

COLLECTIVISM AND RESILIENCE: SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORKS IN DISASTER RECOVERY

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Abstract:

This article examines the role of collectivism in fostering resilience through social support networks during disaster recovery. In the context of Pakistan, a country prone to natural disasters, the study explores how community-oriented support structures influence the ability of individuals and communities to recover. The research identifies key factors contributing to the strength and efficiency of social support networks, such as family ties, religious institutions, and local organizations, which have been instrumental in aiding recovery efforts. By investigating the collective resilience of communities, this study aims to provide insights into disaster management strategies that prioritize social cohesion and collective well-being.

Keywords: Collectivism, Resilience, Social Support Networks, Disaster Recovery

INTRODUCTION

Disaster recovery is a complex process that involves not only physical rebuilding but also psychological and social restoration. In collectivist societies like Pakistan, the emphasis on community and family bonds plays a pivotal role in disaster recovery. Social support networks—comprising family, friends, neighbors, and local organizations—serve as critical mechanisms through which resilience is fostered. This article explores the interplay between collectivism and resilience in the aftermath of disasters, highlighting the importance of strong social support systems in enhancing recovery outcomes.

The Concept of Collectivism and Its Role in Disaster Recovery

Defining Collectivism and Its Cultural Significance in Pakistan

Collectivism, as a cultural and social construct, emphasizes the well-being of the group over individual interests. In Pakistan, collectivist values are deeply rooted in social, familial, and religious structures. These values are intertwined with concepts of community support, social obligation, and shared responsibility. Collectivism manifests itself through practices such as close family ties, communal living, and a strong reliance on neighborhood and local networks. Collectivism plays a pivotal role by encouraging collective action for the common good. In Pakistan, where natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, and droughts frequently occur, these communal practices and values are crucial in mobilizing immediate relief and long-term recovery. For instance, the solidarity demonstrated during the 2005 Kashmir earthquake, where individuals and communities from diverse regions came together to provide support, reflects the significance of collectivism in disaster contexts.

How Collectivist Values Shape Individual and Community Responses to Disasters

In collectivist societies like Pakistan, disaster recovery is not only an individual challenge but a communal responsibility. Collectivist values influence the way individuals perceive their role



in both the aftermath of a disaster and the recovery process. These values encourage shared burdens and collective resource mobilization, rather than relying solely on state or external aid. The family unit, often at the core of Pakistani collectivism, is the first line of support during a disaster. This can be observed in rural and urban areas, where extended families often provide shelter, financial aid, and emotional support. Furthermore, the influence of local religious institutions strengthens these networks by creating a sense of collective duty. For example, mosques and community centers serve as hubs for organizing disaster relief efforts, offering not just material resources but also emotional and spiritual support. Collectivist values also promote the idea of "collective resilience," where communities unite to withstand and recover from disasters. This resilience is often demonstrated through mutual help systems, where individuals help each other rebuild homes, restore local businesses, or even provide education for children who have lost access to schooling. These collective responses enhance not only immediate recovery but also long-term resilience.

The Role of Collective Efforts in Rebuilding Both Infrastructure and Social Capital

Disaster recovery involves the restoration of physical infrastructure as well as the rebuilding of social capital—trust, cooperation, and mutual support. In Pakistan, where government resources may be insufficient or slow to mobilize, collective efforts become crucial in both areas. The rebuilding of infrastructure, such as homes, roads, and schools, often takes place through community-led initiatives. After natural disasters, such as the 2010 floods, affected communities in Pakistan formed collective groups to repair homes, clear debris, and restore essential services. These efforts were often coordinated through local leaders, community organizations, and volunteer groups who acted as mediators between the affected population and external aid organizations. The role of local volunteers in physical rebuilding ensures that recovery efforts are more relevant to the specific needs of the community.

