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Child Neglect and Violence against Children: A Cross National Comparative Study of Developed, Developing, and Muslim Majority Countries and Pakistan

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Abstract
This study aims to investigate empirical insights on the violence against children in developed and developing countries. This issue has been found in *Global South* and *Global North*. This study has been conducted qualitative method. Published research method reviewed on the subject of violence against children. The inclusion criteria have been used including violence against children in developed, developing, and Pakistan in the title and published in a peer reviewed national and international journal. The published research documents have been abstracted from digital data bases including Google Scholar, Sage, Springer Nature, Emerald Insights, Tylor & Francis etc. Thematic analysis has been done to represent the result to draw study conclusion. The study finding pointed out that violence against children's leftovers a pervasive and deeply rooted worldwide issue, affecting both the *Global South* and *Global North*, though its arrangements and drivers often vary across contexts. The study also asserted that in the *Global South*, including Pakistan, children are more vulnerable to physical labor, early marriage, trafficking, and limited access to legal protection due to poverty, weak enforcement of laws, and entrenched cultural norms.

Keywords: Violence, Children, Global South, Global North, Neglected

Introduction
Neglected children become the victim of physical, psychological, emotional and financial violence in *Global South* and *Global North* (Abbas, Naqvi, & Mahmood, 2024; Cprek et al., 2020; Fortier, Parent, & Flynn, 2020). By the same token, they are not paid according to their work load at their work places like in workshops, hotels, and at brick kilns. Similarly, even brick kiln owner prefers children for bound labor as they have to spent little money as their wage (Daly, Hillis, Shrestha, & Shrestha, 2021). Additionally, numbers of child abuse cases are increasing day by day in Pakistan because children are the easiest target for child molester and pedophile. Likewise, in recent past, killing of children after sexual abuse have been increased many folds (Andresen & Practice, 2021). Further, neglected children of the poor families are the easy target for criminals because no one bothers about them in society (Kallsen, Allwood, Adams, & Pugach, 2020).
Furthermore, in cities, rich families hire children of poor families for the work of house hold on meager pay. Moreover, these poor and neglected children become the easy target

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of aggression and frustration of the rich owners (Abbas, Naqvi, & Zaman; Kealy, Laverdière, Cox, & Hewitt, 2020). In addition, even they are not provided sufficient food and cloth. Besides, these rich families don't bother about the education, health and other basic rights of these poor children (Abbas *et al.*; Dawson, 2020). Likewise, these poor and working children have to wait for long time to contact with their family because they have no source of communication (Abbas *et al.*). On other hand, family snub them if they have frequent contact with their family, they will talk about the atrocities of owner which they are facing (Ismayilova & Karimli, 2020). Neglected and destitute children have very poor health conditions because they don't have resources and information about dreadfulness of diseases (Abbas et al., 2024; Checketts et al., 2020). Besides, malnutrition and under development is common in these ignored children because they face scarcity of food and clean water (Crandall *et al*., 2020). Moreover, they become pray of such diseases which are directly developed due to malnutrition. Further, maltreatment and violence promote aggression in neglected children (Chen & Qin, 2020).

In addition, in mega cities, now a day Rag picking is a very profitable business and the owners of the scrap stores attract these neglected children for collection of waste material for little money (Iqbal, Fatmi, Khan, & Nafees, 2021). Likewise, these children collect rag from garbage and sold it for little money. By the same token, during rag picking they come into contact with contaminated garbage even with waste material of hospitals. Similarly, from this waste material or garbage they become victim of contagious diseases and also become the source of transmission of these dangerous diseases to other healthy family members (Abbas *et al.,* 2024; Homan & Kong, 2020). Additionally, families of these neglected children have no money for treatment and awareness about the seriousness of disease (Counts & John-Henderson, 2020). On the other hand, in many cases there is no one who think about the health of these children and compel them to lead a very miserable and stressful life (Azeredo *et al*., 2020). Likewise, most of the time; they go to hospital, when any particular disease become too fatal for life and developed to the advanced stage, where it becomes incurable (King, 2021).

