosocial recovery where the governance is feeble and corruption is scourging.

Baluchistan and Pishin rural and Cultural setting

Baluchistan is the sparsely populated but the largest province of Pakistan that has rugged terrain, climatic extremities and strong tribal trends (Siddiqui and Siddiqui, 2009). The province is rural as it is seen in Pishin district where subsistence farming, livestock farming and semi-arid ecosystems form the primary source of livelihood (Ahmed, 2015). The water scarcity, along with the influence of climate change and the worsening of the ancient irrigation systems known as karez, has caused the rise of the livelihood insecurity and seasonal migration (Suleri and Savage, 2006; Salik, Shabbir, & Naeem, 2020).

The social life in Pishin is governed by Pashtunwali, which is one of the traditional codes of honor, masculinity and collective responsibility, and the jirga systems tend to work in parallel to the formal legal institutions (Mushtaq, Yaqoob, & Javaid, 2016). Even though the systems promote social cohesion, they also support powerful gender hierarchies and limit the availability of justice among disadvantaged categories of people (Amnesty International, 2020). The absence of infrastructure, inability to access healthcare, low educational attainment, particularly in girls, and ineffective disaster preparedness also increase vulnerability (Shaikh et al., 2018; UNICEF, 2021).

The empirical study of Pishin-Lora Basin indicates that the composite resilience indexes of smallholder farmers are low, and all the socioeconomic, physical, and other institutional resilience indexes are weak (Naz & Saqib, 2021; Yousuf and Barrech, 2022). Climate-related migration has also interfered with social orders and livelihood and worsened identity loss, marginalization, and psychosocial misery (Ullah et al., 2025).

Synthesis and Research Gap

As it can be seen, there has been a highly noticeable shift of a feminized perspective on disaster vulnerability towards the inclusive types of gender structures in the literature. However, there is very little information about the experience of men, particularly within patriarchal, rural, and resource-deprived settings. The existing studies are largely centered on the loss of the economy, masculinity or the institution failure as independent of each other but not as a system. Moreover, little of the qualitative, context-based studies that are predictive of the voice of men have been done in such regions as Pishin.

To address these gaps, the present paper has included the theory of the disaster masculinities, intersectionality, and structural analysis to provide an analysis of the joint effects of economic disruption, cultural expectations, and institutional actions on post flood recovery of men. By doing so, it will assist in developing a more balanced and holistic idea of disaster resilience that considers men as vulnerable subjects and acknowledges them as agents of the complex social systems.

Research Design

This study will use the paradigm of interpretivists because the research design is a qualitative research that attempts to explain the experience of men in their post-flood recovery in Pishin, Balochistan. It is a qualitative approach which dwells on subjective meanings and lived experiences of the participants and provides the possibility to conduct a deep analysis of the interaction of economic loss, the norms of masculinity cultures, institutional responses, and psychosocial distress in the post-disaster environment. The critical qualitative approach was chosen and realized in accordance with the sociological and gender-disaster perspective, in order to find out the lost voices of the men who remain only underrepresented by the disaster studies.

Data Collection Methods

Three qualitative data collection techniques in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis were employed to collect the data, which allowed making the methodological triangulation possible.

In order to conduct in-depth interviews, purposive sampling was applied on seven male flood survivors who incumbent in various socioeconomic backgrounds namely farmers, small business owners, professionals, and one of the religious leaders. The subjects were aged 30-50 years, which is the age at which the social pressure of the necessity to be a provider is the most intense. Everyone who took part in it was personally familiar with the 2022 floods. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in either Pashto or Urdu with some degree of flexibility though there was need to maintain focus of the interviews in the main theme of the loss of livelihood, development of mental health conditions, the participation in the institution, and the coping mechanisms. The interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed verbatim and translated into English.

The villages that were flood affected like Kili Zarif Abad and Ameerabad were visited in field work to give an idea to the interview data. Reconstruction of houses, collective sociality and open demonstration of institutional presence or absence (NGO camps and incomplete infrastructure) was observed.

The review of the documents included the governmental reports, NGO recovery strategies, disaster policies, and the local media news to find the gaps in the male-centered recovery efforts, and institutional discourses of disaster victims.

