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Boarding a Donkey Flight: Investigating push and pull factors behind irregular emigration from Pakistan to European Countries

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to all those migrants who left their homes in search of a better future for their families but never returned back.

I also dedicate this work to the days I spent at Forman Christian College, a place that not only imparted knowledge but also laid the foundation for transformative experiences and lifelong memories. To those who crossed my path and left indelible imprints on my life that will remain with me forever.

Lastly, I dedicate this research work and all my academic achievements to my parents and family.

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List of Acronyms

FIA: Federal Investigation Agency

UNODC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

IOM: International Organization for Migration

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

OECD: The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

ICMPD: International Center for Migration Policy Development

UN: United Nations

EU: European Union

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

GO: Governmental Organization

Terms Used

Dekha-Dekhi: Emulation, Imitation

Dunki: Referred to Irregular Migration.

Abstract

This study investigated the factors influencing irregular migration from Pakistan to European countries. This phenomenon was explained by examining the complex interactions of socioeconomic, political, and cultural factors. The study took a qualitative approach, conducting in-depth interviews with six key figures, including government officials and migration experts. Conducting interviews provided a thorough understanding of the motivations and experiences of people directly affected by irregular migration. A thorough analysis of the interview data revealed several attention-required patterns. Given the current economic crisis, socio-cultural influence, many Pakistanis have been driven to actively seek better opportunities abroad. The study also emphasized the role of social networks and misinformation spread on such sites leads migrants to take perilous journey.

The findings emphasize the critical need for policies that address the root causes of irregular migration and show that successful legal migration management requires collaboration between countries of origin and destination. This thesis contributes to the field of Sociology migration studies in particular by presenting concrete evidence and drawing meaningful connections between the ground realities and broader theoretical framework on migration.

This study provides strong evidence supporting the Sustainable Development Goals of reducing inequalities and ensuring well-regulated, safe, responsible migration processes. This study advances the understanding of the factors that contribute to irregular migration and lays the groundwork for policy makers for creating strategies to improve migration management and migrants' protection from the illegal migration agents.

Keywords: *Irregular Migration, Immigration, Emigration, Pakistan to Europe*, *Dunki*

Chapter 1: Introduction

The last decade has seen a substantial rise in global migration from 1970 to 2017 as Betts & Kainz (2017) report a significant rise in human mobility across the globe, estimated at 244 million. This accounts for roughly 3.3% of the global population. The phenomenon of globalization, coupled with advancements in communication technology and transportation, is widely believed to have amplified the magnitude, heterogeneity, geographical scope, and overall complexity of international migration. However, the main patterns of international migration are towards Europe, the Gulf, and Asian Countries (Czaika and de Hass, 2014).

It is crucial to acknowledge that international migration has allowed millions of individuals globally to enhance their lives in both their home countries and the countries they move to. However, it is important to understand that not all migration happens in favorable circumstances and is done through legal channels. In the contemporary global landscape, irregular migration still stands as a tangible reality, and at the heart of this debate, there is Europe and its hinterlands (Morehouse & Blomfield, 2011). With millions of people crossing borders without proper documentation or legal authorization, irregular migration has significant social, economic, and political implications (Koser, 2010).

The Debate over the phenomenon of irregular migration to Central Europe and its bordering countries is not just about the mere description of an irregular practice, but to a great extent, it includes highlighting the construction of this brutal social reality, enabling masses to put their lives at risk to cross the border without following legal procedures (Rumford, 2008).

At the core of the discussion, the major setback that stands as a wall of hindrance to migrate legally is the recent politicization of international migration to Europe. This migration system to European countries is characterized by strong economization and securitization (Lauwers et al, 2021). Day by day, this system is not only increasing and becoming highly selective but also more dynamic and multifaceted, showcasing the economic interests and security concerns of the receiving countries (Iovet al, 2017).

The statistics shows that this irregular practice is not new to South Asian countries especially to Pakistan as this land is one of the top ten origin countries of the irregular migration as each year, almost hundreds of thousands of men enter to Europe through unauthorized means to earn a decent livelihood to improve their quality of life (UNODC, 2013). Despite high security measures at the borders, high rejection rate of Pakistani applications for asylum, and many other complexities of the journey, Pakistan still has significantly high numbers of irregular migrations to European Union (Shah, 2020).

International organizations working on the issue of the irregular migration such as United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2012) and International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD, 2013) claim that between 0.3 to 0.5 million people from Pakistan alone attempt to trespass the national boundaries to enter the Europe via Iran and Turkey. The chain-migration (Goering, 1989) or emulation (Laghari, 2009), *dekha-dikhi* (Khan, 2017; used this term in Pakistani context which means emulation or imitation) is highly supported by well-directed mechanism of social and kinship bonds to carry out migration especially irregular migration from this region (Khan & Awan, 2020).

This debate has a long-standing attention of social researchers advocating the well-being of migrants and that interest is backed by the conventional viewpoint that people aspire to migrate with the aim of improving their quality of life. The prevailing thought among researchers and in the public domain is that legal emigration can benefit sending countries due to its inability to alleviate poverty and unemployment, primarily through the flow of remittances from expatriates. These remittances play a crucial role in supporting families and ensuring the economic stability of the nations from which they originate (Hendriks & Bartram, 2019).

Although the total number of international migrants is 3% of the overall world population but during the refugee crisis of 2015-16, this discussion became significant in the public sphere (OECD, 2016) as the year 2015 marked a significant shift in the global migration agenda. On the one hand, the excessive inflow of refugees has intensified debates concerning the ability of host communities to house and sustainably integrate the immigrants, leading to a global shift towards highly restrictive yet selective immigration measures. On the other hand, this year, Adidas Ababa Action Agenda (UN, 2015a) and Sustainable Development Goals (UN, 2015b), recognizing the positive impact that international migration has on contributing to sustainable development, both on receiving and sending ends.

Multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their sub-targets reflect upon the well-being of the migrants and emphasize on the protection of workers especially women labor such as Target 8.8, considering the economic benefits of the phenomenon of regular migration, Target 10-c recommends reducing the cost of sending remittance while Target 10.7, advise over the adaptation of well-managed policy framework for the well-being of migrants (UN, 2015b).

However, irregular migration does not take place in isolation and is not a simple or straight way journey (Kyle and Liang, 2001). Agents play a crucial role in facilitating irregular migration by assisting migrants in navigating while crossing borders unlawfully. Oftentimes, these coyotes operate behind the curtains and manage this activity through social media networking (IOM, 2020). However, it is crucial to bear in mind that their function of assisting them is not rightful but just an act of exploitation. This guidance is crucial for migrants who have limited financial resources or access to authentic information. Individuals are vulnerable to exploitation or mistreatment during their travels (Düvell, 2019).

1.1 Statement of the problem:

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in unlawful migration from Pakistan to European countries. This phenomenon, referred to as irregular migration, is characterized by individuals boarding on dangerous and illegal journeys in search of better living conditions. The migration in Pakistan is influenced by a complex relationship of socio-cultural and economic factors, as well as the allure of perceived opportunities in Europe (Naveeda, 2017). Despite the existence of numerous studies on migration dynamics, there remains a significant lack of understanding regarding the Push and Pull factors that drive Pakistani migrants to choose irregular migration routes instead of legal ones (Koser, 2007).

The primary factor driving migration in Pakistan is commonly attributed to economic insecurity, characterized by high levels of unemployment and poverty (Ishfaq, 2016). Nevertheless, there is a lack of understanding when it comes to the impact of sociocultural factors, such as familial responsibilities and community norms, on patterns of migration (Harvey, 2015). In addition, it has been observed that smuggling networks frequently disseminate inaccurate information, which leads to migrants having a limited understanding of the risks associated with

irregular migration (Laczko & Gozdziak, 2005). It is worth noting that European nations provide various incentives that appeal to individuals. These incentives include improved employment opportunities, a higher standard of living, and stronger social security systems. According to Triandafyllidou (2014), these factors are frequently regarded as attainable, even though there are risks involved with irregular migration routes. This study seeks to address a lack of understanding of factors influencing migration dynamics from Pakistan to European countries by conducting thorough qualitative analyses of in-depth interviews with migration experts and stakeholders in Pakistan and Europe.

