

Poverty Trap: Wage Discrimination and Multi-Generational Inequality in Pakistan's Manufacturing Sector: A Case Study of Sukkur's Industrial Laborers

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Abstract

This study investigates how Pakistan's regional manufacturing hub (Sukkur) is still poorly understood, sustains intergenerational poverty. The study employs a mixed-methods approach and includes surveys of 1,000 workers to reveal significant wage disparities. Multigenerational poverty continues to exist when 68 percent of their children forcibly work low paying jobs. The prime reasons include wage inequality, insufficient economic resources, and savings, educational challenges, dearth of skilled employment opportunities, collectively contribute the vicious cycle of intergenerational poverty. Unfair piece-rate policy and absence of effective social welfare programs force them to live under the shadow of poverty. More specifically, women earn 78 percent less than men and 63 percent of workers do not receive formal employment contracts. Therefore, this study recommends formal and informal interventions, enabling the sufferers to avail of their due employment rights from formal employment agreements and allowing provincial and local governments to ensure social welfare support for the affected child labor.

Keywords: Wage Discrimination, Multi-Generational Inequality, Child Labor.

Introduction

With its significant total national output commitment, Sukkur is a colossal yet little-investigated area regarding the impact of wage discrimination on its economically insecure laborers. Without question, even while the business is a giant driver of the economy, it is obliterated by wage bundles and irrefutable distinction, especially in discretionary metropolitan associations like Sukkur where professional factory workers are regularly banished from the advantages of progress. Informal contracting and compensation concealment limit workers' true capacity. Sukkur's food businesses, for example, depend on modest work without giving advantages like medical coverage or annuities, developing laborer weakness.

This article examines how pay errors and intergenerational resource inconvenience result in self-making crazy traps using Sukkur's case to contextualize public models. Considering late stagflation, which is portrayed as a dire situation and uncontrollable growth, more than 20 million Pakistanis live in general resentment. Settlements and improvements in cultivating compensation have decreased a couple of effects in common districts, yet metropolitan gathering places like

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Sukkur are at this point. Workers, routinely homeless people from juvenile districts, oversee remuneration aberrations here, supporting examples of dejection.

Research Questions

How does wage discrimination impact the persistence of the poverty trap among multi- generational industrial laborers in Sukkur's manufacturing sector?

To what extent does wage discrimination contribute to intergenerational poverty among laborers in Sukkur's manufacturing sector?

Literature Review

Wage gaps are inevitable, with women earning 82% of male earnings for similar work in Pakistan (Khan, 2024). This discrepancy is obvious in rural areas (75%) when word-related isolation in low-esteem industries such as agriculture plays a role (Malik & Akram, 2024). This data reveals that economic disparity remains very high in Pakistan. It also reflects that how deeper inequalities work and get valued and distributed in the economy. The dark side of this gap is that it is not evenly spread between male and female laborers. Female gender is one who pays the highest price of this wage-based discrepancy particularly in rural areas. The problem with rural areas is that economic indicators reflect the true picture of countries, like Pakistan, where the majority of the Pakistani population reside. The worse part of this dimension is that agriculture is the economic segment where this economic gap affects the income levels between male and female workers. In other words, gender and occupation are two keywords that describe the plight of poverty-stricken rural areas of Pakistan, especially in Sukkur.

Women in assembly face a 15% pay discrepancy despite making up around 25% of the workforce, which is exacerbated by their restricted access to skilled roles (Farooq & Sulaiman, 2024) and focus on the quality of socio-social norms, lesser instructional achievement, and specific biases in hiring (Malik & Akram, 2024). In Pakistan, 48% of the general population encounters various sorts of poverty, which is caused by a shortfall of access to clinical thought and tutoring (Ali et al., 2014). This perspective reveals the vulnerability of all population segments, including men and women, in Pakistan. The problem with poverty is that it does not have specific or crystal-clear indicators in all areas. For instance, in some areas, poverty appears where purchasing power of local population is low. In contrast, in some areas, people fail to find enough employment opportunities to make their living. Specifically, 48 percent of general population faces poverty issue is not an ordinary barometer to ignore. This single source explicitly indicates that poverty has numerous dimensions and recipients who frequently change their behavior but they remain the same.