Sampling Strategy

The representative purposive sampling approach was that of getting diversification in terms of occupation and setting (urban and rural Pishin). This was complemented with snowball sampling to sample those men that did not enroll in formal assistance mechanisms due to stigma. This combination implied that it would embrace both the visible and the oppressed opinions in the community.

Data Analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) were used in the thematic analysis to deal with data. It included transcription and translation, open coding to find out the first ideas (e.g., silent suffering, debt burden), axial coding to examine the interdependencies

between the economic loss and masculine identity, and the development of the themes. In order to enhance rigor of analysis, the interview information was triangulated using field notes and documentary evidence.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical conduct was observed. The informed consent was obtained in a multi-stage process through the language of preference of the participants who were reiterated to their consent through consistency because the post-disaster trauma is a sensitive area. Guarantee of anonymity was ensured by use of pseudonyms and safe data storage. The cultural diversity was taken into account by following the Pashtunwali regulations like same sex interviewing. Interviews methods were interview methods that were based on trauma and where necessary, referral information was provided to the psychosocial support.

Limitations

The finding of the study cannot be statistically generalized due to this context-specific small sample size ($n=7$). However, that level of analysis is strengthened by a long period of interaction and quality of data. Other drawbacks are that there is a potential of bias due to recalls and accessing gender-conservative environments. This has been taken care of by triangulating them with secondary information and the time they took in the field.

Data Analysis

This chapter sees the author give an analysis of lived experiences of men who had gone through floods in Pishin, Pakistan, and how the disaster intensified existed economic insecurity, bad governance, and rigid gender norms. The floods served as an agent, which transformed the hidden weaknesses into the simultaneous crises and exposed systemic failures in the recovery of the disaster.

Four key themes were determined including; livelihood breakdown, related psychosocial distress of interrupted provider role and institutional failure related to corruption and marginalization and coping strategies of religious endurance and risky survival tactics. These findings pose a problem to the official recovery discourses and indicate that aids processes are likely to replicate inequality.

Demography

The participants (those who were between 30 and 50 years of age) represented different occupational backgrounds yet they were all victims of downward mobility after the floods. The avenues to precarity were differentiating by profession, age, and even place where the economic loss and debt was the world over. Masculine demands complicated the inability because not to do it would lead to social shame and psychological trauma to add to intergenerational problems of child labor and school drop-out.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Key Vulnerability</i>	<i>Economic Impact</i>
Hameedullah	38	Imam & Religious Teacher	Village Ameerabad, Pashin	Lost mosque (main income source) 25-30 lacs Pakistan rupees debt	Reduction of salary; income demolished by rent;
Abdullah	32	District Irrigation Officer	Kili Zarif abad	The cost of reconstruction at home was a burden on government salary	50 percent salary that was redirected to the payment of loans.
Farhan Niazi	32	Former Motorcar Showroom Owner	Kili Zarif abad	Cannot read and write; business lost the job; to work as labor	The debt consumes 70% of the income; they are forced to work without contracts;
Dr Musharaf Hameed	30	Doctor (Hospital & Clinic)	Pishin	Destroyed clinic; no use of professional skills in healing recoveries	Taken in order to rebuild house; crops/animals lost in the family
Shakaruddin	32	Islamic Scholar & Teacher	Kili Zarif abad	Savings used up Children tugged out of school; children pulled out to work; children dragged out of school	Works in the morning, breaks at night; in debt cycle diagnosed

Abdul Rahim	45	Former Farmer → Day Laborer	Pishin	Discrimination based on age at work; lost the family collection of 12 goats (made up their family savings).	Earns 500 PKR/day; boy grows up and leaves school for herding livestock
Zahid Khan	50	Former Shopkeeper → Roadside Vendor	Pishin	age barrier to employment and supplier threaten over 1.8M PKR debt	Sells plastics; sold wife's gold to settle debts

Financial Disintegration

Participants consistently told that the floods resulted in complete disintegration of livelihoods whereby men whose livelihoods had been in normal engagements were pushed in the informal jobs and in debts. Farmers had lost farm produce and animals; business persons had lost premises and those under salary had lost institutions. “I had wheat and onion crop”, which, as Abdul Rahim explained, was wiped out in totality. As a worker, “I earn 500 PKR per day today- it is not enough to support seven children.” On that, Farhan Niazi noticed that there was down-mobility between entrepreneurship and survival labor: “my motorcar showroom was completely burnt. I have now become an employee to make a living.”