Comprehending this issue is of utmost importance for researchers in order to develop more effective migration policies and interventions to address the issue of irregular migration. This will help to understand the underlying reasons why people choose to leave their homes. Having a thorough understanding of these factors will provide valuable insights for researchers, policymakers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international agencies involved in the management of migration and the provision of support for migrant populations (UN Migration, 2020).

1.2 Objectives of the study

United Nations reports indicate that Pakistan is among the top ten nations where there has been a notable occurrence of irregular migration to the European Union in recent years (UNODC, 2013). This phenomenon brings complex challenges to both countries of origin and countries of destination, with far-reaching economic, social, and political outcomes (Mainwaring & Brigden, 2016). Therefore, this research holds the following objectives:

- To identify and analyze the factors influencing individuals to leave their homes for irregular migration to European countries.

- To examine the pull factors that attract individuals to Europe.

- To contribute to existing literature on the migration studies particularly in context of Pakistan.

- To document the perspectives from the stakeholders directly involved in addressing the irregular migration in Pakistan and Europe.

- To help policymakers with holistic insights on irregular migration from various stakeholders.

1.3 Significance of the study

Studying irregular migrants' decision-making process regarding their migration is exceedingly challenging due to research ethics and academic study protocols. Therefore, taking insights from the individuals who are directly involved in addressing the irregular migration offers distinct perspectives on Push and Pull factors that contribute to their decision-making process. The present study holds great importance in this particular context for three primary rationales.

First and foremost, it offers a holistic perspective to understanding the push and pull factors influencing the irregular migration from Pakistan to European countries. In addition, this study holds academic significance as it seeks to enhance theoretical understanding of irregular migration and its push and pull factors supported by the narratives of stakeholders thereby building upon the existing literature. Last but not least, this study seeks to emphasize the role of fundamental motivations that compel individuals to migrate which would be helpful to take steps for controlling irregular migration.

1.3.1 Significance of the study in context of SDGs

This exploratory study of the factors that contribute to irregular migration from Pakistan to European countries is extremely important in light of the SDGs. It provides practical knowledge to address global issues such as reducing inequalities, promoting peace and justice, and strong institutions, as well as promoting decent work and economic growth, which are the most important solutions proposed by this study. Finally, this study emphasizes the role of partnerships in achieving goals.

The importance of SDG 10, which addresses the critical issue of reducing inequalities, objective 10.7 emphasizes the importance of promoting safe and responsible human migration and mobility. This study seeks to provide important insights that can be used to develop migration policies that promote safer and more regulated migration practices. This directly supports the goal of improving migration policies.

Furthermore, this research is consistent with the goals of promoting long-term and inclusive economic growth, as well as the creation of meaningful jobs and decent working conditions for all people that falls under the SGD 8, Decent Work and Economic Growth. The research findings, which intends to provide a thorough examination of the economic disparities that contribute to irregular migration, have the potential to influence policies aimed at improving economic conditions in Pakistan.

This research work is closely related to SDG 16, which emphasizes the importance of building peaceful and inclusive societies in order to promote sustainable development. This goal is completely consistent with the emphasis on upholding the principles of legal governance and ensuring equitable access to legal remedies. Unfortunately, migrants, particularly those who take

unauthorized routes, are vulnerable to a variety of exploitative and unjust circumstances. The study's findings aim to offer an extensive outline for improving measures to protect these people.

SDG 17 emphasizes the importance of strong partnerships in fostering sustainable development, particularly with regard to migration. The study emphasizes the importance of cooperation between the countries of origin and destination in effectively managing migration. These collaborations can share knowledge, coordinate policy efforts, and develop comprehensive strategies that address both the root causes and consequences of irregular migration.

1.4 Research Gap

Through the preliminary literature review, this study has identified various research gaps as there is a notable gap of qualitative insights from the stakeholders addressing the irregular migration directly as these narratives provide valuable insights into the personal and community-oriented factors that frequently motivate individuals to migrate. In addition to this, many existing studies have neglected to consider the importance of individual' response towards push factors generally, and socio-cultural in specific, when making migration-related decisions. Consequently, there is a deficiency of the holistic comprehension of the socio-cultural factors and economic conditions that go parallel to motivate individuals to seek irregular migration. Therefore, it is crucial to bridge the gap and enhance academic discourse on Push and Pull Factors in context of irregular migration from Pakistan to European countries. By incorporating the firsthand narratives of push and pull factors, future research could enhance the effectiveness of migration management leading to more economically practical and culturally suitable interventions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The existing literature indicates that migration from Pakistan to European countries has been divided into two distinct phases: an initial legal phase followed by a subsequent irregular phase. Keeping in view the research objectives, this study only focuses on irregular migration. Furthermore, this section provides insight from the already existing literature into the factors that drive migration from Pakistan, with a particular focus on European countries. The drivers have been classified into two factors, namely Push and Pull Factors, as aligned with the study objective and research questions.

2.1 Historical Background

The historical background of immigration from Pakistan to Europe roots back to early years of creation of Pakistan when a massive number of people from Azad Jammu & Kashmir and Northen Punjab moved to United Kingdom for meeting the demand for labor in development sector (Vihe, 2007, Gazdar, 2003). Afterward, the end of World War II, the revival of the British economy, particularly the shipping industry, got dependent heavily on the services of young men coming from third world countries with little or no specialization (Webner, 2005). This cycle of immigration continued in 1960s, when middle class, and highly qualified Pakistani immigrants moved to England and other European countries. This group moved for better career opportunities, employed in the industry and services in Central and Northern Europe i.e., England, West Germany, and Norway (Vihe 2007, Webner, 2005). Until the 1980s, this period marked the beginning of legal migration to Europe, which was accompanied by permanent settlement (Webner, 2005). A study by Arif (1997) shows an estimation that there were almost 32,000 people living in England in 1961 and this decade also witnessed the first brain drain movement of

Pakistani people to Europe (Arif et al, 1997). This migration predominantly originated from urban areas with significant immigrants from cities such as the Gujarat region of Punjab and Mirpur in Kashmir.

On the other hand, the first wave of undocumented migration (also known as irregular migration) to EU nations began to emerge at the beginning of the 1980s. A great number of men who belonged to the lowest-income communities moved to Europe through smuggling networks became known into the category of irregular migrants from Pakistan to these states. Certain individuals were able to acquire legal status within the host country by means of the asylum system. Examples have been observed wherein migrants engage in a semi-legal status by initially entering a country through legal means, such as obtaining student or tourist visas, and subsequently remaining in the country beyond the expiration of their visas, also falls in the realm of irregular migration. Still the accurate estimation of irregular immigrants coming from Pakistan residing in European countries remains elusive (AENEAS, 2009).

Several case studies on Greece provides the historical background of immigration from Pakistan to Greece when a bilateral agreement was implemented to ease the temporary hiring of Pakistani workers in Shipyards roots back to 1970s (Dermetzopoulos 2009; Leghari 2009; Triandafyllidou, 2010). Later, there was a trade agreement established between the Association of Enterprises in Greece and Pakistan. As part of this agreement, skilled employees from Pakistan were brought into meet the needs of Greece's prominent textile industries (Dermetzopoulos, 2009). This mobilization was lawful and called "metaklisi"(The term "metaklisi" refers to the process of hiring foreign laborer for transitory employment, which is typically facilitated by bilateral agreements between the country of destination and the country of origin (Tonchev 2007; Μαρούκης2008).