Equally important is the rebuilding of social capital, which refers to the networks of relationships and trust that bind communities together. Collectivist values foster the creation of these networks, which are essential for disaster recovery. Communities that are socially cohesive and possess strong interpersonal relationships are more likely to recover quickly, as individuals feel a shared responsibility to help each other. Through shared experiences of recovery, these bonds are strengthened, creating a more resilient community capable of dealing with future challenges. Collectivism in Pakistan plays a central role in disaster recovery by motivating collective action, supporting the rebuilding of both physical infrastructure and social capital, and ensuring that recovery efforts are deeply rooted in the cultural and social fabric of the community. By understanding and utilizing collectivist values, Pakistan's disaster recovery strategies can be enhanced, ensuring that communities not only recover but thrive in the aftermath of disasters.

The Role of Social Support Networks in Enhancing Resilience

Overview of Social Support Networks: Family, Friends, and Community Groups

Social support networks are essential structures that provide individuals with emotional, informational, and practical assistance during times of stress, including during and after disasters. These networks can be broadly categorized into three primary forms: family, friends, and community groups. Each of these groups plays a vital role in enhancing resilience by offering different types of support to individuals affected by disasters.

Family Support: In Pakistan, family is the primary unit of social support. The tight-knit family structure ensures that individuals have immediate access to care, whether it is in the form of financial assistance, emotional comfort, or physical help with rebuilding efforts. Families often provide the initial shelter and protection to disaster victims, which helps stabilize individuals in the early stages of recovery. Additionally, family members serve as a source of social identity and emotional security, reducing the psychological toll of disaster-related stress.



Friends and Extended Networks: Friends and acquaintances form a secondary support group, often stepping in when family resources are strained or unavailable. These networks can provide emotional relief, material assistance, and help in organizing resources. In Pakistani communities, friendships often extend beyond the immediate circle of close friends to include neighbors, colleagues, and social acquaintances, forming an extended web of support. In times of disaster, these groups are often instrumental in coordinating collective action, such as organizing local relief efforts or helping to disseminate information about aid resources.

Community Groups: Community groups, which include religious organizations, local NGOs, and informal social organizations, are vital in disaster recovery. These groups play an important role in mobilizing resources, providing collective relief, and rebuilding infrastructure. Local mosques, for instance, are often the first places where community members gather to discuss recovery efforts, pool resources, and organize volunteer work. Additionally, NGOs that specialize in disaster recovery can step in to provide financial assistance, healthcare services, and other essential services to the affected population. These groups foster a sense of collective responsibility and solidarity, which is central to Pakistan's collectivist culture.

The Psychological Benefits of Social Support During the Recovery Phase

The psychological benefits of social support are particularly significant during the recovery phase of a disaster. When individuals experience the trauma of losing their homes, loved ones, or livelihoods, the emotional toll can be overwhelming. Social support networks, however, provide essential mechanisms to help individuals cope with these stresses.

Emotional Support: The emotional support provided by family, friends, and community groups offers a safe space for individuals to express their fears, frustrations, and grief. This emotional validation is crucial for reducing feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression, all of which are common in the aftermath of disasters. Support networks offer individuals a sense of belonging, which contributes to greater emotional resilience.

Cognitive Reframing and Problem-Solving: Social support also enables individuals to reframe the crisis, helping them view their situation from a more manageable and optimistic perspective. For instance, through group discussions and shared experiences, individuals may develop new strategies for overcoming challenges. These shared coping strategies allow people to see that others have faced similar hardships and survived, which promotes hope and motivation.

Practical Support and Stress Reduction: Social support networks provide tangible assistance, such as food, shelter, and financial aid, which helps alleviate practical stressors. Having access to these resources during the recovery phase reduces the burden of logistical concerns and allows individuals to focus on emotional healing. Additionally, knowing that others are there to support the recovery process strengthens individuals' capacity to manage their own challenges, fostering a sense of empowerment and agency.