The debt was amongst the major post disaster liabilities since the cost of rebuilding made families resort to high interest loans and selling their properties. Abdullah replied, “50 percent of my salary will be reconstructing the debts. My savings are exhausted.” The debt re-invented to other people family structure and children future in the same way Shakaruddin reasoned: “My children are working to pay loans instead of being educated. The family has been sucked into the debt trap.”

Social and psychological Effects

Men cited severe mental distress which is brought about by gendered ideals of strength. The pressure to remain resilient in playing the role of being a head of a house caused most of the people to repress traumas. Abdullah was a patriarch of the family and, as such, told me that he repressed emotions. “The psychological pressure was great and I had to control myself.” This suppressing of the distress was often only increasing the distress rather than diminishing it.

Mental health issues (anxiety, depressions, and trauma symptoms) were frequent but not professionally addressed because of the deficiency of those services and their

stigmatization. Farhan Niazi narrated, “The trauma made me visit a psychologist, but mental health is not a big issue in my case especially among the male gender.” Monetary barriers to access care also existed where Abdul Rahim noted that health worker referred to it as depression, “but pills would be costly because they required money which they did not have.” Seclusion only compounded the situation and Hameedullah points out that, “I have become more isolated. Community ties weakened.”

Institutional Failure

The respondents applied similar words to refer to the post-flood recovery as being corrupt, exclusionary and absence of delivered promises. “The aid distribution process was perceived as being selective and the actual victims were being sieved.” Farhan Niazi reported that according to the authorities “the money fell in the wrong hands. We received not even half the promised ten lakh rupees.” It was likewise the opinion of Abdul Rahim: “The revenue officer promised to pay it, but he even put the names of his kinsfolk in.”

The absence of preventative facilities, besides the help, enhanced the depictions of desertion. Shakaruddin told, build dams and bridges to drain off floods. Pishin is awaiting but without getting any assistance of significance. These failures transformed the flood into a type of an institutional and moral crisis instead of the natural disaster as it was reported by the participants.

Coping Strategies

Using adaptive and maladaptive coping methods were employed by men. Religion was an emotional support and praying and reciting Quran made pain have a sense. Hameedullah responded, “It is my support, patience and pray. Quran requests us to turn to Allah in case we are in trouble.” Abdul Rahim likewise informed the same, that he said, “It is Surah Duha, I recite it by night, --it speaks of light after darkness.”

The remaining ones used to escape and isolate themselves to handle the shame and desperation. Abdul Rahim acknowledged his habit of chewing naswar by the remark, “I chew naswar to forget I want to eat, and to secret peer support”, Abdul Rahim said, “We meet at the riverbank and eat one cigarette. That is our support group.” These are resilient plans, and formal psychosocial supportless plans.

Cross-Cutting Patterns

Overall, in each theme, 4 patterns were repetitive and overlapping, i.e. debt as some sort of economic trap, systematic corruption in the delivery of help, silent suffering with the assistance of the norms of masculinity, and damage to the generations in the form of school dropout and child labor. Zahid Khan believes that the future generation of the children is being murdered by the present generation. There are implications of these findings, in that the most devastating effect of the floods was not just the devastation of the environment but the structural collapse that changed a one-time shock into a self-generating loss cycle.

Summary of Findings

The paper discussed qualitative interviews, field observations, and document analysis of men experiences, in the post floods, in Pishin, Balochistan. These findings reveal that men were subjected to intersecting economic, psychological, cultural and institutional pressure which is largely ignored in the standard disaster recovery strategies. The 2022 floods as compared to being a temporary shock worsened the preexisting vulnerabilities and brought into view the systemic vulnerabilities that further amplify the pain and recovery.