According to Tonchev (2007), the second wave of Pakistanis came to Greece during the following decade (1980) as a result of the development of the Single European Market at the time and also with an opportunity in hands of migrants to free travel inside the old European Economic Community (EEC). At the same time, Greece was a transit country for a large number of Pakistanis who entered the country irregularly in search of other European countries. In 1981, the National Statistics Office documented 1,829 Pakistanis in Greece, of which 1,349 were irregular (Lasarescu & Broersma, 2010).

2.2 Migration Drivers

According to the literature, there are only two major drivers that cause people to migrate, and they are classified into two types: push and pull factors. This section takes these drivers into consideration:

2.2.1 Push Factors

The migration from Pakistan is motivated by a multitude of factors that are closely connected to the country's socioeconomic and political environment. People migrate to foreign countries, especially European countries, in search of better prospects, such as higher salaries and enhanced quality of life (Czaika & de Haas, 2014). Many people in Pakistan often are motivated to search for safer environments because of the unstable political situation, which is characterized by the situation of law & order. Individuals seek a sense of safety and efficient leadership to protect their welfare (Betts & Kainz, 2017). Migration decisions are heavily impacted by sociocultural factors. In many Pakistani communities, migration is frequently viewed as a pathway to attaining a higher social standing and individual accomplishment. People may choose to move to a different location because of the societal expectations to achieve success and the perceived benefits of

opportunities in Europe (Carling, 2002). Furthermore, the influence of environmental factors such as climate change and natural disasters is prompting an increasing number of individuals to consider migration as a way to protect their overall well-being and physical health. Based on the findings of Black et al. (2011), Europe is commonly perceived to have superior healthcare and safer living conditions.

Furthermore, migration networks play a crucial role in facilitating these movements. These networks are essential for providing valuable information and support, which can help reduce the costs and risks associated with migration. Furthermore, they contribute to the preservation of migration patterns, even in circumstances where the typical economic motivations may not be as compelling (Massey et al., 1993). These different factors, combined with the valuable support of migration networks, contribute to a scenario where migration is often seen as a necessary move towards a brighter future.

2.2.2 Pull Factor

Individuals facing economic difficulties in their home countries are drawn to the economic opportunities available in Europe, particularly the potential for higher wages in industries that do not typically require advanced education, such as construction and services (Düvell, 2006). The legal system in Europe is recognized for its strong dedication to safeguarding human rights and offering support to migrants, including those seeking asylum. This feature is particularly attractive to individuals who are seeking a secure refuge from sectarian violence or political persecution in Pakistan.

Family reunification policies in Europe enable individuals who have effectively migrated to bring their family members, thereby creating a significant motivation for others to resort to irregular methods if necessary. The presence of well-established Pakistani diaspora communities in various European cities has been found to play a significant role in facilitating the integration process. These communities offer newcomers a support network consisting of individuals from comparable cultural backgrounds (Castles; De Haas, & Mille; 2014).

2.3International Policy and Legal Framework:

The United Nations (UN) has established a comprehensive framework and strategic approach to address the pressing issues of human trafficking and migrant smuggling in various countries. The comprehensive strategy encompasses four key components: prevention of trafficking through measures that target underlying causes and enhance public awareness, prosecution of traffickers, protection of victims, and partnership with other nations. Given that the matter at hand pertains to law enforcement and organized crime, it is imperative to adopt a multifaceted approach that encompasses various angles such as considering migration and labor policies, as well as adopting a moral and human rights standpoint (UNODC, 2008).

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime held on 15 November 2000 is the main component of the legislative framework. This instrument is a primary tool in the effort to fight against transnational organized crime. The convention is further strengthened by three protocols that address specific aspects and occurrences of organized crime. Protocols include the prevention, suppression, and punishment of Trafficking in Persons, particularly of women and children; measures taken against the land, sea, and air smuggling of migrants; and actions taken to combat the illegal manufacturing and trafficking of firearms, their parts and components, as well as firearms themselves. Pakistan signed the United Nations

Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) on December 14, 2000, and ratified it on January 13, 2010.

2.4 National Legislative framework:

The several legislations have been introduced in Pakistan, involving human trafficking and migrant smuggling, whether transnational or internal such as Section 17 of the Emigration Ordinance, enacted in 1979, assumes a pivotal role in the regulation and oversight of the migration and departure of individuals within the confines of our jurisdiction. This framework identifies the role of governments in safeguarding security and maintaining public order through the implementation of emigration regulations. The aforementioned legislation presents a thorough framework delineating the repercussions encountered by individuals who engage in the act of unauthorized departure or emigration.

The possible consequences encompass the potential for a maximum incarceration period of five years, monetary fines, or a combination of both punitive measures. Furthermore, this ordinance explores the complex interplay of socioeconomic and political determinants that drive individuals to engage in emigration. So, the comprehensive examination of Section 17 is essential to assess the effectiveness of emigration policies and their implications, encompassing not only the state but also its citizens.

Research Question(s):

RQ: 1 What are the primary push and pull factors driving irregular emigration from Pakistan to European countries, as perceived by the stakeholders?

RQ: 2 What is the extent of the gaps between regulatory frameworks and implementation to address the issue of irregular migration?

Chapter 3: Theorizing Migration

This chapter presents a comprehensive examination of the migration process, specifically highlighting the phenomenon of irregular migration from Pakistan to European countries. This section is based on Douglas S. Massey's (1993) model of international migration, which serves as the theoretical framework for the analysis. With its multifaceted approach, Massey's model is quite useful for examining the complex association of political, socioeconomic, and personal elements that drive people to take irregular migration routes. To comprehend migration patterns, it is essential to have a comprehensive understanding of the economic inequalities between regions, the networks through which migration occurs, the policies of the countries where migrants settle, the individual capital, and the processes of cumulative causation (Massey et al., 1993).

This thesis aims to provide comprehensive analysis of the factors that drive individuals to migrate from Pakistan and the attractive aspects that attract them to Europe. This framework comprehensively analyses the economic and policy determinants that impact migration, while also considering the significance of personal narratives and social networks in facilitating these journeys. This model provides a thorough comprehension of the migration path from Pakistan to various European destinations.

The framework emphasizes that the main causes of migration are structural economic factors, more especially the significant economic differences between Pakistan and Europe. The economy of Pakistan is still unstable and marked by high rates of inflation and unemployment. In contrast, Europe provides better pay and job security, which makes it a desirable choice for people looking to improve their financial situation (Triandafyllidou, 2016).

Migration networks are essential because they provide guidance and support to migrants as they navigate the challenges of moving to another country. These networks, which act as a support system and ease the process of migration, are made up of social links, family ties, and large diaspora communities (Ryan et al., 2018). These networks are essential to reduce migration costs and uncertainties and to ensure a steady flow of migration.

Moreover, these trends are greatly influenced by the immigration policies implemented by European countries. Highlighting the significance of policies that promote and enable legal migration and integration, it becomes clear that these measures can significantly impact individuals' decisions. Conversely, policies that are more stringent could unintentionally compel individuals to opt for riskier and illegal routes. This emphasizes the complex connection between policy frameworks and the decision-making processes of individuals (FitzGerald, 2019).

In addition to this, the individual's capital, which encompasses their knowledge, expertise, and resources, plays a significant role in shaping their ability to navigate and thrive in the migration process. According to the OECD (2017), migrants who have higher levels of education or specialized skills have a greater chance of benefiting from legal migration channels and successfully integrating into European labor markets. This, in turn, improves their long-term prospects in the host country. Lastly, Migration leads to more migration, according to cumulative causation. Each act of migration has the potential to change the social and economic dynamics of both the origin and destination communities, influencing future migration decisions. This phenomenon demonstrates how successful migration can change conditions in a way that encourages more migration, resulting in a self-sustaining cycle of movement (Massey et al., 1993).

Chapter 4: Methods

Research methods refer to a systematic and empirical approach that is employed to acquire a more comprehensive understanding of a particular problem. To achieve this objective, researchers need to identify and utilize appropriate research and data collection methods. This section will focus on the research philosophy and design, as well as the data collection procedures and data analysis processes.