By the same token, psychological support is needed to the children rescued and resided in child protection institutions (Bureau, 2004e). Besides, child psychologists boost the confidence of children who are facing mental stress and are in depression because of neglect (Fu et al., 2026). Further, child Psychologist also calls upon the parents of the children facing stress and depression for sustainable solution (Bush et al., 2026). Furthermore, Child Protection & Welfare Bureau is providing health support to the children residing in child protection institutions which have been established with in the premises of child protection intuitions to deal with emergency and for improvement of health of the children (Bureau, 2004f). Moreover, child protection School are working for the education of the deprive children in Punjab (Bureau, 2004a). By the same token, primary level education is being provided in Child Protection School and children are being sent to different colleges and universities for higher education (Bureau, 2004a). In addition, Govt is bearing all the expenses of education of the neglected children to bring them back into main stream of society. Likewise, a technical college is also working for technical education for future rehabilitation of these children (Bureau, 2004c). Religious teachers also enlighten these children with religious education. Further, special focus is giving to the stress and anxiety ridden children so that disadvantages of deprivation have been minimize (Bureau, 2004d). Moreover, every year, annual sports gala is being held in headquarter in which children from all units of child protection take part (Bureau, 2004b). Several studies have been conducted using qualitative and quantitative study

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design in the field of social sciences (Shoaib & Usman, 2026a, 2026b, 2026c, 2026d, 2026e, 2026f; Usman & Shoaib, 2026a, 2026b, 2026c, 2026d, 2026e, 2026f). However, this study has been conducted in qualitative nature and already published documents have been used as unit of analysis on the subject of violence against neglected children. Hence, this study aims to generate empirical insights into the prevalence, patterns, determinants, and consequences of violence against children, with particular attention to the social, familial, and institutional factors that shape children's experiences of violence.

Data and Method

This study has been conducted qualitative method. Published research method revied on the subject of violence against children. the inclusion criteria have been used including violence against children in developed, developing, and Pakistan in the title and published in a peer reviewed national and international journal. The published research documents have been abstracted from digital data bases including Google Scholar, Sage, Springer Nature, Emerald Insights, Tylor & Francis etc. Thematic analysis has been done to represent the result to draw study conclusion.

Results and Discussion

This section has been based on the results and discussion based on the themes as followings;

Violence against Children in Developed Countries: The study of Antle *et al*. (2020) declared that transfer of violence against intimate partner from one generation to another spoiled the attitude towards relationship of young children. Similarly, Miller-Graff, Scheid, Guzmán, and Grein (2020) were concluded that positive family support and interventions from caregivers have strong relation with speedy recovery and resettlement of a child who was victim of maltreatment. Likewise, Barone and Carone (2020) avowed those women who become victim of violence and maltreatment during her childhood, get higher chances to become filicide, when she became mother. Similarly, Yoon *et al*. (2020) stated that children encountered the violence and maltreatment in early stages of childhood have higher rick to involve in use of alcohol and other sedative substance and this risk can be reduce by the involvement of father of the children. Yang, Hu, Silventoinen, and Martikainen (2020) highlighted that symptom of stress and mental illness in old age are directly associated with childhood adversities.

Moreover, the study of Xu, Huang, and Cao (2020) suggested that early exposer of children to neighborhood disorder is detrimental for children's behavioral patterns and interventions of father reduced the severity of the problem. However, of Womersley *et al.* (2020) suggested that childhood psychological neglect implicated the physical development of brain of the children. Further, Wilhelmsen, Lekhal, Alexandersen, Brandlistuen, and Wang (2021) summarized the study that uncontrolled environment and free play without any check can affected the children mental development negatively. Similarly, Weller, Conrad, Wilburn, Ramamonjiarivelo, and Gladden (2021) expressed that adverse childhood experiences negatively affected the mental stability of the children especially the children of multicultural parents. In the same way, the study of Watt, Kim, Ceballos, and Norton (2020) asserted that bad experiences during early age by a child led him mental stress, anxiety and social isolation. Furthermore, the research of the Wang, Chen, Zhao, Feng, and Song (2021) suggested that programs to improve parenting skills decreased the physical violence against school going children by their

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parents at home. By the same token, results of Wang, Tang, and Liu (2020) concluded that children who were sexually abused and neglected in rural area of China left behind every part of life. In addition to this, the study of Vaughan-Jensen, Smith, Blake, Keith, and Willson (2020) determined that child maltreatment is directly associated with violence in later life and could be mitigate through preventive measure.