Economic disintegration of people was also amongst the major discoveries as men would lose farms, businesses, livestock and official jobs to work in the informal sector and earn using high-interest rates. In the majority of cases 70 percent of the household income was directed at settling loans that had brought intergenerational consequences such as school drop-out and child labor. Masculine demands of holding back emotions raised the levels of psychological distress and led to depression, anxiety, and trauma without treatment in situations of social isolation and the absence of accessible health services. The lack of trust and recovery was further caused by the institutional failures that compromised the system by corrupting it, misplacing aid and developing the infrastructural development at a slow pace. Men reacted to this by a combination of reactions to adjust to both faith-based resilience and maladaptive behavior as an agentic source and systemic abandonment.

Theoretical Implications

The article is included in the recent literature on the topic of disaster masculinities and suggests that the vulnerability to disasters exists in a binary and feminized way. It confirms that manhoods are not specified but adjusted during crisis, in the

majority of instances, making the suffering of men in patriarchal conditions aggravated. The interaction of class, age, occupation, and cultural expectations and resulting differentiated experience of trauma and resilience can be demonstrated using an intersectional approach and applied to the support of the statement by Enarson and Pease (2016). The findings indicate that a novel concept of gender is required in the disaster studies that must not include women but men as the subjects as well as agents.

Practical Recommendations

The findings show that combined recovery plans are necessary. On financial front, survivors were concerned with direct financial aid, low-interest micro-loans, debt relief and economic development based on a local setting to restore lives. To attain psychosocial recovery, community-based mental health services that are culturally sensitive, including male-only support space and awareness campaigns by community and religious leaders of authority, are needed. At institutional level, what the participants required was clear aid provision systems, participatory policy making that involves men in decision making and long term investments in resistant infrastructure against floods. The poverty cycle needs to be broken through cultural and education-based interventions such as reconstructing masculinity to allow the expression of emotions and prevent child labor through educational subsidies.

Policy Implications

It is suggested in the study that the change would be to gender-inclusive and inclusive policies of disaster recovery to consider the vulnerability of the men as a constituent element of community resilience. It is recommended that the policies combine gender perspectives at all levels of the disaster risk mitigation procedures, invest in long-term psychosocial support, and increase the collaboration of the state, nongovernmental organizations, and educational establishments to monitor the recovery outcomes. Inclusive and accountable governance is significant in the reestablishment of the lost public trust and prevention of re-marginalization.

Limitation for Future Research

Due to the small size of sample (n=7), the findings of study cannot be statistically generalized. The proposed research may be founded on the mixed-method designs or larger surveys to verify and generalize such findings. What would be also informative would be the way the men would recover in different settings and

calamities guided by culture. It is also possible that the research on the favorable role of women and other underprivileged groups can contribute to the knowledge base on the collective resiliency.

Final Reflections

The Pishin floods were not necessarily an environmental phenomenon but a prism in which the models of injustice, institutional apathy, and hard-and-fast gender constructions were revealed. Indeed, the narrations of the participants show that recovery is not just about reconstructions of the infrastructure but also about recovery of dignity, agency and hope. The case of Pishin during the time of rising climate threat demonstrates that the issues of developing comprehensive and unbiased and humane models of disaster management that can be used to repair the visible and invisible harm and create strong societies are as much so.