4.1 Research Philosophy and Design

The primary objective of this research was to explore the roots causes of irregular emigration patterns, with attention to push and pull factors. Considering the aim of this study, scholars suggest qualitative research designs to study experiences of any group and to understand the meanings that shape the lives of such groups (Lewis, 2015).

The qualitative research methodology entails various methods such as In-depth Interviews, Focus Group Discussion and Elite Interviews (Duneier,2019). Keeping in mind the objectives of the current study, elite interviews seek to provide valuable information on the subject matter therefore, it was employed. This approach is frequently observed in the field of Social Sciences and Humanities as this method entails conducting interviews with individuals who hold significant or high-profile positions. The umbrella term 'elite' encompasses a broad range of individuals as this class of people involves individuals who hold prestigious roles within the government, including high-ranking government officials, as well as chief executive officers of well-known corporations and so on. Moreover, it also includes individuals who occupy leadership roles within their communities and have made significant contributions to the improvement of their respective localities (University of Oxford, 2020). Keeping the research objectives and targeted population

in view, the current study aims to only involve government department dealing with irregular emigration e.g., Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) along with that, registered immigration consultants and Governmental Organizations (GOs) working on this phenomenon and an international investigative journalists, and United Nations offices working on safe migration, lastly, European Union Delegation in Pakistan was also taken on board to get their response to the subject matter.

4.2 Research Method

The present study employed qualitative research methodology to explore the Push and Pull factors, migration patterns and risk associated with irregular migration. The present research methodology incorporates an elite interviewing data collection technique. These methods yield insights on multiple realities that are grounded in social life (Grey, 2009). By employing this design, the researcher gained emic perspectives and was also able to comprehend the complexities of the debate. The comprehension of the subject matter is effectively conveyed through the emergence of themes that arise from the dynamic exchange of dialogues. So, a thematic analysis was employed for analysis.

4.3 Study Participants and their recruitment:

Johnson (1990) proposes that the selection of informants can be categorized into two distinct frameworks. The first framework is theory-driven, and the other one is an a-priori approach, where researchers initially determine the statuses of potential informants based on pre-existing theories or take decisions based on available data. In the latter approach, the researcher commences by conducting a comprehensive examination and structured analysis of networks before selecting informants. Löblich and Pfaff-Rüdiger (2012) emphasize over the selection of

informants, in any case, it is vital to choose the individuals who best can describe or share the knowledge on the phenomenon under investigation.

The present study aims to pay special attention to narratives coming from stakeholders on the subject matter. Keeping in view the study aims, officials from FIA along with that, registered immigration consultants and Governmental Organizations (GOs) working on this phenomenon and an international investigative journalist, and United Nations offices working on safe migration, lastly, European Union Delegation in Pakistan was also taken on board to get their response to the subject matter. A number of six in total were interviewed. The study requires elite/expert interview, so the process of participants recruitment was different from conventional participant recruiting process.

The present study adheres to the guidelines given by Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) of University of Oxford version IV published in November 2020 for elite and expert interviewing. The guidelines say that when a study requires elite interviews the initial connection may be facilitated through professional or social networks. It is customary to submit a formal letter or email explicitly requesting an interview in order to obtain access. This correspondence should include pertinent details that empower the recipient to make a judicious choice regarding their involvement. Keeping in view the guidelines and the template given for writing emails requesting interviews would be employed in the recruitment process. The emails were sent out to the potential informants explicitly stated research objectives, significance and also permission letter from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), FCCU was attached along.

4.4 Research instruments and data collection procedures

Since this study aimed to employ the qualitative approach so data was collected through interviewing. Researchers typically employ a semi-structured approach when conducting elite interviews with high-rank officials. According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2014), Elite respondents are approached and questioned about their opinions and viewpoints about a specific social issue or phenomenon. An interview guide was used considering the elite nature of the study; therefore, it benefited the researcher to firmly stay stick with the research objectives and specificness of the study. Another way to conduct semi-structured interviews is by keeping questions open-ended or nondirective.

This method employs a flexible and adaptable interview protocol as opposed to a rigidly predetermined one (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995; Lewis, 1991; Ali, 2012). Interview protocols continue to be essential in research for several reasons. First, they aid researchers in maintaining focus and adhering to the necessary IRB guidelines. In addition, these protocols allow researchers to carefully determine the optimal time to ask delicate questions. In some instances, however, it may not be necessary to pose sensitive questions using a non-directive approach, as the response may emerge naturally. According to Lewis (1991), a dialogic or conversational approach permits interviewees to direct the conversation and apply their own definitions and interpretive frameworks to the subject matter at hand.

According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1995), this facilitates the creation of a seemingly spontaneous and unscripted dialogue between the respondent and interviewer. The qualitative interview offers a significant advantage in terms of allowing the respondent to determine the focus of the discussion and allowing a thorough exploration of potentially intriguing topics (Lewis, 1991; Harvey, 2011; Mikecz, 2012).

4.5 Ethical Guidelines

This research strictly follows established ethical standards in academic research, aiming to maintain the highest ethical conduct throughout the entire research process. One of the most important principles is the firm dedication to obtaining informed consent from all participants, including key stakeholders such as the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) personnel, registered immigration consultants, Governmental organizations (GOs), and UNODC, an investigative journalist, lastly, European Union Delegation in Pakistan was also taken on board to get their response to the subject matter.

Participants were provided with a detailed explanation of the research objectives, and a clear explanation of their rights, including confidentiality and the option to withdraw from the study. These practices are consistent with the ethical principles outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA, 2010) regarding informed consent. Maintaining participant anonymity and ensuring data confidentiality are crucial aspects of this study. and data was securely stored in a restricted-access repository. A comprehensive set of data protection measures will be implemented to prevent unauthorized access and ensure the integrity of the collected information, in accordance with the ethical principles of the American Psychological Association (APA, 2017).

Additionally, this study prioritized the ethical principle of beneficence, ensuring the welfare and well-being of all participants. Interactions with stakeholders prioritized respect, sensitivity, and a steadfast dedication to professionalism. All information and feedback provided during interviews was handled with great care and consideration (APA, 2010). Transparency, an essential element of ethical research, seeks rigorously upheld throughout the study. This requires a concise and thorough description of the research's goals, methods, and the characteristics of stakeholder interviews. Researchers adhere to the APA standards for transparency (2010) by

openly communicating the purpose of the research and discussing the possible implications of its findings. Additionally, the study intends to strictly adhere to the APA's ethical guidelines (2010) to ensure objectivity and ethical integrity by avoiding any potential conflicts of interest. The research adheres to strict ethical guidelines, ensuring ethical execution and protecting the rights and well-being of all participants.

4.6 Data Analysis:

The in-depth elite interviews were translated and transcribed with intensive care, resulting in the creation of a Microsoft Word document accurately formatted in office 365 style. Microsoft Excel was used to record and organize the data in question. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) proposed a framework for a qualitative analysis that has been employed in this study.

The initial phase of qualitative analysis entails the methodical organization of data to identify and then develop themes. According to Boyatzis (1998), the concept of a theme refers to evident and persistent insights that emerge during the data collection process.