Furthermore, Ustuner Top and Cam (2020) childhood maltreatment undermine the health in later life as compare with those who did not encounter with such abuse and neglect. Moreover, results of the study of Trinh, Feeny, and Posso (2021) showed that adversaries in parents health negatively affect the children health. The findings of Tredinnick and McMahon (2021) described that college athletic coach play important role in prevention of in young children. the Treat, Sheffield-Morris, Williamson, and Hays-Grudo (2020) showed that children's encounter with adverse circumstances have negative consequences for their physical and mental development. Furthermore, the work of Todahl, Barkhurst, Watford, and Gau (2020) suggested that masses have important role on protection and care of children.

In the same way, Tiwari *et al*. (2021) described those restrictions on children during COVID-19 pandemic on children have caused psychological stress and physical disturbance among children. By the same token, Thulin, Kjellgren, and Nilsson (2020) elaborated those children who become victim of physical violence remain in state of fear and confusion and act in a defensive way to avoid further abuse. In addition to this, (Somani et al., 2021; Thomas-Skaf & Jenney, 2020) explained that children with physical disabilities face more violence as compare to children without disabilities. In the same way, Tejada and Linder (2020) asserted that children who encountered sexual abuse in preschool age become the victim of disassociation, week in relationships, emotionally unstable and irregularity in seeping patterns. By the same token, Tchoukou (2020) described that religion was used as weapon for early age girl child marriage in Nigeria. Similarly, the study of Sui *et al*. (2020) explained that children who have exposure to violence developed the problem of irregularity in emotional behavior. Furthermore, findings of Sudland and Neumann (2020) highlighted that poor parenting, violent conflict between parents negatively compromised the children's safety and emotions. Moreover, results of the study of Stoute and Slevin (2021) showed that structural racism against black children disturbed them psychologically. Beside this, study of Steiner, Johnson, Postmus, and Davis (2021) resulted that girl children are more prone to sexual violence committed by the teachers and religious figures than the male children in primary school in Liberia.

Alongside this, Spira, Perkins, and Gilman (2020) concluded that children who were victim of physical violence previously by their relatives went into shocking conditions and more likely to become victim of physical violence again. Similar to this, (Smales *et al*., 2020; Sölva, Haselgruber, & Lueger-Schuster, 2020) stated that children in foster care become the victim of maltreatment by the caregivers and developed post-traumatic stress disorder (PSTD). Additionally, results of the study of Smith-Cannoy, Wong, Siddiqi, Tait, and Parnia (2020) articulated those human rights injunctions have positive impacts in improvement of health of children. Further, Smith, Mitchell, and Jin (2021) elaborated that childhood victimization of maltreatment and violence increase the chances of perpetration of intimate partner sexual violence in later life especially the risk of occurrence of violence augmented many folds in case of women. Moreover, Smith, McLean Cooke, and Morrison (2020) particularized that sexual violence against girls is common in educational institutions in Jamaica. Likewise, Smith, Ashdown, Dixe, and