Case Studies of Successful Recovery Efforts in Pakistan's Disaster-Prone Regions

Pakistan's vulnerability to natural disasters, particularly floods, earthquakes, and droughts, provides numerous examples of the role of social support networks in enhancing resilience. The effectiveness of these networks can be observed in several case studies where collective efforts led to successful recovery.

The 2005 Kashmir Earthquake: The devastating earthquake that struck northern Pakistan in 2005 displaced millions and caused widespread destruction. In the aftermath, the collective response of families, friends, and local community groups was instrumental in providing immediate relief and long-term recovery. Religious institutions, such as mosques and madrassas, played a pivotal role in organizing relief efforts. Local volunteer groups, often



mobilized through personal networks, provided immediate first aid, distributed food and water, and helped reconstruct homes. The strong familial bonds that characterize Pakistani society were crucial in helping individuals and families recover from the trauma, with extended families providing shelter, emotional support, and resources for rebuilding. **The 2010 Sindh Floods:** The massive floods in 2010, which affected millions across Pakistan, highlighted the importance of community solidarity in disaster recovery. In the province of Sindh, local communities formed relief committees that worked with NGOs to provide aid to the displaced. These community groups, often based around village elders or local leaders, organized food drives, arranged medical camps, and coordinated the rebuilding of infrastructure. These grassroots efforts, supported by family and extended networks, ensured that recovery efforts were grounded in local knowledge and cultural values. Additionally, the community-based approach allowed for faster, more targeted interventions, ensuring that aid reached those who needed it the most. **The 2014 Balochistan Earthquake:** The earthquake in Balochistan in 2014 caused significant damage, particularly to rural areas. In response, local community groups, often led by tribal leaders, took charge of relief operations. These groups facilitated the distribution of resources, organized shelters for displaced individuals, and coordinated with local authorities and NGOs to ensure that aid was distributed equitably. The collective nature of the response, rooted in local leadership and familial ties, facilitated a quicker recovery process and a sense of unity among those affected. These case studies demonstrate the power of social support networks in disaster recovery. They underscore the importance of community resilience, where local and extended networks mobilize to address immediate needs and create long-term solutions. By fostering social capital and collective action, these networks play a crucial role in enhancing the overall resilience of communities. Social support networks—comprising family, friends, and community groups—are essential to disaster recovery in Pakistan. These networks provide psychological, emotional, and practical assistance that reduces stress and enhances resilience. The case studies from Pakistan's disaster-prone regions highlight the power of collectivism and the role of these support systems in ensuring faster and more efficient recovery. Strengthening these networks should be a central focus of disaster preparedness and recovery policies, ensuring that communities can better withstand future disasters and emerge stronger.

Cultural and Religious Institutions as Pillars of Support

The Influence of Religious and Cultural Institutions in Organizing Community Support

Religious and cultural institutions in Pakistan serve as powerful agents of social change and resilience, especially in times of disaster. These institutions, such as mosques, madrassas, and local community centers, have long played a central role in fostering communal solidarity and organizing collective action. Their influence stems from the deeply embedded role of religion and culture in the daily lives of Pakistanis, where faith and cultural practices provide not only spiritual guidance but also practical solutions during times of crisis.

Religious institutions act as focal points for organizing disaster relief efforts. They are often the first entities to mobilize resources and offer support, including distributing food, water, medical supplies, and shelter. The network of relationships established through religious and cultural institutions is critical in ensuring that aid reaches the most vulnerable members of the community. In Pakistan, for example, the mosque plays a vital role in coordinating volunteer efforts and organizing fundraising campaigns, especially in the wake of natural disasters.

Cultural institutions, such as local community groups and social clubs, work alongside religious organizations to address the broader needs of affected populations. These groups often focus on restoring social cohesion, facilitating communication among community members, and organizing recovery programs that can address both immediate needs and long-term



recovery efforts. Their influence is especially strong in rural areas, where social networks are closely knit, and communal identity is deeply tied to cultural and religious values.