As a result of money- related necessities, the offspring of social event laborers will habitually work in low-fit occupations, achieving a cycle wherein destitution breeds neediness (Farooq & Sulaiman, 2024). The absence of professional preparation and social versatility programs worsens this pattern (Farooq & Sulaiman, 2024). Still, poverty persists and affects all segments of Pakistani society (Awan et al., 2022).

Currently, the government is using private sector to address the issue of poverty and its effects on the living conditions of ordinary rural population, including Sukkur. The study reveals that

the Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO) is one anti-poverty program aims to reduce gender poverty (women) and offers funds and interest-free loans to rural women in Sukkur (Staff Reporter, 2025). A closer analysis reveals that this report does not address the spread of poverty in Sukkur and its magnitude as more efforts are necessary to counter the effects of poverty and wage discrimination in Sukkur.

The paper addresses this research gap. It conducts a primary study and collects primary data from factory workers through interviews. Although the magnitude of the problem remains very high and it is rarely possible for the researcher to cover all dimensions, still the paper highlights the key areas related to wage discrimination and inter-generational poverty effects in Sukkur.

Methodology

This study uses a mixed approach to examine the lived experience of laborers in Sukkur, Pakistan, focusing on the implications of their pay and multigenerational imbalance for their financial challenges. The validity of both Positivism and Phenomenology rests on their ability to observe and describe human interactions nearly entirely, which is consistent with the review's impartiality in identifying workers' wage discrimination effects.

A blended strategy was utilized, joining quantitative and subjective information through an organized survey directed to 1,000 workers in Sukkur's manufacturing sector. The example was chosen using purposive inspecting to guarantee portrayal across age, orientation, and related jobs. The researchers accessed 800 respondents to participate and share their views about the questions. The response rate was 80 percent. However, the researchers used both open-ended and close-ended questions about job security, wage difference, employment perks, discrimination and intergenerational problems. Subsequently, the researchers used a pilot testing that used both Urdu and Sindhi languages as a key medium of communication. Subsequently, thematic analysis was a significant analysis tool that enabled the researchers to reach answers.

The results were released to safeguard members' financial vulnerabilities, namelessness was ensured by removing IDs from information records, and the researcher collected data in neutral settings to avoid workplace coercion.

The study suffers from inherent limitations. The geographical spread of Sukkur limits the study's pertinence to different regions. Reaction inclination might be presented by self-detailed information, particularly while talking about sensitive subjects like bias. In addition, the researchers avoided longitudinal study because of time and resource constraints.

Findings and Discussion

The findings emphasize how important and indisputable the wage opportunities are in Sindh's labor industry. Still, the difference is considerably more noticeable in the Sukkur region, where women workers often make up 78% of what males do. 82% of males are generally paid for equal labor; this discrepancy is prevalent in urban networks, but it may also be found in rural regions, where rates might be as low as 75%. In the labor market, women usually constitute up to 25% of the workforce in all sectors, including manufacturing but only 12% of them have regulatory roles, therefore demonstrating both vertical and horizontal separation. This regulatory violation impacts occupational segregation (Malik & Akram, 2024; Farooq & Sulaiman, 2024). Also, the

regional differences further exacerbate the problem. Temporary laborers from rural Sindh secure about 22% of jobs, which is fewer than their urban counterparts. This is said to reduce education rates, trade power, and opportunities for skilled new development (Malik & Akram, 2024). These pay options highlight how isolation based on location and orientation impacts some basic benefits and hinders development, thereby limiting financial flexibility and contributing to a pre-determined destitution trap. Also, lower wages imply that employees have fewer opportunities to put assets on hold or prepare, creating a vicious cycle in which those in distress stay that way for all ages.

A crucial perspective exposed by the disclosures is the peculiarity of multigenerational inequality. The primary research emphasizes that financial hardship is not always a singular incident; rather, it is transmitted between generations through educational and work-related issues. For instance, 68% of respondents in Sukkur look for work somewhere else prior to completing their discretionary arrangement; this is similar to other broadly utilized models (Arfan, n.d). The way to a more talented, worthwhile vocation is truly impeded while arranging is subverted.