The primary objective of this activity is to provide a comprehensive examination of the collected data and to establish a systematic framework for understanding the various aspects of the investigated phenomenon. The following stages of coding for qualitative analysis (adapted from Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006).
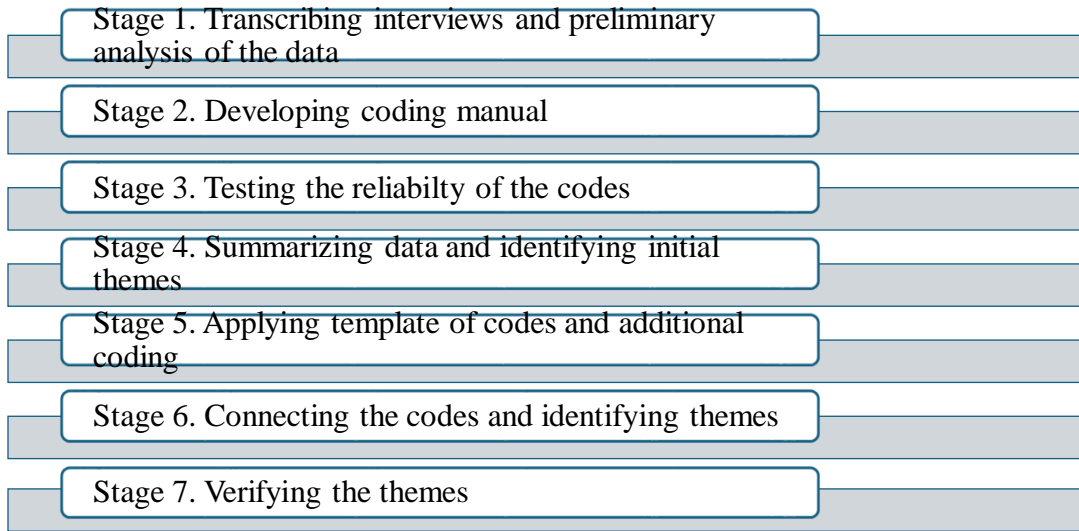
Stage 1. Transcribing interviews and preliminary analysis of the data

Stage 2. Developing coding manual

Stage 3. Testing the reliabilty of the codes

Stage 4. Summarizing data and identifying initial themes

Stage 5. Applying template of codes and additional coding

Stage 6. Connecting the codes and identifying themes

Stage 7. Verifying the themes

Table 1

4.7Interview Summary

The below given table gives a summary of all the interviews that were conducted during the course of this study. As the table shows, a number of Six in total interviews were conducted.

Interviewee	Designation	Institution	Medium	Duration
Assistant Director	FIA - Anti Human Trafficking and Smuggling Wing (AHS)	Federal Investigation Agency (FIA)	In-person	90 minutes
Interviewee N	Coordinator	Migrant Resource Centre Lahore (MRC)	In-person	45 minutes
Interviewee S	Investigative Journalist	BBC London	Online (Zoom)	30 minutes
Program Officer	Program Officer	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)	Online (Google Meet)	30 minutes
Deputy Ambassador & Migration Officer	Deputy Ambassador & Migration Officer	European Union Delegation in Pakistan	Online (Webex)	45 minutes
Consultant	Registered Consultancy Owner	Private Consultancy	In-person	60 Minutes

Chapter 5: Findings

This section outlines the themes followed by the sub-themes that have arisen from the analysis of six elite interviews conducted with key stakeholders involved in addressing the pressing matter of irregular migration from Pakistan to European countries. These stakeholders include the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), a licensed immigration consultant, an international organization focused on safe migration, a United Nations agency in Pakistan, an international investigative journalist, and the European Union Delegation in Pakistan. The following themes and sub-themes are supported by the direct quotes from the interviews to draft the findings.

5.1 Migration Drivers: Economic Factors and Sociocultural influence

Through in-depth discussions with the stakeholders, the following factors act as catalyst for inspiration and motivation among potential migrants to embark on this perilous journey. The migration was predominantly motivated by sociocultural and economic factors, which formulated a solid foundation for this irregular movement. The recurring sub-themes extracted from the interviews are as follows:

5.1.1: Economic Instability:

Across all six interviews, economic instability was consistently highlighted as sub-themes, with each respondent contributing their own unique perspectives. Here are some quotes that have been provided to support the theme and literature reviewed in order to identify the causes of the irregular migration. As it was highlighted by an official of United Nations agency in Pakistan, she said that

> "Due to the prevailing economic instability and limited job prospects, individuals
> are compelled to seek better opportunities in foreign nations."

This situation creates a condition where everyone only observes this way to get out of poverty. The main factors contributing to irregular migration are economic instability and a lack of local employment opportunities, shared by each respondent, supported by the literature reviewed. In the given context, an official of law enforcement agency quoted that

The most prominent push factors that have been identified are poverty, unemployment, and religious factors. The current condition of economic instability creates a sense of hopelessness and pushes people to pursue this danger in search of a better life abroad.

Individuals often choose this type of migration as an approach to break the chains of poverty and unemployment. In addition, there are various other outcomes that can be categorized as economic instability, consequently compelling individuals to take part in dangerous journeys of irregular migration. Therefore, number of interconnected factors resulted by economic instability that provide an encouragement to the individuals to embark on this journey are stated below:

5.1.1.1 Chronic Unemployment & Poverty

The persistent economic instability has resulted in high unemployment rates and widespread multi-dimensional poverty. Consequently, these individuals emigrate to European countries in order to obtain employment and earn basic livelihood for survival of their families. Talking to an Official of EU delegation revealed that

"With in the country, due to lack of job creation, and prevailing unemployment push people to seek better opportunities abroad."

Therefore, these primary underlying factors are responsible for contributing to bitter social reality.

5.1.2   Sociocultural influence

The choice to migrate irregularly is significantly influenced by sociocultural factors identified as sub-themes, such as the role of diaspora and peer networks, irregular migration as a cultural practice and lastly, symbol of high social status. All factors contribute to a strong desire to pursue irregular migration. The sub-themes that have been identified are stated below:

5.1.2.1 Role of diaspora and peer networks

The presence of the Pakistani diaspora serves as a significant catalyst in motivating and guiding their peers to undertake this journey. Upon reaching the destination country, one member encourages and motivates the other peers to embark on this journey. While talking to officials of EU delegation in Pakistan, they stressed that

"the presence of Pakistani diaspora can't be underestimated in context of pulling

such individuals to Europe".

Moreover, when a member of a hotspot community successfully reaches the destination, it serves as an exemplar for the others, motivating them to undertake the same journey, eventually, they end up becoming an organized peer network.

5.1.2.2 Migration as a cultural practice

The phenomenon of irregular migration can have a profound impact on certain populations as the past migration patterns play a significant role in shaping current attitudes and decision towards irregular practice of migration. Talking to stakeholders with mutual agreement over this social practice and already existing knowledge suggests that this kind of movement is culturally appropriated, and its roots are embedded in those communities that includes, Gujrat, Jhelum,

Sialkot, and Gujranwala are the hotspots of this practices. According to one of the stakeholders, Regions such as Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin, Jhelum, Rawalpindi, and Gujar Khan have been identified for having a large number of irregular immigrants. Emulation is the dominant practice in these communities, where the act of observing and imitating others has become popular and eventually develops into a social trend among the individuals of such communities. During the interview, an immigration consultant revealed the following information as

> 'Dekha-dekhi' (Emulation) which inspires the individuals to take this journey to earn the same level of success, but this practice set the impractical expectations and choices made without getting the proper information".

Likewise, an EU Delegation official while discussing the perceptions of irregular migrants shared following stories:

> During a recent deportation, I observed a range of reactions when they reached back home. The person of age 50 years who had applied for asylum but was later deported from the country after a period of eight years. And an 18-year-old young man showed the determination to undertake the journey once more, even after being forcibly expelled from the country. Then, there was a man in his thirties who showed the same level of determination. This actually shows the mindset of such individuals; despite being aware of the potential consequences, they do not see their actions as illegal and wrong.

> Taking all these narratives into account followed by the support of the existing literature that migrating irregularly has become a cultural practice.

5.1.2.3 Symbol of high social status

Several communities in Pakistan are actively participating in irregular migration to European countries. Within these communities, individuals who earn money abroad are associated with a social status. The act of migration has gained popularity over time as a result of this particular description. During an interview with an international journalist, she said:

> …within the communities there are families that send them their children to European countries in order to get validation from the community they are living in, but no-one talks about what actually they are going through because of the social status associated with the idea of living and earning abroad.