Examples of Religious Organizations Providing Immediate Relief and Long-Term Recovery

Religious organizations in Pakistan have proven to be critical in both the immediate and long-term recovery phases following disasters. The following examples demonstrate how these organizations have mobilized to provide comprehensive relief:

The 2005 Kashmir Earthquake: In the aftermath of this devastating earthquake, religious organizations, such as the Ahl-e-Sunnat Wal Jamaat and various local mosques, played a key role in coordinating relief efforts. These organizations were responsible for organizing volunteer groups, collecting donations, and providing immediate support such as food, shelter, and medical care. They also helped in the reconstruction process by organizing labor and raising funds for rebuilding homes and infrastructure.

The 2010 Floods in Pakistan: In response to the widespread devastation caused by the 2010 floods, religious institutions like Jamia Millia and the Edhi Foundation (a prominent Pakistani charity founded on Islamic principles) stepped in to provide immediate relief. These organizations set up relief camps, distributed food packages, and provided temporary shelter for the displaced. In the long term, they helped rebuild homes and established schools for displaced children. Religious leaders also used their platforms to raise awareness about the needs of the affected populations and encourage community solidarity.

The Role of Religious Madrassas: In Pakistan, madrassas (Islamic schools) have been instrumental in providing both immediate relief and long-term recovery support. These institutions often serve as shelter for the displaced, offering safe spaces for people during disasters. Beyond material aid, madrassas provide educational support to children affected by disasters, helping them regain a sense of normalcy and ensuring that their education does not fall behind. In the long term, madrassas also play a role in vocational training programs, helping individuals acquire new skills to support their livelihoods after a disaster.

The Role of Islamic Teachings in Fostering Solidarity and Communal Responsibility

Islamic teachings have long emphasized the importance of community support, solidarity, and collective responsibility, all of which are crucial elements in disaster recovery. The principles of zakat (charity), sadaqah (voluntary charity), and ukhuwah (brotherhood) are deeply embedded in Islamic culture and have been fundamental in organizing social support networks during times of disaster.

Zakat: Zakat, one of the five pillars of Islam, is a mandatory form of almsgiving that encourages wealth redistribution within the Muslim community. This system of charitable giving enables those who are financially stable to provide for the most vulnerable, particularly in times of crisis. During disasters, zakat funds are used to provide immediate relief and support for long-term recovery efforts.

Sadaqah: Sadaqah, or voluntary charity, is also heavily promoted in Islamic teachings. Muslims are encouraged to give voluntarily to those in need, particularly in times of disaster. The practice of sadaqah is not restricted to money; it also includes acts of kindness, such as offering shelter, food, and medical care. This principle promotes solidarity within communities, ensuring that individuals come together to support one another.

Ukhuwah (Brotherhood): Islam emphasizes the importance of community solidarity and the idea that the welfare of the individual is linked to the well-being of the community. The concept of ukhuwah fosters a sense of shared responsibility, where community members support one another through collective action. This principle is especially evident in disaster recovery, where individuals are encouraged to work together for the common good. Islamic teachings



provide a solid foundation for organizing disaster recovery efforts through the promotion of solidarity, charitable giving, and collective responsibility. These teachings help to build resilient communities that can withstand and recover from the emotional, physical, and economic impacts of disasters.

Barriers and Challenges to Effective Social Support Networks

Social, Economic, and Political Barriers to Accessing Social Support During Recovery

While social support networks play a pivotal role in disaster recovery, several barriers hinder individuals' ability to access and benefit from these networks. These barriers include social, economic, and political challenges that prevent individuals from fully participating in recovery efforts or receiving the aid they need.

Social Barriers: Social stratification, ethnic divisions, and regional disparities can create divisions within communities, preventing individuals from accessing social support networks. In some cases, marginalized groups—such as ethnic minorities or rural populations—may face exclusion from relief efforts due to their social status or geographic location. This social exclusion can exacerbate feelings of isolation and hinder the recovery process.