These adolescents will then without a doubt continue in the strides of their folks; as a matter of fact, 54% of the youngsters referenced have moved to low-wage regions that are basically indistinguishable from their loved ones. This work-related legacy multiplies a cycle where nonattendance of direction and expertise improvement limits adaptability. Without the essential human resource experience, each unique age stays restricted to low-paying, low-capacity positions, supporting both a multi-generational anomaly and the general poverty trap. The exposures recommend that pay parcel isn't simply a concise remuneration issue — it has persisting results that contact the extreme front line by denying them the assets crucial for elective money-related doorways.

Still, another significant revelation is about the imbued institutional obstructions in Sukkur's modern industry. Around 63% of workers work without formal agreements, which deny them legitimate privileges and advantages like government-backed retirement, medical services, and benefits frameworks. The pervasiveness of casual business builds weakness to financial shocks as well as works with wage concealment rehearses. Roughly 41% of laborers report occasions of neglected extra time, and piece-rate frameworks further add to general wage concealment.

These foundational issues worsen wage segregation by making it hard for laborers to haggle fair terms or to get predictable pay, supporting an endless loop where workers stay unfit to gather reserve funds or put resources into schooling for their kids (Azhar & Ahmed, 2024). Thus, the casual idea of business strips laborers of prompt monetary advantages as well as sustains long-haul financial uncertainty — a critical component in the perseverance of intergenerational destitution.

The mechanisms that drive the poverty trap in Sukkur's manufacturing sector are multifaceted. At the core of this cycle is wage discrimination, which initiates a chain reaction: low wages lead to limited savings, which in turn restrict investments in education and skills development. When workers and their families are unable to invest in human capital, the opportunities for upward mobility diminish significantly. As the literature review illustrates, this is seen in the high drop-out rates among children of laborers and the overwhelming tendency for occupational inheritance. The cycle spreads out as follows:

Wage detachment reduces the additional money of workers, essentially precluding venture reserves. This money-related strain powers families to zero in on brief perseverance over long stretch interests in tutoring. As a result, the state of the art has fewer chances to receive high-quality training and acquire capacity as they grow older, which restricts their access to more fulfilling roles.

Occupational segregation and skill development remain the primary challenges for women and new laborers. The absence of vertical mobility remains the primary challenge for new workers because the existing promotion system remains highly biased and gender-focused. Consequently, it maintains and exacerbates poverty across all age groups. These workers continue in a pattern of low profit and limited social mobility because they are not granted access to better opportunities.

Laborers in the party region come up short on the net of the flood because of the strength of their agreeable workspace. Laborers remain generally fragile against shocks related to cash and thrive with hardly any authentic structures or advantages, for example, government-controlled retirement. This imperfection further subverts their capacity to create some distance from franticness in light of the fact that any surprising cost or reduction in business could have horrifying significant length repercussions for their cash-related adequacy.

By consolidating these parts, the conversation makes sense that pay separation is a central issue with tremendous significant length thoughts as opposed to just a task market unpredictability.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The expanded findings and discussion reveal that wage discrimination in Sukkur's manufacturing sector is intricately linked to multi-generational poverty and limited economic mobility. The literature review provides a crucial backdrop, detailing how systemic issues—ranging from compensation segregation to the lack of formal labor protections—contribute to a self-reinforcing poverty trap. The most ridiculously grievous of these irregularities are persevered by female and country laborers, who are basically not their accomplices and who oppose a couple of open courses for portability. Also, the irregular thought of educational trouble and word-related legacy ensures that disheartening is sent starting with one age and then onto the next.

The appraisal incorporates the affirmed need for expansive strategy mediations through comprehension of these interconnected apparatuses. Legitimate compensation structures, HR ideas, formalizing workers, and dispensing help for incapable bundles are fundamental to upsetting the earnest model. A more powerful and comprehensive work market — where monetary versatility is reachable and the destitution trap is at last broken — can be accomplished through the fruitful execution of such strategies.

This dimension highlights a significant insight into the multifaceted wage discrimination and its long-term ramifications. It emphasizes on more concentrated efforts from factory owners, regulators, policymakers, and union leaders. They must perform their role in addressing the systematic challenges caused by intergenerational poverty. Economic progress of Sukkur largely depends on revisiting the current employment practices in its manufacturing sector.

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