5.1.3   *Role of social media and Misinformation spread: Dreams vs Reality*

In the contemporary age of digital technology, it is normal for individuals who use social media networks to fabricate their digital identity. Therefore, this rosy picture created by the people living abroad injects a desire to relocate to European nations, in response to the dream lifestyle that people see on social media. One of the respondents provided her perspective on this phenomenon, as shared by an international investigative journalist who has experience with irregular migration. she expressed her thoughts as

> People are taking such a big step and thinking what they are doing is right, but they are not aware of what is coming to them, they should not be lured by social media and what is shown to them, and they should be shown both sides of the picture. And the picture which is shown to them is just 5 % of the reality and the rest of 95 % is horrific they can't even imagine the rest.

5.1.3.1 Spread and Impact of Misinformation

Social media plays a significant role in spreading misinformation and misunderstandings about irregular migration. These coyotes operate online and discreetly to avoid any legal consequences. However, it creates a strong desire among the aspiring migrants to attain the same level of success being showcased on these platforms. During the interview with the consultant, he shared that

"Misinformation is spread through social media and as a result of this misinformation, people get ready to go on this very dangerous journey".

5.1.3.2 Success stories shared on social media

Social media has completely transformed how people share their daily experiences. The people living abroad display their lavish lifestyles and paint a fake image of their daily life. However, a journalist shed light on the reality of life behind the screen, pointing out that the portrayed narrative does not accurately represent what actually happened.

In the younger generation, there is a lot of influence, you know, on social media, whatever you see, the people who have reached here, and now you know, with the tools like Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, when a person reaches here, they don't want to tell, that I do driving here, or I clean someone's house, they just paint a rosy picture, because no one wants to show themselves, that it was a bad choice, or we are living, you know, in hell now, so the kind of picture they paint, it is inspiring the youngsters, to a great extent, and it is attracting them in Pakistan.

The EU delegation official in Pakistan emphasized the importance of success stories that are shared on social media in motivating the youth, he said

The success stories often shared on social media is the biggest motivation for such individuals.

5.2   Journey and Risks: A Journey of Death

Irregular migration is an extremely dangerous and risky journey, filled with numerous perils and hazards. This theme explores the risks associated with and the abuse & exploitation that migrants have to face during the journey. This theme has further sub-themes given below as

5.2.1 Risks and Dangers Along the Way

Migrants who choose such routes to migrate get to face perilous circumstances that endanger their lives. There are multiple risks associated with this activity, such as difficult travel conditions, being kidnapped by smugglers and much more. Talking to official of the government agency she stated

> They deal with a lot of different kinds of weather, The weather can change quickly, with temperatures ranging from very hot to very cold. This makes their journey even more difficult. On top of the already difficult journey, they have to deal with big problems. Law enforcement watching these migrants is a big problem. If they are caught, they could be detained, sent back to their home country, or even face acts of violence.

5.2.2 Abuse and Exploitation

These migrants experience a range of exploitation and abuse, both during their journey and once they arrive at their destination. Below are some instances of abuse and exploitation that have been identified through stakeholder interviews.

5.2.2.1Economic Exploitation: Exploiters often take advantage of the vulnerability of migrants by imposing exorbitant fees for dangerous journeys, without providing any guarantee of safety or success. The Consultant interviewed stated that smugglers often charge high fees for dangerous and uncertain travels.

5.2.2.2 Labor Exploitation:

After arriving at their destination, many migrants who manage to avoid immediate detection by authorities often find themselves trapped in exploitative labor conditions due to their lack of legal documentation and limited options. The official of EU delegation in Pakistan explained as

"…most of the irregular migrants end up settling in the informal sector due to unavailability of regular visa".

5.2.2.3 Sexual and Physical Abuse:

Women and children are particularly vulnerable to experiencing sexual and other forms of physical abuse during their journey. Official of a government agency stated that

"Female migrants and minors are highly vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse during their journeys, often lacking sufficient access to legal recourse or support."

5.3 Role of migration agents: service providing and facilitation

The agents play a crucial role in this phenomenon, as they are the service provider and facilitate such migrants. During the interview the official of the EU delegation in Pakistan reveled that

"These people show them dreams to Europe and provide a pathway to promise land for better future but at the end of the day such individuals are migrant smugglers and criminal organizations".

The following sub-themes have been identified as

5.3.1 False promises

This was a recurring theme across all the interviews. All interviewees voiced their perspectives on the misleading claims made by the agents when they market their fake promises. During a conversation with a journalist, she narrated a story of her direct encounter with an agent she said as

> The agents don't say that you may be kidnapped, or we will leave you on the way, and you will do it on your own, or what kind of difficulties may come, or you may be arrested, or you may be asked for a ransom from your family. These kinds of additional costs, which are multiplied overall, agents don't tell you about them. And all the agents I talked to, when we were talking about our investigation, I pretended that I have a brother in Pakistan, I have to bring him, and I am someone, who can be your customer. So, they told us about the different costs, and when we talked about his safety, that it won't happen that he will be kidnapped? it won't happen that he will be arrested? They talked to us in such a chilled tone, that "no, no, we are taking 12, 14, 15-years old children every day, how do you be so scared of?" All this is a game of fear, so they remove the fear from your heart.

5.3.2   Network Operation

Their network is well-organized, allowing them to send a large number of people to Europe in an irregular fashion. Throughout the interviews, stakeholders shared various narratives. The quotes below come from a journalist and a law enforcement official that they shared while discussing the networks and their operations.

> they are everywhere, in Pakistan, Iran, France, I mean, they are everywhere, because when you go from one place to another, an agent tells you to go there, you will find someone else, in that place, one of their agents. I know a Pakistani, he sends you to France or UK, he takes you in a trolley, so the network is huge. And this is all running on networking behind the curtains.

The official of the law enforcing agency also talked about how such agents work and the following quote is from the conversation with the official.

> Many prospective migrants get benefited and facilitated along the way by their strong connections in the countries they are passing through. Usually, these networks include agents, already-moved relatives, and other contacts who offer them guidance and information required.

All these narratives suggest that this network operation is itself an entire mafia. Another insightful perspective was shared by a consultant.

> Agents are part of a large and highly organized network that extends multiple countries, operating virtually. They determine the price based on the route and risk associated with the route, and that's how the cost of the journey is determined. These networks are highly efficient in organizing these journeys, handling

everything from the start to the finish, without the agents themselves crossing the border. They hand over the migrants to their other agent on the border.

5.4 Legal and Institutional Responses

In Pakistan, the availability of institutions and legal framework to address this pressing issue is quite limited. Several responses were gathered from the approached institutions regarding the matter. The following are the responses that emerged from those conversations as

5.4.1   National Laws

During the conversation with a law enforcing agency official, he provided insight into the national laws that address this issue, explaining as

To combat irregular migration, we strictly follow certain laws. The Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Act of 2018 addresses the issue of migrant smuggling. It penalizes those who facilitate or organize such activities. The Immigration Ordinance of 1979 also has an important role. It establishes a comprehensive legal framework for immigration control and highlights the consequences of violating these controls. Both of these laws are critical to our ongoing efforts to address and mitigate the issues raised by irregular migration.

UNODC is also a major stakeholder in the drafting of the laws when their officials were brought on board to provide feedback. They shared their perspective as follows.

We have provided extensive support to the Pakistani government, assisting with drafting legislation, developing standard operating procedures for victim care,

running awareness campaigns, and creating migration-related curriculums for law enforcement agencies.

5.4.2   Policy formulation

Several international organizations are actively involved in Pakistan, assisting the government in addressing this issue and formulating effective policies. The EU delegation in Pakistan is actively engaged in policy formulation, while talking to them about policy formation their official shared their response on the issue of irregular migration as

> Our focus is to develop a legal framework to address the issue of irregular migration. We collaborate closely with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) to improve border management and provide policymakers with useful information when making migration decisions. We are working hard to improve policies and strengthen our abilities so that we can assist the government in providing potential migrants with the skills they require. To help with migration issues, we get into collaboration with senior Pakistani officials for dialogue on providing the language and other required skills.