References

- Adger, W. N., Barnett, J., Brown, K., Marshall, N., & O'Brien, K. (2013). Cultural dimensions of climate change impacts and adaptation. *Nature Climate Change*, 3(2), 112–117.
- Ahmed, S., Tobawal, M. U., & Kakar, M. M. (2025). Climate change vulnerability and adaptation strategies in Balochistan focusing on water scarcity, agricultural fragility and extreme heat. *Journal of Development and Social Sciences*, 6(4), 121–137.
- Alcántara-Ayala, I., Gomez, C., Chmutina, K., van Niekerk, D., Raju, E., Marchezini, V., ... & Gaillard, J. C. (2022). *Disaster risk*. Routledge.
- Ali, R. A., Mannakkara, S., & Wilkinson, S. (2020). Factors affecting successful transition between post-disaster recovery phases: A case study of the 2010 floods in Sindh, Pakistan. *International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment*, 11(5), 597–614. (<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJDRBE-03-2020-0016>)
- Alston, M. (2013). Environmental social work: Accounting for gender in climate disasters. *Australian Social Work*, 66(2), 218–233. (<https://doi.org/10.1080/0312407X.2013.785778>)
- Amnesty International. (2020). Pakistan: Harmful traditional practices and violence against women. Amnesty International.
- Ariyabandu, M. M. (2005). Gender dimensions in disaster management: A guide for South Asia. Zubaan.
- Ariyabandu, M. M. (2009). Sex, gender and gender relations in disasters. In E. Enarson & P. G. Dhar Chakrabarti (Eds.), *Women, gender and disaster: Global issues and initiatives* (pp. 5–17). SAGE Publications India.
- Babcicky, P., & Seebauer, S. (2017). The two faces of social capital in private flood mitigation: Opposing effects on risk perception, self-efficacy and coping capacity. *Journal of Risk Research*, 20(8), 1017–1037.
- Bradshaw, S. (2013). *Gender, development and disasters*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Bradshaw, S. (2015). Engendering development and disasters. *Disasters*, 39(S1), S54–S75.
- Bubeck, P., Botzen, W. J. W., & Aerts, J. C. J. H. (2012). A review of risk perceptions and other factors that influence flood mitigation behavior. *Risk Analysis*, 32(9), 1481–1495. (<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1539-6924.2011.01783.x>)
- Chan, S. H. (2018). Chinese nationality and coloniality of Hong Kong student movement, 1960–1970s. *Asian Journal of Social Science*, 46(3), 330–358.
- Cutter, S. L., Boruff, B. J., & Shirley, W. L. (2012). Social vulnerability to environmental hazards. In *Hazards, vulnerability and environmental justice* (pp. 115–132). Routledge.
- DeJong, G. F. (2000). Expectations, gender, and norms in migration decision making. *Population Studies*, 54(3), 307–319.
- Dominey-Howes, D., Gorman-Murray, A., & McKinnon, S. (2016). Queering disasters: On the need to account for LGBTI experiences in natural disaster contexts. *Gender, Place & Culture*, 23(5), 661–676. (<https://doi.org/10.1080/0966369X.2015.1075322>)
- Elliston, D. (2004). A passion for the nation: Masculinity, modernity, and nationalist struggle. *American Ethnologist*, 31(4), 606–630.

- Enarson, E. (2000). Gender and natural disasters. International Labour Organization.
- Enarson, E., & Morrow, B. H. (1998). *The gendered terrain of disaster: Through women's eyes*. Praeger.
- Enarson, E., & Pease, B. (2016). Men, masculinities and disaster. Routledge.
- Fernandez, A., Black, J., Jones, M., Wilson, L., Salvador-Carulla, L., Astell-Burt, T., & Black, D. (2015). Flooding and mental health: A systematic mapping review. *PLOS ONE*, 10(4), e0119929.
- Fordham, M. (2013). Gendering vulnerability analysis: Towards a more nuanced approach. In *Mapping vulnerability* (pp. 174–182). Routledge.
- Gaillard, J.-C., Sanz, K., Balgos, B. C., Dalisay, S. N. M., Gorman-Murray, A., Smith, F., & Toelupe, V. A. (2017). Beyond men and women: A critical perspective on gender and disaster. *Disasters*, 41(3), 429–447.
- Galtung, J. (1969). Violence, peace, and peace research. *Journal of Peace Research*, 6(3), 167–191.
- Haines, A., Kovats, R. S., Campbell-Lendrum, D., & Corvalán, C. (2006). Climate change and human health: Impacts, vulnerability, and mitigation. *The Lancet*, 367(9528), 2101–2109.
- IPCC. (2014). *Climate change 2014: Impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability*. Cambridge University Press.
- Iqbal, M., & Ahmed, K. (2015). Pakistan 2010 floods: Policy gaps in disaster preparedness and response. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, 12, 341–349. (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2015.03.007>)
- Kessler, R. C., Galea, S., Jones, R. T., & Parker, H. A. (2008). Mental illness and suicidality after Hurricane Katrina. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 86(12), 930–939.
- Khalid, Z., Meng, X.-M., & Khalid, A. (2021). A qualitative insight into gendered vulnerabilities: A case study of the Shishper GLOF in Hunza Valley, Pakistan. *Sustainability*, 13(16), 8798. (<https://doi.org/10.3390/su13168798>)
- Mushtaq, A. Q., Yaqoob, U., & Javaid, M. U. (2016). Role of Jirga in Pakhtoon society: An analysis with special reference to justice dispensation. *Journal of the Punjab University Historical Society*, 29(2).
- Myer, L., Ehrlich, R. I., & Susser, E. S. (2004). Social epidemiology in South Africa. *Epidemiologic Reviews*, 26(1), 112–123. (<https://doi.org/10.1093/epirev/mxh004>)
- Naz, F., & Saqib, S. E. (2021). Gender-based differences in flood vulnerability among men and women in the char farming households of Bangladesh. *Natural Hazards*, 106(1), 655–677.
- Neumayer, E., & Plümper, T. (2007). The gendered nature of natural disasters: The impact of catastrophic events on the gender gap in life expectancy, 1981–2002. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 97(3), 551–566.
- Orui, M., Harada, S., & Hayashi, M. (2014). Changes in suicide rates in disaster-stricken areas following the Great East Japan Earthquake and their effect on economic factors: An ecological study. *Environmental Health and Preventive Medicine*, 19(6), 459–466.
- Oxfam. (2005). *The tsunami's impact on women*. Oxfam International.
- Peek, L., & Fothergill, A. (2008). Displacement, gender, and the challenges of parenting after Hurricane Katrina. *NWSA Journal*, 20(3), 69–105.
- Qaisrani, A. W. (2020). *Disasters and gender dynamics in Pakistan*. Sustainable Development Policy Institute.
- Rahim, T. (2024). Beyond quotas: Examining patriarchal barriers to women's political participation in Pakistan. *Journal of Political Studies*, 31(1), 67–81.

