

## THE ECONOMIC POSITION OF FAMILY AND ITS RELATION WITH CHILD TRAFFICKING: A STUDY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF POLICY ANALYST AND EXPERTS

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SYED RASHID ALI<sup>1</sup>, NIAZ MUHAMMAD<sup>12</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Social Work & Sociology, Kohat University of Science & Technology-Pakistan

[bukharasani@gmail.com](mailto:bukharasani@gmail.com)

<sup>2</sup>Institute of Social Work, Sociology, & Gender Studies, University of Peshawar-Pakistan

[niazk30@hotmail.com](mailto:niazk30@hotmail.com)

**ABSTRACT** *The prevalence of child trafficking reflects the omnipresent poverty, deterioration of institutional norms, lack of relevant laws and deficient implementation in both the sending communities and receiving communities (ILO, 2002). However, most of the countries respond to the problem of child trafficking from legal perspective alone. They declare it an act of violence and focus on prosecuting the offenders. Such approach is limited in its scope as it ignores to probe into the underlying factors of the problem and hence, lacks the appropriate and long term effective strategy of its resolution. The issue of child trafficking is rooted in the multidimensional factors associated with the socio-economic, political, cultural, and educational aspects (Broderick, 2005; Limanowska, 2005). It is inevitable to explore and analyze these factors for comprehensive and everlasting solution of the problem. In this context, the present study is designed to investigate the economic factors associated with child trafficking. The study is based on survey carried out in Peshawar, the provincial capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A sample of 392 respondents is selected through a stratified random sampling technique from the list of lawyers, crime reporters, and academicians.*

**Key words:** Child trafficking, Economic factors, Family, Opinion Leaders, Peshawar.

**Introduction:** The factors associated with the vulnerability of child to trafficking are probed by researchers in different regions and cultures of the world. The demographic information of the victims, mostly represents their belonging to a family of low socio-economic status, larger population, lack of employment opportunities, and alternate income source. Families with low socio-economic position often lack the resources and will to socialize their children and protect them from the evils of society like trafficking (Mirza, 2010; Bales, 2007; Demarest et al., 1993; Kielland and Ouensavi, 2001). The abolition of child trafficking is unlike to be realized through law making and advocacy alone but by raising the socio-economic status of the people (Skeldon, 2000). Similarly, intensifying rural poverty forces poor families to give up their children to traffickers, under the pretext of providing them the opportunity to secure good jobs and better lives (Bales, 2001; Dottridge, 2002; Lloyd, 2005). Being a member of certain socio-economic status or ethnic group cannot determine the likelihood to be subject to trafficking, however, poverty, lack of access to education, unemployment, and member of minority group turn young person vulnerable to traffickers (ILO, 2003; Moore, 1994; Clawson, 2009; Estes and Weiner, 2001, 2005; Flowers, 2001). Children from such homes are neglected and abused and the parent's socio-economic status is hurdle in the development of children (Albanese, 2007; Anderson and Michaelson, 2007; Royal, 1998; Williams and Frederick, 2009; Williamson and Cluse-Tolar, 2002; Wilson and Dalton, 2008).

Poverty alone is not responsible for child trafficking; however, it is supported by other factors like ignorance of parents as reported by UNICEF (1998, 2000) in Sudan and Mauritania. Broderick (2005) while conducting research on transnational human trafficking under the title "Identifying factors in human trafficking" set a hypothesis that

there is a significant difference between victims' countries of origin and receiving countries on economic factors of poverty, unemployment, income, and literacy. The research findings reveal some significant differences in economic factors exist between the origin and destination countries.

Beyond poverty, other major community conditions that inflate minors' risk for entrapment into prostitution include residing in an urban environment characterized by high crime and elevated levels of police corruption (Clawson, 2009). Situational conditions such as low socio-economic status of family, existence of prostitution market in the nearby area, the irregular and frequent movement of people like tourists, truckers, or military personnel are the risk factors associated with child trafficking (Estes and Wiener, 2001, 2005). There are many risk factors which is called 'poverty plus', a situation in which poverty does not by itself lead to a person being trafficked, but where a 'plus' factor such as gender based violence, illness, domestic violence, lack of educational opportunities, combines with poverty to increase vulnerability (ILO and UNICEF, 2009; Tumlin, 2000; and Mirza, 2010). Parents' ignorance, lack of general awareness, lack of education, absence, and lack of implementation of existing laws, internal conflicts, lust for money, and involvement of influential are the associated factors with child trafficking (NET, 2008; Gunatilleke, 1994; Demleitner, 2001; Go dziak and Bump, 2008).