5.4.3   Local development

Several stakeholders emphasized and discussed their institution's response to the issue of irregular migration. The EU delegation play a crucial role in addressing this matter, and they shared their institutional insights as said by EU official in Pakistan.

> Migration is a politically sensitive matter. We got together as a global alliance to stop illegal migration by encouraging economic growth. We want to give people

the tools they need to do well in their home countries by working with different donors to create local opportunities. This will minimize the risk and tendencies of migrating irregularly.

5.5 Future steps and Directions

All stakeholders provide guidance for future steps and approaches to combating this society's brutal reality; some responses are listed below based on the sub-themes emerged from the responses.

5.5.1 *Sustainable Development Goals as a way forward*

The UNODC official shared their insights while discussing the way forward to address the pressing issue of irregular migration as

Incorporating SDGs into policy formation and implementing these goals in every initiative is the way forward with strong policy implementation because it will reduce poverty and create local opportunities, which is the root cause of irregular migration.

Similarly, the official of EU delegation in Pakistan also shared their response to address the issue. Their response was more aligned with SGDs given as below.

Our initiatives are aligned with multiple Sustainable Development Goals, including safe migration, poverty reduction, the attainment of gender equality, promoting economic growth, and reducing inequalities. In order to accomplish these objectives, our primary objective is to mitigate the factors contributing to irregular migration.

5.5.2   *Role of Media in spreading awareness*

Each respondent emphasized the importance of media in running the awareness campaigns as this medium is used to trap the individuals therefore a journalist shared her response on the subject matter as

> If authorities want, they can catch the agents through social media as it is used for communication and spreading misinformation, via tracking their Ip addresses. It is not a big deal for them to catch such people.

EU official has also stressed that only social media can be an effective tool now in combating the irregular migration, he said as

> Social media with the help of youth can be used in raising voices against the irregular migration and spreading awareness on the danger of this journey to combat this issue.

The summary of the results Table

Themes	Sub-themes	Example	Reference
Migration Drivers	• Economic Factors • Sociocultural influence	1. Due to the prevailing economic instability and limited job prospects, individuals are compelled to seek better opportunities in foreign nations. 2. This practice is culturally embedded in our society.	1. United Nations agency official 2. EU Delegation Official
Role of social media and Misinformation spread	• False Expectation • Success stories on social media	1. And the picture which is shown to them is just 5 % of the reality and the rest of 95 % is horrific they can't even imagine the rest. 2. with the tools like Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, when a person reaches there, they start posting their stories	International Investigating journalist
Journey and Risks	• Risks and Dangers Along the Way • Abuse and Exploitation	1. Routes are the deadliest. 2. Often, they are kidnapped and asked for ransom.	1. Official of law enforcing agency 2. Journalist
Role of migration agents	• Service providing • Network operation	1. these people show them the dreams to Europe and provide them pathway to promise land for better future. 2. they are everywhere, in Pakistan, Iran, France, I mean, they are everywhere, because when you go from one	1. official of the EU delegation in Pakistan 2. Journalist

		place to another, an agent tells you to go there, you will find someone else, in that place.	
Legal and Institutional Responses	• National laws • Policy Formation • Local development	To combat irregular migration, we strictly follow certain laws. The Prevention of Smuggling of Migrants Act of 2018 addresses the issue of migrant smuggling. It penalizes those who facilitate or organize such activities. The Immigration Ordinance of 1979 also has an important role.	Official of law enforcing agency.
Future steps and Direction	• Sustainable Development Goals as a way forward • Role of Media in spreading awareness	Incorporating SDGs into policy formation and implementing these goals in every initiative is the way forward with strong policy implementation because it will reduce poverty and create local opportunities, which is the root cause of irregular migration.	UNODC Official

Chapter 6: Discussion

The interviews conducted for this thesis provide insight into the important role that economic, cultural, and informational factors play in the conduct of irregular migration from Pakistan to European countries. These narratives gathered from the stakeholders involved in addressing this issue resonate broader perspective in migration studies, particularly with well-established theories such as the push-pull model. According to this model, migration is primarily driven by adverse circumstances in the country of origin and appealing prospects in the destination countries.

This study's findings, combined with the migration literature, highlight the strong link between economic instability and migration Practices. According to Lee (1966), economic factors play an important role in motivating people to leave their home countries. The theory is clearly demonstrated in the interviews, particularly the perspectives shared by the official of law enforcing agency. They discuss how Pakistan's limited job prospects drive young Pakistanis down dangerous paths that eventually lead them to Europe. This is consistent with the findings of Massey et al. (1993), who found that economic challenges and employment opportunities have a significant influence on migration decisions. Interviewees' accounts of financial hardship are consistent with theoretical perspectives, demonstrating the practical importance of classical migration theories in relation to the current challenges in Pakistan.

In addition to economic factors, the study's findings highlight the significance of sociocultural influences on migration choices. The significance of family expectations and societal prestige in successful migration highlights the crucial role of social networks in facilitating the migration process, much like how students learn from their peers. According to social network

theory, migration is greatly influenced by the migrant's social networks (Boyd, 1989). These networks not only offer valuable information, but also encourage migration as a feasible or essential choice. Migration dynamics are shaped by various factors, such as societal expectations and personal aspirations. These influences, whether they are real or perceived, emphasize the intricate connection between the two. The impact of this influence is greatly amplified by the frequent sharing of success stories on social media. The interviews provide valuable insights into the impact of misinformation, showcasing the ways in which digital social networks can shape individuals' perceptions and influence their decisions regarding migration.

Misinformation, among other factors, contributes to the decision of migration. According to systems theory, migration systems are influenced by a variety of interconnected factors, such as economic and political conditions and the information available to migrants (Castles, 2010). The interviewees' accounts provide valuable insights into how misinformation can lead to false expectations and risky decision-making. It is critical to make efforts to improve the migration information system. This emphasizes the importance of providing improved and easily accessible information to address the risks associated with irregular migration to minimize the tendencies of migration within any community.

The interviews conducted to explore the dangerous nature of the journey, often described as a 'Journey of Death' by those who have experienced it investigated through already existing literature. They provide valuable insights into the significant dangers and mistreatment experienced by migrants, as extensively recorded in migration literature as risks during transit and violations of human rights (Spijkerboer, 2007). The risks described in the interviews underscore the significance of international cooperation and well-designed policy frameworks in safeguarding migrants, as emphasized in human rights-based approaches to migration (Goodwin & McAdam,

2007). The field reports emphasized the significant difference between the theoretical protections provided by international law and the challenging experiences encountered by migrants.

This investigation into irregular migration, and the narratives gathered from the stakeholders, has produced a compelling depiction of the various factors that drive people from Pakistan to embark on dangerous journeys to Europe. The complex connection of economic and sociocultural factors paints a horrible picture in which people are forced to migrate, often under dangerous conditions, due to their own despair and societal constraints. The interviews revealed important details about the profound impact of misinformation on migrants' perceptions of life in Europe. These false or inaccurate pieces of information frequently lead people to underestimate the potential dangers they will face while overestimating the opportunities that await them. The disparity between expected and actual outcomes is a critical issue that migration policies must address.

A thorough analysis of the insights gathered from the stake holders emphasizes that addressing migration issues requires more than just strengthening legislation and borders. Understanding the fundamental causes of migration is critical, such as economic instability and the spread of false information. Furthermore, increasing public awareness of legal migration options has the potential to reduce the need for dangerous routes, lowering the risks associated with these journeys. In addition to this, the interviews conducted support the global collaboration that it is critical in addressing the complex problem of irregular migration, which has serious consequences for the countries involved at both the origin and destination. Partnerships between countries of origin and destination are critical for effectively managing migration, ensuring its security, coordination, and mutual benefit for all stakeholders involved. Such collaborations can also help combat smuggling networks that exploit people considering migration.