- Salik, K. M., Shabbir, M., & Naeem, K. (2020). Climate-induced displacement and migration in Pakistan: Insights from Muzaffargarh and Tharparkar districts.
- Schilizzi, S., & Azeem, M. M. (2020). How to be fair in prioritizing support in the aftermath of disasters: Pakistan's housing reconstruction challenges following the 2010 flood disaster. In *Natural hazards and disaster justice: Challenges for Australia and its neighbours* (pp. 151–166). Springer.
- Siddiqui, G. U., & Siddiqui, Z. A. (2009). Balochistan: People and culture. *Al-Burz*, 1(1), 38–56.
- Suleri, A., & Savage, K. (2006). Food security and livelihoods in Baluchistan. Sustainable Development Policy Institute.
- UK Climate Change Risk Assessment. (2017). UK climate change risk assessment 2017. UK Government.
- UNICEF. (2021). Education access in rural Balochistan. United Nations Children's Fund.
- UNISDR. (2015). Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction 2015–2030. United Nations.
- Waite, T. D., Chaintarli, K., Beck, C. R., Bone, A., Amlôt, R., Kovats, S., ... & Oliver, I. (2017). The English national cohort study of flooding and health: Cross-sectional analysis of mental health outcomes at year one. *BMC Public Health*, 17(1), 129.
- Walker-Springett, K., Butler, C., & Adger, W. N. (2017). Wellbeing in the aftermath of floods. *Health & Place*, 43, 66–74.
- Weis, L. (2003). Gender, masculinity and the new economy. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 30(3), 111–129.
- Yousuf, M., & Barrech, S. (2022). Assessing community resilience to climate change impacts: A case of smallholder farmers of Pishin-Lora Basin, Balochistan, Pakistan. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs*, 5(2), 846–877.

Article Information:

<i>Received</i>	22-Mar-2026
<i>Revised</i>	21-May-2026
<i>Accepted</i>	10-Jun-2026
<i>Published</i>	30-Jun-2026

Declarations:

Authors' Contribution:

- **All Authors Conceptualization, and intellectual revisions. Data collection, interpretation, and drafting of manuscript**
- The authors agree to take responsibility for every facet of the work, making sure that any concerns about its integrity or veracity are thoroughly examined and addressed

• **Conflict of Interest:** NIL

• **Funding Sources:** NIL

Correspondence:

Sadaf Awan

sadaf.dgs@pu.edu.pk