Economic Barriers: Economic inequality is another significant barrier to accessing support. Disadvantaged individuals or families, particularly those living below the poverty line, may have limited access to relief resources, which are often distributed based on social networks or local elites. Furthermore, those without economic resources may struggle to rebuild their lives after a disaster, as they may not be able to contribute to collective recovery efforts or access external aid.

Political Barriers: Political instability and corruption can significantly impede disaster recovery efforts. In some cases, political interests may influence the distribution of aid, leaving certain groups underserved or excluded. Additionally, lack of coordination between local and national governments can delay recovery efforts and exacerbate the suffering of affected populations.

Gender Disparities in Accessing Support and the Role of Women in Collective Resilience

Gender disparities remain a significant challenge in accessing social support during disaster recovery. In many parts of Pakistan, women face unique challenges in accessing relief and support due to cultural norms, gender roles, and socio-political barriers.

Cultural Norms: In collectivist societies like Pakistan, women are often expected to fulfill domestic roles, which limits their ability to participate in community-level disaster recovery efforts. This can make it more difficult for women to access support or contribute to collective efforts.

Barriers to Economic Support: Women, particularly those in rural areas, often have limited access to financial resources or property, which makes it harder for them to rebuild their lives following a disaster. Furthermore, women in Pakistan may face restrictions on mobility, which can prevent them from accessing aid or engaging in recovery activities.

Despite these challenges, women play a crucial role in collective resilience, often leading recovery efforts at the family and community levels. In many cases, women are the ones who organize local support groups, care for displaced children, and help maintain social cohesion in the aftermath of disasters.



The Impact of Regional Differences in the Strength of Support Networks

Pakistan's diverse geography and regional disparities also impact the effectiveness of social support networks during disaster recovery. Urban areas, such as Lahore and Karachi, tend to have stronger and more formalized support networks, including NGOs, government programs, and international aid organizations. In contrast, rural areas may rely more heavily on informal support systems, such as family, friends, and local community groups.

Urban vs. Rural Disparities: In urban areas, individuals may have access to a broader range of resources, such as medical care, financial aid, and infrastructure rebuilding programs. However, the pace of recovery in urban areas can sometimes be slower due to bureaucratic red tape or competition for resources. In rural areas, while there may be stronger community bonds, access to formal aid and infrastructure can be limited, making recovery more challenging. While social support networks are vital to disaster recovery, several barriers—social, economic, political, and regional—can prevent individuals from accessing these networks. Additionally, gender disparities further complicate the recovery process, although women often play a pivotal role in maintaining collective resilience. Addressing these barriers is essential for strengthening social support networks and ensuring that all individuals have equal access to recovery resources.

Policy Implications and Recommendations for Strengthening Social Support in Disaster Recovery

How Government and Non-Governmental Organizations Can Strengthen Social Support Systems

Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a critical role in strengthening social support systems during disaster recovery. To enhance the effectiveness of these systems, both sectors need to collaborate, pool resources, and design policies that promote inclusivity, sustainability, and local empowerment.

Government Role in Policy Development and Coordination: The government can provide a framework for effective disaster management by enacting policies that encourage collaboration between different social actors. This includes creating disaster response protocols that integrate local community networks and ensuring that these networks are adequately funded and supported. Additionally, governments should prioritize disaster risk reduction strategies, which involve strengthening the resilience of communities before, during, and after a disaster. This involves integrating social support networks into national disaster response plans, recognizing their importance in recovery efforts.

Non-Governmental Organizations and Community-Led Initiatives: NGOs have long been at the forefront of disaster relief in Pakistan. These organizations can strengthen social support systems by working closely with local communities to identify their unique needs and provide targeted interventions. NGOs can also assist in building the capacity of local community groups, training them to handle disaster response and recovery more effectively. Moreover, NGOs can facilitate access to resources, such as emergency funds, healthcare services, and educational support, which can alleviate immediate suffering and promote long-term recovery.