Child trafficking in Sub Saharan Africa is a demand-driven phenomenon (ILO, 2002). The existence of an international market for children in the labour and sex trade, coupled with an abundant supply of children from poor families with limited or no means for education in a cultural context that favors child fostering, with restrictions on legal migration possibilities, have clearly opened a niche for traffickers. Fifty percent of the trafficking victims are children below the age of 18 (ILO, 2002; Broderick, 2005; Van, 2006). Studies analyzed the labor market and conclude that excess of labor in origin countries and shortage in the destination propels the business of child trafficking as in the Europe (Skeldon, 2000; ILO, 2003). Similarly, from a broader perspective, the practice of child trafficking is associated with demand and supply. The demand in international sex and labour market and the abundance of vulnerable population which is supported by the trafficker as a profitable and low risk trade (Joffres et al., 2008; Schauer and Wheaton, 2006). In most cases, trafficking results from the interface of multiple risk factors (ADB, 2003; Sinha, 2005; ILO, 2006; EPCAT, 2001). Vulnerability results from a range of inter-related economic, social, political, and familial factors (e.g., poverty, lack of sustainable livelihoods, inter and intra familial conflicts, structural inequities and discrimination).

Becker (1995) introduced the dialogue on economic approach to crime. Like rational choice theory, a person evaluates the cost and benefit of a crime. The benefit according to Becker may include money, property, and psychic prices ("getting away with something"). Costs could be money, "the opportunity cost of not working in legitimate work", and the likelihood of conviction and punishment. Becker perceives offenders as risk takers as profit to illegitimate actions are vague. As the benefit from child trafficking is more than its cost, it will continue. Similar arguments are made by Schloenhardt (1999), Hughes (2003), O' Neil (2000), and Makisaka and Marc (2009) that traffickers are making money from the business of trafficking of children and women being the easy target, hence, the crime prevails. Miko (2000), Yinusa and Basil (2008), Olateru (2004), ILO (2006), and Kapstein (2006) claims that next to arm and drugs, trafficking of women and children is the 3rd principal income source for the criminal syndicate worldwide and the key players and contractors spread over the world. However, feminist approach look into the crime and analysed it as stated by Jeffreys (2009) that prostitution and sex business is globalized industry where from girls' bodies enormous profit is secured. Child trafficking known as modern day slavery prevails due to its profitable nature. Child trafficking is reported to be the third largest profitable trade after drugs and arms (Miko, 2000; Olateru, 2004).

Human trafficking is high profit and relatively low risk trade with availability of supply and increasing demand (Joffres et al., 2008; Bales, 1999, 2007; Naim, 2005; Hughes, 2000; Kapstein, 2006). Similarly, camel racing in the Gulf countries attracts poor people from Pakistan through the manipulation of parents by agents to surrender their children. The law enforcement agents and the immigration personnel perceived that high profit and low risk and fear of prosecution and penalties encourage the traffickers' gangs to work in the country (Mirza, 2010).

Studies show that trafficked children are exploited in diverse ways. They are trafficked for abusing in sex and/or in labour market and sometimes in both. They are coerced into prostitution (Albanese, 2007; Priebe and Suhr, 2005; Williams and Frederick, 2009). They are detained, locked up to starvation, along with severe physical and verbal abuse (Anderson, 2003; Makisaka and Marc, 2009). Variety of tactics, the traffickers use for controlling the victims as reported by Makisaka and Marc (2009) the victims are tight in the web of debt-bondage. They are deprived of their identification and travelling documents like passport with the aim that they may not be able to escape. They are psychologically tortured. Victims, due to their illegal status afraid of the authorities, cannot ask for help. In Europe

and Central Asia children are mostly trafficked for forced begging, marriages, and prostitution. Their forced services are utilized in bricks kilns, agriculture, rice mills and other factories. Both girls and boys are used in domestic work (UNDOC, 2009).

Afghan boys in Pakistan, and children in Colombia are trafficked for exploiting in militancy and paramilitary operations and even suicide bombing. In Nepal and Pakistan, one of the major forms of human trafficking is bonded labor. In East Asia in the Pacific children are often trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, and forced begging. In Latin America and Caribbean poor families often push their young daughters to provide sexual favors to wealthy older men in exchange for school fees, money and gifts (Trafficking in Person Report, 2003). Noor Education Trust (NET, 2008) draws the findings that the purpose of sale through marriage (bride price in Pakistan) was quoted as sex trade by 32 (16.4%) respondents, exploitation as cheap labour was quoted by 27 respondents, while 73 (34.4%) said they were used for both. However, Mirza (2010) reports that even children are trafficked for removal of organs. Literature reveals that children are trafficked for the purpose of performing forced labour of all types, including agriculture, domestic services, construction work, and sweatshops in addition to commercial sexual exploitation (Brodrick, 2005; Trafficking in Person Report, 2003; Bales, 1999). Trafficking clearly violates the fundamental right to a life with dignity. It also violates right to health and health care, right to liberty and security of person, right to freedom from torture, violence, cruelty or degrading treatment. It violates for children who have been trafficked, or victims of child marriages their right to education, it violates the right to employment and the right of self determination (Mirza, 2010; NET, 2008).

