

Fatalistic: The Land of Sufi and Allah *Jey Likhay Khay*

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ABSTRACT

Flood has been noted as one of the major natural disaster contributors in the world causing huge suffering to human beings. Majority of flood victims link natural disaster to an act of God, whereas God is punishing human beings because of sins committed by individuals. However, Pakistani society, which is deeply intertwined with religion, hence, its flood related narratives must have impact on its flood experiences. Since present research participants are *Kacha* farmers from Sindh, province of Pakistan and they are prone to flooding. Thus, present research investigated flood narratives impacted by religious beliefs. This research study employed qualitative research methodology and recorded flood narratives of 31 research participants. This research design is appropriated for current research and subsequently a thematic analysis was performed. The key finding noted that *Kacha* farmers strongly believe in Sufism, hence they supposed that they are protected by Sufi saints, whose tombs are near flood site. Moreover, they also viewed that floods are God's wrath upon those individuals who have committed sins and must be punished. These flood narratives contradict with modern flood hazard management practices in the developed countries who firmly argue that any flood disaster is subjected to human act and thus concerned people are accountable. This is sharp contrast with the present finding where *Kacha* farmers link natural disasters to act of God thus, all related officials and individuals absolve themselves from accountability about flood related management decisions.

KEYWORDS: Floods, *Kacha* Farmers, Religion, Sindh, Sufiism.

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INTRODUCTION

Flood perils are one of many serious challenges for humankind on earth. Humans are fighting with floods with inception of civilization till this date. Similarly, scholars in the past noted that for hundred years, floods contributed to one of the major natural disasters causing around this world (Adikari&Yoshitani, 2009). In addition, Asian Development Bank (ADB), stated that floods attributed 84% of all calamity-related deaths between the year 2000 to 2005 and 65% of calamity-related to monetary deprivation between 1992 and 2001 (ADB, 2009). Globally, flood was responsible for extensive losses and killed 6.9 million people causing hardships to 3.6 billion citizens from the year 1900 to 2012 (Ali, 2013).

Moreover, majority of floods in the developing countries are victims of riverine floods and are linked to agriculture segment. Consequently, farmers are worse affected by floods. Agriculture of Pakistan is the pillar of economy. Agriculture's contribute in Pakistan's economy is 21% in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) generating employment for 24 million individuals, hence, 47% of the total labour force of the

country is employed by this sector (Spielman, Malik, Dorosh& Ahmad, 2016). Conversely, 63% of the Pakistan's population resides in rural area and relate to agriculture directly or indirectly for their livelihood (Spielman et al., 2016).

Pakistan has many large rivers; hence the country is susceptible to natural catastrophe like, floods. Floods are not a recent problem in Pakistan, and their occurrences is frequent, thus these flood disasters are probably to continue for many years. Floods in Pakistan killed almost 2000 people in the year, 2010, with heavy losses of 450,000 livestock, and 2.2 million hectares of crop distressing 20 million people that caused large-scale sufferings (Disaster Emergency Committee, 2014).

Brief History of Flood in Pakistan

The data in Table 1 shows the people impacted by floods in Pakistan. Majority of floods are connected to riverine floods in Pakistan (Aslam, 2018). Moreover, the Indus River is one of the major irrigation sources to cultivate the major agricultural land in the country. Therefore, major portion of population rely for their livelihoods on agriculture, thus inevitability making them suspect to flood hazards.

Table 1: History of Floods in Pakistan by Federal Flood Commission (FFC)

Serial No.	Year	Direct losses (US\$ million) @1US\$-PKR 86	Lost Lives	Affected villages	Flooded area (Sq-km)
1	1950	488	2,190	10,000	17,920
2	1955	378	679	6,945	20,480
3	1956	318	160	11,609	74,406
4	1957	301	83	4,498	16,003
5	1959	234	88	3,902	10,424
6	1973	5134	474	9,719	41,472
7	1975	684	126	8,628	34,931
8	1976	3485	425	18,390	81,920
9	1977	338	848	2,185	4,657
10	1978	2227	393	9,199	30,597
11	1981	299	82	2,071	4,191