Chapter 7: Limitations, Implications, and Conclusion

This thesis examines the complex phenomenon of irregular migration from Pakistan to Europe through conducting in-depth interviews with various key stakeholders. While these insights have greatly improved our understanding, it is crucial to acknowledge the inherent limitations of the study.

7.1 Limitations

- One primary limitation of the study is that it did not incorporate the first-hand experiences of migrants' challenges and their lived experience of this journey.

- Although these perspectives provide valuable insights, it is important to note that they are subjective and influenced by the interviewees' specific roles and experiences.

- Absence of primary resources led this study to rely on the secondary accounts coming from stakeholders and entities dealing with them.

Despite certain limitations, this study stands out for its focus on how institutions address irregular migration. This study aims to fill a significant void in the current body of literature by gathering valuable insights from officials in migration-related organizations and government bodies. It brings attention to the frequently involved entities in migration and their response to the subject matter.

7.2 Implications

Although this study has certain limitations, it provides valuable insights that can be applied to policy-making and practical implementation.

- The results emphasize the significance of comprehensive migration policies that consider both the root causes of migration and the potential hazards associated with the journey.

Enhancing economic prospects in Pakistan is crucial for addressing the underlying causes of irregular migration. One possible approach is to allocate resources towards job creation, education, and vocational training as a means of offering viable alternatives to immigration. This approach has multidimensional progress as it will contribute to GDP of Pakistan and help increasing the per capita income eventually, the quality of life here in Pakistan will improve and it will uplift the marginalized communities.

- The study highlights the significance of offering authentic information and public awareness initiatives to disseminate false information regarding migration routes and life in Europe. The use of social media could be a powerful tool in addressing this issue and running the campaigns. These initiatives have the potential to assist potential migrants in making well-informed choices while also deterring them from undertaking perilous journeys.

- Enhancing migration management and border management requires collaboration between nations. Therefore, there could be bilateral agreements for easing the process of migration and a one window policy should be introduced. this study suggests that Effective management and security of migration routes, as well as the fight against smuggling networks and the protection of migrants' rights and safety, require collaboration between countries of origin and destination. This could be done through sitting together for identifying the major attractions in the European countries and the reasons that compel the migrate from Pakistan and addressing them here in Pakistan. So that the potential migrants prefer staying in their home communities.

- Recognizing specific areas experiencing significant migratory pressures emphasizes the critical need for targeted interventions in those locations. The government must prioritize

job creation and economic equity, as these factors play a significant role in potential migrants' decision to leave. These measures address not only the immediate economic factors driving migration, but also help to ensure long-term stability and development.

- Social media's influence on migration decisions emphasizes the importance of monitoring and actively participating in digital platforms. To effectively manage the narrative and counter the romanticization of illegal migrant routes on the internet, authorities can improve their understanding of how information and perceptions about migration are disseminated via social media. They have the expertise to provide precise and useful advice. In addition, a comprehensive surveillance system can be implemented to monitor online platforms and real-world activities in high-risk areas.

- To put these measures into action, a comprehensive approach involving local governments, international organizations, and civil society is required. Interventions must respect diverse cultures while also being financially viable and socially sustainable. Through this approach, the government has the potential to significantly reduce the need for unauthorized migration, resulting in improved quality of life for affected communities and increased regional stability. This strategy demonstrates a commitment to global migration management standards and sustainable development goals, thereby promoting inclusive and equitable progress within the country.

7.3 Conclusion

This thesis deeply studies into the complex issue of irregular migration from Pakistan to European Countries, examining a wide range of policy, social, and economic issues. Through in-depth interviews with key participants, this study learned a lot about the institutional frameworks that govern these migrations. As a secondary account, this study examined the personal and group motivations behind them. When analyzing these findings, it is critical to consider the deeper reasons why people choose to travel in dangerous ways. People are leaving Pakistan, in search of better opportunities elsewhere because the economy is unstable and there are few job opportunities. The economic push is fueled by societal and cultural pressures, as well as a wealth of false information that romanticizes European life and raises unrealistic expectations. According to the information gathered, Pakistani stakeholders must focus on implementing comprehensive economic development plans that priorities job creation, improved education, and infrastructure development. Taking these steps is critical for creating long-term job opportunities and preventing irregular emigration. Also, the fact that false information can influence migrants' decisions demonstrates the importance and demands for effective public awareness campaigns. It is also critical that these campaigns provide clear and concise information about the various legal ways to migrate while dispelling common cultural myths. This strategy aims to reduce the number of people who take dangerous illegal routes by assisting potential migrants in making informed decisions. The study's findings shed light on the multi-dimensional issues that migrants face along their journeys, including being exploited and abused, as well as the possibility of being held in detention centers or deported to their home country. Because of these concerns, both the countries from which migrants originate and the countries to which they travel must take stronger measures to protect them immediately. International cooperation is critical for protecting migrants' rights

along the way, making borders safer, and disrupting networks that bring people irregularly. It emphasizes the importance of addressing the reasons why people migrate in order to make migration more manageable and controlled. This includes making it easier for people to move legally, as well as enacting stricter laws to combat human trafficking and smuggling. Migration policies must be consistent with international human rights obligations and standards in order to be fair and caring.

To conclude the debate, this thesis contributes to the understanding of irregular migration by including the perspectives of those who monitor, study, and respond to these movements which was a research gap in academic studies. In the future, it will be critical to emphasize addressing the root causes and parallelly, strict implementation of migration policy. These objectives can be achieved by enhancing resource allocation, optimizing the effectiveness of migrant support services, and sustaining cooperation between countries of origin and destination. This approach can not only reduce the risks of illegal migration, but also contribute to a more prosperous and stable society.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire

Section 1: Stakeholder Perceptions

1. From your perspective, what are the primary push factors driving individuals from Pakistan to undertake irregular emigration to European countries?

2. In your view, what are the key pull factors that attract individuals to European nations as a destination for irregular emigration?

3. Could you describe any patterns or trends you've observed in irregular emigration from Pakistan to European countries over the years?

4. What are the major key demographic differences between irregular and regular migrants?

Section 2: Risks and Challenges

4. What are the most significant risks and challenges faced by individuals who choose irregular emigration as a means to reach European countries?

5. How do these risks and challenges differ for various categories of emigrants (e.g., economic migrants, refugees, students)?

Section 3: Legal Framework and Implementation

6. In your experience, are there gaps or discrepancies between the legal frameworks governing immigration and the practical implementation of immigration policies in Pakistan?

   - If yes, could you provide specific instances or examples?

7. How do these gaps between law and practice affect the experiences of irregular emigrants and the efficacy of immigration policies?

Section 4: Stakeholder Narratives

8. In your role, have you encountered narratives or perspectives from stakeholders like the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), registered immigration consultants, NGOs, or legal practitioners regarding irregular emigration?

9. How do these stakeholder narratives align with or diverge from the experiences and motivations of individuals involved in irregular emigration?

Section 5: Role of Your Organization/Agency

10. From your standpoint, what should your organization/agency's role be in addressing the challenges and issues posed by irregular emigration from Pakistan to European countries?

11. Are there specific initiatives or recommendations you would propose to address the complexities surrounding irregular emigration?

Appendix B: Timeline and Budget

Timeline

The following given timeline was strictly adhered to complete the work in time.

Date	Duration	Tasks
Nov-December'23	1 Month	Seeking Permissions from IRB
December-Jan'24	1 Month	Refining Interview guide through demi-interviews
Jan-March	1.5 Month	Data Collection/ Translation & Transcription Process
March- April	1 Month	Analysis Process
April- May	1 Month	Report writing
06 May'2024		**Thesis Submission**

Budget

The budget below was utilized in order to complete this study.

Budget	
Tasks	**Rupees**
Traveling Cost	*1000/-*
Stationary	*1000/-*
Photocopies	*5000/-*
Bindings	*3000/-*
Total	
	10,000/-