According to the Trafficking in Persons Report (TIP, 2003), Pakistan is reported to be labeled as a source, transitory and destination country. Men, women, girls and children are trafficked for exploiting in forced labour and sex markets. It further reports that the big problem faced in Pakistan is bonded labour which is concentrated in Sindh and Punjab provinces, particularly in brick kilns, carpet making, agriculture, fishing, mining, leather tanning and production of glass bangles, estimates of Pakistan victims of bonded labour, including men, women and children, vary widely but are likely over one million. Other practices include selling of daughters into domestic servitude, prostitution, or forced marriages, and tribal or family disputes are settled through girl traded (known as *swara* in Pashto) or as payment for debts.

**Research Methodology:**The present section explains methodology adopted for carrying out the under discussion study as follows;

**Study Area:**The present study is conducted in Peshawar, cradle of Pakhtun culture. The incidents of various issues related to child trafficking are likely to be high in this city. The city houses a large population of Afghan refugees who are prone to the child trafficking (Azam, 2009). Moreover, it has also provided shelter to the internally displaced peoples (IDPs) due to military operation in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) as a result of war against terrorism. Both of the mentioned groups are prone to child trafficking and other socio-cultural evils. Further, the city hosts the old established academic institutions like Islamia College, University of Peshawar, and University of Agriculture. It also abodes Peshawar press club where journalists are covering every aspect of life in their reporting including crimes. A Bench of Supreme court, a full-fledged High court, Special courts, and Peshawar District courts are running its affairs in both its civil and criminal jurisdictions. Due to the mentioned features, District Peshawar has been selected to investigate the issue.

**Sampling Procedure:**We tried to approach the victims of trafficking which are handled by Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) at Peshawar. However, we were not given access to the victims due to law prohibiting interaction with the victims. In the absence of information from victims, we approached the social scientists, legal experts, and crime reporters who are the eyes and ears of the society, for their perception of the issue. Moreover, the strata we have used in our sampling is opinion leaders in the particular society and is able to influence the general society, local administration, regional and national legislature, therefore, it is worth to know about their perception of the issue.

For data collection, proportionate stratified random sampling technique is used while membership list of Peshawar Bar Council, Peshawar Press Club, and Teachers' Association is utilized as sample frame. For gathering consistent and reliable data, this technique deems to be more appropriate. As mentioned, the population is trifurcated into strata of social scientists, crime reporters, and lawyers working in district Peshawar. A sample size of 392 is drawn from the total population of 453 by using formula  $n = \frac{K^2V^2}{d^2}$  of Casley and Kumar (1989). The calculated sample size is

divided into the mentioned strata on the basis of proportional allocation method where  $NI = N_i/N * n$  formula is used (Chaudhry and Kamal, 1996).

**Data Collection:** A comprehensive questionnaire, based on Likert Scale, is developed for data collection. The questionnaire is first discussed with experts and amendments are made accordingly. Thereafter, the questionnaire is pre-tested for its relevance to objectives of the study. Again, the inconsistencies and ambiguities are addressed before starting the final phase of data collection.

**Data Analysis:** Data is analyzed through SPSS 2010 computer software. Bi-variate analysis is carried out to measure the level of significance of hypothetical association and direction of relationship between dependent variable (Child trafficking) and independent variables (Economic Position of Family) by using Chi square ( $\chi^2$ ) and Gamma ( $\gamma$ ).

**Results and Discussion:** In this section major results are discussed and presented in table No. 2, which shows association and direction of relationship between child trafficking and economic position of the family. A positive ( $\gamma = 0.460$ ) and highly significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) relationship is observed between low socio-economic status and child trafficking (Table 2). Findings of the present study suggest parents with low socio-economic status may not be able guardians. In other words, families with middle and high socio-economic status may be more capable of guardianship than families with low socio-economic status. These findings are consistent with ILO (2003); Moore (1994); Clawson (2009); Estes and Weiner (2001, 2005); Flowers (2001); Dottridge (2002); and Lloyd (2005).