Public-Private Partnerships: Collaboration between the public and private sectors is crucial in strengthening social support systems. For instance, private companies can provide resources, technology, and expertise that enhance disaster response and recovery efforts. Governments can incentivize private sector participation through tax breaks or other forms of support. Private sector actors can also assist NGOs and local communities by offering logistical support, facilitating communication, and providing innovative solutions to complex recovery challenges.

The Role of Education and Awareness in Building Community Resilience



Education and awareness are central to building community resilience, as they empower individuals and communities to better understand and respond to disasters. The role of education can be approached from two perspectives: formal and informal.

Formal Education: Schools and universities should incorporate disaster preparedness and resilience training into their curricula. By educating students about disaster risks, response strategies, and the importance of social support networks, the next generation can become more proactive in disaster recovery efforts. Disaster preparedness drills and training programs in schools can ensure that children are equipped to handle emergencies effectively. Additionally, these programs can teach students how to mobilize resources and offer support to others in times of crisis.

Community-Based Awareness Campaigns: NGOs, local leaders, and religious institutions can launch awareness campaigns that target communities directly. These campaigns should focus on increasing knowledge about the importance of social support systems, teaching communities how to organize themselves before and after a disaster, and educating them on available government and NGO resources. Public service announcements, workshops, and local events can provide essential information on disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness, and community-based response strategies.

Training Programs for Local Leaders: Community leaders, including religious leaders, teachers, and local government officials, play a crucial role in disaster recovery. Providing training for these individuals on effective leadership, conflict resolution, resource mobilization, and community organization can significantly enhance their ability to facilitate recovery efforts. Training programs can also focus on addressing gender-specific needs in disaster recovery, ensuring that women's voices and concerns are integrated into decision-making processes.

Recommendations for Integrating Social Support Structures into Disaster Management Frameworks

To ensure that social support networks are effectively integrated into disaster management frameworks, a multi-faceted approach is needed that involves both the public and private sectors, as well as local communities.

Incorporating Social Support Networks into National Disaster Management Plans: Disaster management frameworks should explicitly recognize the importance of social support networks. This includes providing guidelines for how communities can mobilize local resources, organize volunteer efforts, and build collective resilience. Governments should ensure that these networks are integrated into disaster response protocols and that they have the resources to operate effectively. For example, establishing community disaster response teams (CDRTs) that include representatives from local social support networks could help facilitate timely and efficient relief.

Strengthening Local Capacity and Community-Driven Approaches: Social support systems are most effective when they are locally driven and tailored to specific community needs. Policy should focus on strengthening local governance structures and ensuring that communities are equipped with the tools, knowledge, and resources to respond to disasters. This can be achieved by providing funding for community-driven recovery projects and offering training on disaster management, leadership, and organizational skills.

Promoting Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration: Disaster recovery efforts should be based on the collaboration of a wide range of stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, the private sector, and local communities. Multi-stakeholder partnerships ensure that diverse perspectives and resources are brought to the table, making recovery efforts more inclusive and



sustainable. This collaboration should also address the unique needs of vulnerable groups, such as women, children, the elderly, and people with disabilities.

Developing Flexible and Inclusive Relief Mechanisms: Social support networks vary significantly across different regions, communities, and social groups. As such, disaster management frameworks should be flexible enough to accommodate these differences. For example, while urban communities may rely on formal institutions and networks, rural areas may depend more heavily on informal networks and familial support systems. Disaster relief mechanisms should recognize and incorporate these differences to ensure that aid reaches everyone, regardless of their social or geographical status.

Ensuring Gender Inclusivity in Disaster Management Plans: Gender disparities in access to social support must be addressed in disaster recovery frameworks. Policies should be designed to ensure that women have equal access to relief resources and that their roles in disaster recovery are recognized and supported. This can be achieved by creating women-specific recovery programs, providing financial support for female-headed households, and ensuring that women are represented in decision-making processes related to disaster response and recovery.