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Guarnaccia (2020) described that mostly children suffering from mental illness are neglected by parents because parents do not perceive the issue well.
Similarly, findings of Smith (2020) highlighted that health and social wellbeing of the refugee children are being neglected for financial gains through social sufferings and structural violence by the host countries. In a same way, Shin, Shim, and Hwang (2020) described that there is lack of coordination between child health needs and health services providers. study of Shenk *et al*. (2021) articulated those children look older than their actual age due to epigenetic age acceleration syndrome developed because of childhood victimization of violence and maltreatment. Similar to this, outcomes of the study of Shen (2020) showed that contaminated with racism and ethnicity, neighborhood environment is negatively affecting the mental health of children. Furthermore, Sharp *et al*. (2021) described that training is important for caregiver to align their abilities according to mental health needs of vulnerable and neglected children. In addition to this Seddon *et al.* (2021) argued that children suffering from multidrug resistant tuberculosis are being neglected. Moreover, Santoki (2021) discussed that school through education changed positively the life of neglected and destitute children. Additionally, Yoon *et al*. (2020) concluded in their research that the father use alcohol and other sedative material maltreated their children. By the same token, Salokangas *et al*. (2020) mentioned that physical violence and mental disturbance in early childhood caused psychological and rational ailment during adulthood.
In addition, Sellers, Smith, Izzo, McCabe, and Nunno (2020) concluded that quality relationship with children in residential areas improve the sense of safety and protection among children. Furthermore, Ryabov (2020) summarized that physical violence during childhood have negative impacts for psychological and emotional live. Moreover, Rosner *et al*. (2020) concise that psychotherapy play positive role in rehabilitation of abused and neglected children. Similarly, Popescu, Muntean, and Juffer (2020) resulted that to rationalized the full capacity of adoption and settlement of abundant and neglected children in families the adoption laws and procedure must be reestablished. By the same token, Perkins and Meyers (2020) stated that physical and emotional violence by siblings in families against children had many negatives insinuations during later lifespan for them. Furthermore, Paine, Burley, Anthony, Van Goozen, and Shelton (2021) identified in their research that adopted children, deprived from love and care of their own family, faced more neurocognitive, emotional and behavioral problems towards teachers and parents as compared with the children of normal families. In addition to this, Paguinto, Kasparian, Bray, and Farrar (2020) suggested that independence of victim's neuromuscular disorder children through the injunction of wheelchair played positive role in their psychological, emotional, and cognitive development. By the same token, concluded that childhood exposure to aggression and violence substance using parents and peer bulling resulted in aggressive behavior to shame and development of gun violence tendencies in adulthood.
Additionally, Ngo *et al*. (2020) suggested that children who left behind from vaccination against vaccine-preventable diseases in conflict and violence effected areas remained at high risk to become victim of any disease. Qualls, Hewes, Mann, Dai, and Adelgais (2020) established that Child Abuse and Neglect (CAN) was minimal among children aged below three years whereas young victims with injuries and other sever symptoms showed overt signs of trauma.

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Violence against Children in Developing Countries: As the study of Ozoemenam, Ekanem, and Delamónica (2021) advocated that child specific poverty exposes them to exploitation, neglect and violence in Nigeria. Moreover, Onapajo (2020) concluded that children's involvement in conflict and violence by the Boko Haram and Govt security agencies negatively affected their freedom, survival and social development in war zone of Nigeria. Likewise, Obong'o *et al*. (2020) stated in their research that not disclosing child sexual abuse (CSA) due to fear of victim blaming, social pressure, cultural norms about sex and poor legal structure leads to re- victimization in Zimbabwe.

Additionally, Russell, Higgins, and Posso (2020) concluded that in developing countries whole focus of prevention intervention was only on school based strategies, not for all population and there was a gap of knowledge for full population. Furthermore, Bhatia *et al.* (2020) concluded that child labor, child marriages were high in Nepal. Moreover, Boakye (2020) highlighted that every fifth young adult aged 12-18 years indulged in sexual delinquency and fault lines were exist in family sphere of influence like family indulge in violence, parental abuse or neglect, alcoholic parents and family economic deprivation. Likewise, Jose and Cherayi (2020) illuminated that physical, emotional and psychological abuse and neglect of children of alcohol addict families significantly disturbed their behavior patterns. Alike, Chakraborty (2020) concluded that skill improving program may prove to be detrimental for trafficking and increase awareness among masses and beneficial for future policies. In the same way, Ginige, Baminiwatta, and Jayawardana (2020) critically reviewed the data and declared that children were found with behavioral and borderline of the problem. Externalizing problem was more common than the internalizing problem among children in Sri Lanka.

In addition to this, Nyangoma, Ebila, and Omona (2021) came to the results that child neglect (CN) caused by poor parenting, conflict and violence in family, separation among spouses, single parenting, disorientation to cultural norms and more the one marriage at a time by both genders. Similarly, Nöthling, Malan-Müller, Abrahams, Hemmings, and Seedat (2020) draw a conclusion from their research that childhood trauma due to neglect and violence caused many negative psychological implications for adulthood or later life.