Similarly, a positive ( $\gamma = 0.485$ ) and significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) relationship is found between growing unemployment and child trafficking (Table 2). Large number of young population in Pakhtun society remains illiterate and unskilled due to which, mostly they may be unemployed. This situation of unemployment has deteriorated the psycho-social make up of individual personality and they remain unable to cope with the challenges like inflation, thus becoming easy prey to trafficking. These findings are in consonance with Kielland and Ouensavi (2001); ILO and UNICEF (2009); Tumlin (2000); and Demleitner (2001).

However, a non significant but positive ( $\gamma = 0.324$ ) relationship exists between increasing number of children at poor household and child trafficking. The positive value of Gamma shows more vulnerability of poor's and the concept of trafficking increase in population would ultimately lead to the occurrence of incidences. The probable reasons to this increase could be the prevalent psyche that sons are guns. These findings are in line with Bales (2001).

Contrary to the above, a positive ( $\gamma = 0.403$ ) and significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) relationship is observed between non-cooperative behavior of economically sound people and child trafficking. The significance and positive result of this study reveals the non cooperative behavior of well off people with poor people in Pakhtun society. This practice of non cooperation can best be understood in terms of Karl Marx ideology of dialectical materialism where there is a gap between two classes i.e., bourgeoisie and proletariat which he explained in his concept of historical materialism. The ideal of Pakhtunwali focuses on the help of needy and deserving people, however, this ideal is not in practice which brought massive problems for the poor and ultimately they may get deceived by the traffickers for employment, education, better career etc. Lack of social capital, social solidarity and homogeneity in existing strata of haves and have not could be the main contributing factors. For bringing harmony and equilibrium between two classes it is the need of the hour to implant social capital on sound footings in Pakhtun society (study area).

Moreover, a positive ( $\gamma = 0.189$ ) and significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) relationship is observed between cheap labor for business activities and child trafficking. Similarly, a positive ( $\gamma = 0.314$ ) and significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) relationship is found between demand in international market for cheap labor and child trafficking (Table 2). The findings of the present study suggest that the traffickers may get motivated when observing high demand in the national and international labor and or sex market along with the increase in vulnerable population. The findings of the present study are in line with Joffres et al. (2008); Broderick (2005); Van Impe (2006); ILO (2002); Schauer and Wheaton (2006); Skeldon (2000); and ILO (2003).

Similar results ( $\gamma = 0.469$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) are observed between profitability of the business and child trafficking. The findings suggest that continuity of the business may be subject to the return it warrants for the investors. Higher the profit more would be the frequency of the crime and vice versa. The findings are in much corroboration to that of the Miko (2000); Olateru (2002); UNODC (2008); Joffres et al. (2008); Bales (1999 and 2007); Naim (2005); Hughes (2001); King (2004); Kapstein (2006); Schloenhardt (1999); and Hughes (2003).

A highly positive ( $r = 0.464$ ) and significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) relationship is found between exploitation of victims in diverse form and child trafficking (Table 2). The findings suggest that it may be very difficult for the law enforcement agencies to trace the victims as they may be engaged in various fields like, bricks kilns, factories, sex industry and militancy, forced begging, marriages, domestic work, debt bondage. These findings are in high degree of consonance with Albanese (2007); Priebe and Suhr (2005); Williams and Frederick (2009); Anderson (2003); Makisaka and Marc (2009); UNDOC (2009); and TIP (2009).