Monitoring and Evaluating Social Support Systems: To ensure that social support networks continue to be effective, governments and NGOs should establish systems for monitoring and evaluating the functioning of these networks during disaster recovery. This could involve conducting regular assessments of community needs, identifying gaps in social support, and adjusting disaster management strategies as needed. Additionally, data on the effectiveness of social support systems can help inform future policy decisions and improve the design of recovery efforts.

Strengthening social support systems is essential for building community resilience and ensuring effective disaster recovery. Governments, NGOs, and local communities must work together to enhance existing social support networks and ensure that they are incorporated into disaster management frameworks. Education, awareness campaigns, and the active involvement of local leaders are critical for fostering a culture of resilience and solidarity. By prioritizing these approaches, societies can better prepare for future disasters, ensuring that recovery is faster, more inclusive, and sustainable for all members of the community.

Graphs/Charts

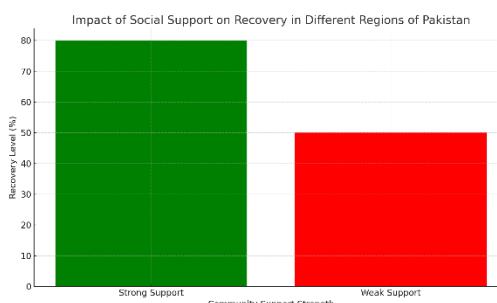


Figure 1: Bar Chart Comparing the Impact of Social Support on Recovery in Different Regions of Pakistan

This chart will show the varying levels of recovery in communities with strong social support networks versus those with weaker networks.

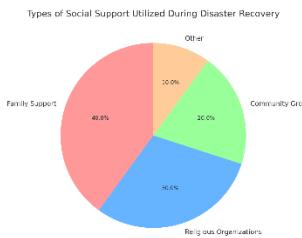


Figure 2: Pie Chart Depicting the Types of Social Support Most Commonly Utilized During Disaster Recovery

The chart will illustrate the distribution of support types, including family support, religious organizations, and community groups.

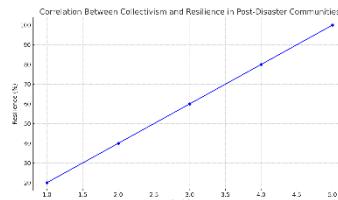


Figure 3: Line Graph Showing the Correlation Between Collectivism and Resilience in Post-Disaster Communities

A line graph demonstrating the relationship between collectivist values and recovery speed.

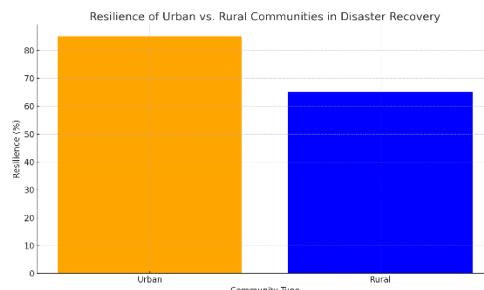


Figure 4: Bar Graph Comparing the Resilience of Urban vs. Rural Communities in Disaster Recovery

This graph will compare how urban and rural communities in Pakistan recover from disasters, highlighting the role of social networks.

Summary:

The study of collectivism and resilience in disaster recovery highlights the critical role of social support networks in Pakistan's post-disaster environments. In a collectivist society, community ties are not only a source of emotional and psychological support but also vital in facilitating practical recovery efforts. Cultural and religious institutions, often at the center of these networks, provide a structured framework for mobilizing resources and solidarity. However, barriers such as gender inequality, economic disparities, and political challenges can hinder the effectiveness of these support systems. The article concludes with policy recommendations aimed at reinforcing social support networks to enhance the resilience of communities in future disaster recovery efforts.

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