Violence against Children in Muslim World: Salem *et al*. (2020) indicated that male children were higher in numbers who become the victim of violence than female participant whereas all types of maltreatment were occurring on Qatari society. By the same token, Mathews, Pacella, Dunne, Simunovic, and Marston (2020) concluded that for more reliability and effectiveness of methodologies to extract the useful details about frequency, intensity, effects, nature characteristics of child abuse and neglect and relationship between neglect and person perpetuated this maltreatment more investment and focus was recommended for prevention of child maltreatment and for policy development for future. In addition, Kaiser and Sinanan (2020) revealed that most of the female children at street face sexual abuse but many of the still hopeful for bright future. Moreover, Shah *et al*. (2020) inflicted those girls have more depression than the boys and depression rate was very high rate in UAE and there were urgent needs of measures for early control of this problem. Furthermore, the results of Sahin, Dagli, Acarturk, and Sahin Dagli (2020) showed that the Syrian children were encountering multiple health's and wellbeing issue like chronic diseases, maltreatment, sexual abuse, child labor and family violence and multilateral efforts were being made by NGOs and at Govt level to overcome the problems related health, psychological, protection and wellbeing.

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Similarly, Harsha, Lynch, and Giacaman (2020) described those children were mostly abused by their mother with less education and income and male children were more prone to violence and abuse than the female in Palestine.
Similar to this, Shah *et al*. (2020) incited in their study inflicted those girls have more depression than the boys and depression rate was very high in UAE and suggested that there were urgent needs of steps taken for early control of this problem. In the same way, Sahin *et al*. (2020) elaborated that the Syrian children were encountering multiple health's and wellbeing issue like chronic diseases, maltreatment, sexual abuse, child labor and family violence and multilateral efforts were being made to overcome the problems related health, psychological, protection and wellbeing. In addition to this, Harsha *et al*. (2020) declared that Child abuse and violence very common phenomena in Palestine. Mother with less education and income were mostly abused by their children and male children were more prone to violence and abuse than the female. Furthermore, Child abuse was a great matter of concern in Iran and it was suggested that child abuse must be tackled at early stages through education and awareness.

Violence against Children in Pakistan: Likewise, the study of Zafar, Naeem, and Zehra (2020) revealed that immediate family member or relative were perpetrator in most of the cases of child abuse and neglect in Pakistan. the study conducted by Raman *et al*. (2020) highlighted that perpetrator of violence against children were mostly whom with children closely intermingle daily in family, school, play ground or in society and suggested cooperation with international institution dealing with violence against children, for policy formulation. In addition to this, S. S. Abbas and Jabeen (2020) elaborated that physical abuse was highest among young student and this rate was higher in male than female whereas female student encountered more emotional abuse than male and parents were at the top among the igniters of abuse followed by friends and most reported year of abuse was 12th year of age.

Conclusion

Violence against children's leftovers a pervasive and deeply rooted worldwide issue, affecting both the Global South and Global North, though its arrangements and drivers often vary across contexts. In the Global South, including Pakistan, children are more vulnerable to physical labor, early marriage, trafficking, and limited access to legal protection due to poverty, weak enforcement of laws, and entrenched cultural norms. In contrast, the Global North, whereas generally having stronger institutional frameworks, continues to grapple with issues such as domestic abuse, online exploitation, and psychological violence, often hidden within households or digital spaces. Pakistan exemplifies the complex interplay of socio-economic inequality, gender discrimination, and gaps in child protection systems, which intensify children's exposure to violence. Across both regions, systemic factors such as inequality, lack of education, and social acceptance of certain harmful practices perpetuate the cycle of abuse. Addressing this issue requires a comprehensive, multi-sectoral approach that includes strengthening legal frameworks, improving reporting mechanisms, raising public awareness, and investing in education and child welfare services. Ultimately, protecting children from violence is not only a moral obligation but also essential for sustainable development and the creation of safer, more equitable societies worldwide.

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