**Table No.2 Relationship between Economic Aspect and Perception on Child Trafficking**

Statements	Attitude	Perception on child trafficking			Total	Statistics
		Agree	Disagree	Not sure		
Children from low socio-economic status are more susceptible to trafficking.	Agree	281(71.7)	40(10.2)	1(0.3)	322(82.1)	$t^2 = 36.761$ (.000) $r = .460$
	Disagree	47(12.0)	9(2.3)	0(0.0)	56(14.3)	
	Not sure	4(1.0)	10(2.6)	0(0.0)	14(3.6)	
Growing unemployment provides room for traffickers to groom around.	Agree	290(74.0)	40(10.2)	1(0.3)	331(84.4)	$t^2 = 15.242$ (.004) $r = .485$
	Disagree	19(4.8)	10(2.6)	0(0.0)	29(7.4)	
	Not sure	23(5.9)	9(2.3)	0(0.0)	32(8.2)	
Non-cooperative behavior of economically sound people is proportional to child trafficking.	Agree	235(59.9)	27(6.9)	1(0.3)	263(67.1)	$t^2 = 14.699$ (.005) $r = .403$
	Disagree	42(10.7)	14(3.6)	0(0.0)	56(14.3)	
	Not sure	55(14.0)	18(4.6)	0(0.0)	73(18.6)	
Increasing number of children at poor household breeds the chances of trafficking.	Agree	252(64.3)	35(8.9)	1(0.3)	288(73.5)	$t^2 = 7.499$ (.112) $r = .324$
	Disagree	52(13.3)	15(3.8)	0(0.0)	67(17.1)	
	Not sure	28(7.1)	9(2.3)	0(0.0)	37(9.4)	
Trafficking is a profitable business that's why it is increasing day by day.	Agree	253(64.5)	29(7.4)	1(0.3)	283(72.2)	$t^2 = 18.652$ (.001) $r = .469$
	Disagree	26(6.6)	10(2.6)	0(0.0)	36(9.2)	
	Not sure	53(13.5)	20(5.1)	0(0.0)	73(18.6)	
Protection is being given to traffickers by the high ups of the society.	Agree	248(63.3)	38(9.7)	1(0.3)	287(73.2)	$t^2 = 3.189$ (.527) $r = .212$
	Disagree	31(7.9)	7(1.8)	0(0.0)	38(9.7)	
	Not sure	53(13.5)	14(3.6)	0(0.0)	67(17.1)	
Trafficking is encouraged to gain cheap labor for market/business activities.	Agree	268(68.4)	45(11.5)	0(0.0)	313(79.8)	$t^2 = 12.366$ (.015) $r = .189$
	Disagree	41(10.5)	5(1.3)	1(0.3)	47(12.0)	
	Not sure	23(5.9)	9(2.3)	0(0.0)	32(8.2)	
Demand in international	Agree	222(56.6)	32(8.2)	0(0.0)	254(64.8)	$t^2 = 19.754$

market for cheap labor is a reason of trafficking.	Disagree	49(12.5)	4(1.0)	1(0.3)	54(13.8)	(.001)
	Not sure	61(15.6)	23(5.9)	0(0.0)	84(21.4)	=.314
The trafficked children are exploited in diverse forms.	Agree	283(72.2)	38(9.7)	1(0.3)	322(82.1)	$t^2 = 16.352$
	Disagree	20(5.1)	11(2.8)	0(0.0)	31(7.9)	(.003)
	Not sure	29(7.4)	10(2.6)	0(0.0)	39(9.9)	=.464

Source: Field Survey, 2012

Note\*Values presented in the above table indicate frequency while values in the parenthesis represent percentage

**Conclusions:** It is concluded that children from low socio-economic status are more susceptible to trafficking. Growing unemployment, increase in population, especially in the poor families, along with non-cooperative behavior of the economically sound people, is positively associated with child trafficking. Demand for cheap labor in national and international markets is a major motivating factor for the traffickers. Trafficking was a profitable business and protection to traffickers was given by the high-ups of society which results in exploitation of victims in diverse forms.

The findings of the present study confirm the theory of Routine Activities introduced by Cohen and Felson (1979) which states that interaction of the three variables at same time and place i.e., suitable targets, absence of capable guardian, and motivated offender results into the commission of crime. Applying this theory to the present study approves that low socio-economic families, unemployment, lack of social solidarity and homogeneity, decreases the capability of guardians to safeguard their wards. Further, over population at poor house hold turn them into an easy and suitable target for trafficking. Furthermore, demand in the national and international market for cheap labor, availability of vulnerable population, the low risk and high profitability of the business motivates the offender to carry out their illegal enterprise of child trafficking.

**Policy Recommendations:**Following recommendations are made in the light of the findings of this study:

- 1 Poverty and gender inequality is perceived to be the causes of child trafficking. In this regard serious and sustained efforts should be made from right based perspective for promoting gender equality and alleviating poverty in all segments of society.
- 2 Government and other agencies should encourage and support academicians to conduct research and to highlight the issue.
- 3 The government should increase the salaries of the immigration, human trafficking unit and police officials who are particularly working on human trafficking cases, however, along with this government should issue a policy of zero-tolerance for corruption. If any official is convicted severe punishment is needed to be inflicted. Another strategy to adopt is the naming and shaming policy. Government should publish and public the names of all the involved people in the trafficking chain whether government officials, private citizens, politicians, or other powerful people. Media should give proper time and place for publishing and disseminating the name and cases. After all reputation matters.
- 4 Rehabilitative measures by the government in collaboration with the national and international organizations should be initiated which include programs for psychological support and therapy for the vulnerable communities and particularly for the survivors of trafficking.

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