Sectarian Violence: A Sociological Analysis of Sukkur Division

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Abstract

Purpose: To determine the causes, consequences, and potential outcomes of conflict resolution, this study investigates the social elements of sectarian violence in the Sukkur Division district. The study makes use of sociology to explain how to strengthen neighborhood relationships and produce long-lasting peace.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The Data were collected through a questionnaire from the victims of sectarian violence. A sample size of 460 was randomly selected. Using techniques of descriptive statistics, reliability, and regression analysis to find out the consequences behind sectarian violence. All methods were performed in the SPSS 30 version for the data analysis.

Findings: The findings emphasize the need for socio-politically tailored policies. These measures may strengthen efforts to address sectarian conflict's root causes and promote lasting peace. The study shows that political, social, religious, and historical factors complicate sectarian conflict in the Sukkur Division. The division has gradually developed sectarian divisions, especially in recent decades while accommodating several religious congregations. Economic inequality, political manipulation, and religious extremism raise tensions. Violence has increased due to the state's failure to address inequality and its sometimes-sectarian involvement. Political and religious leaders exploiting these differences for power has made unity and reconciliation harder.

Introduction

To understand sectarian violence in Sukkur Division, one must examine Pakistan's religious conflict's historical and social roots. Pakistan's sectarian violence surged in the late 1970s and early 1980s due to General Zia-ul-Haq's Islamization efforts. Sunni-supporting policies oppressed Shia communities. Terrorist groups like Sipah-e-Sahaba, which targeted Shia Muslims only, generated a significant sectarian division in Pakistan, notably in Sindh and Sukkur Divisions. Economic inequality exacerbates sectarian tensions. Poverty, limited economic prospects, and poor education plague many Sukkur residents. These characteristics make extremist groups more likely to use these communities. These socioeconomic inequalities foster radical beliefs that claim to fix systemic oppression and injustice (Ahmed and Ali, 2019). For a comprehensive assessment of sectarian violence in Sukkur, a representative sample was surveyed. The study sought to identify violent hotspots and demographic variables. Younger people, especially those with lower education, are more likely to engage in or be victims of sectarian violence. This study emphasizes the need to bridge educational differences to reduce conflict over time. Local authorities, community leaders, and sectarian violence survivors conducted semi-structured interviews to acquire qualitative data. These interviews reveal the daily sectarian violence people face. Survey participants reported pervasive fear and distrust in communities and little government help to

address these issues. They also noted that media coverage of sectarian disputes might increase or decrease tensions. Conversations typically touched on political influence. The panelists stressed that political players often fund or otherwise assist sectarian-focused NGOs to maintain power. Rizvi (2018) claims that this deception hinders religious unity and perpetuates bloodshed. It was also understood that social marginalization and education drive sectarian conflict. Media and religion influence sectarian warfare, according to the study. Some religious groups can foster interfaith dialogue, while radical elements use them to spread divisive discourse. Depending on how they frame sectarian issues, the media can help resolve or intensify conflict. Complex rules that support ethical, religious, and media activities are needed to handle these implications, which may be favorable or bad. This study seeks Sukkur community cohesion methods. Three research methodologies are combined to achieve this. This includes educational reforms, economic development, and interfaith dialogue venues. The findings emphasize the need for socio-politically tailored policies. These measures may strengthen efforts to address sectarian conflict's root causes and promote lasting peace.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of determining the causes, consequences, and potential outcomes of conflict resolution, this study investigates the social elements of sectarian violence in the Sukkur Division district. The study makes use of sociology to explain how to strengthen neighborhood relationships and produce long-lasting peace. There is no defined sect in the religion. The purpose of the study is to identify the real image of Islam and to eradicate this menace from society. The issue of sectarian violence has affected the society badly.

Literature Review

A literature review is the most important part of research as it sheds light on various tireless efforts of the research scholars. It also enlightens me to move ahead regarding the issue. The following literature is reviewed on the issue. Sectarian violence continues to plague many places, threatening social stability and harmony. Sectarianism has become a complex sociopolitical issue in Pakistan, threatening national unity and peace. This national issue has greatly affected certain areas. Sukkur Division in Sindh province is a unique case study for socioeconomic factors in sectarian violence. Despite its diverse history, Sukkur has seen sectarian enmity that has shown the root causes of division. Prior research on sectarian conflict, social structure, and community reactions will be examined in this literature review to determine the sociological reasons for sectarian violence in Sukkur Division. This study analyses key research issues. These include religious identification, politics, economic inequality, and cultural norms that cause sectarian violence. The review analyses numerous perspectives to contextualize sectarian violence in Sukkur. The review will suggest ways to reduce tensions. The literature review emphasizes the need to see sectarian violence as part of a larger social framework shaped by political, economic, and historical factors. Religious leaders and intellectuals must address religious violence. The Pakistan Ulema Council promotes religious tolerance and togetherness (Khan, 2019). A comprehensive approach is needed to combat Pakistan's sectarian violence. This strategy should include community engagement, judicial reforms, and economic growth. Nasr (2000) believes government-civil society engagement is necessary for a more inclusive and peaceful society. Sindh's cultural variety has benefited the province but also caused sectarian-based ethnic strife. Sukkur's religiously structured ethnic groups exacerbate sectarianism. Religious differences and ethnic loyalty might increase exclusion and hatred (Shaikh, 2021). Many factors may lead sectarian and ethnic identities to converge. To comprehend sectarian violence in Sukkur, one must understand ethnicity.

Research Methodology

Research Methodology is a chapter that describes the methods, tactics, and procedures that were utilized to investigate the sociological roots of sectarian violence in the Sukkur Division. This study employs a variety of methodologies to gain an understanding of the multifaceted nature of sectarian violence in the region. The factors of politics, society, and the economy that contribute to violence and conflict between different groups are investigated in this study. Together, qualitative and quantitative research methods will be utilized to accomplish this goal.

Results

Question	Statement	Percentage
Historical Rivalry among Sects	Shia& Sunni	67.5%
	Christen & Muslims	3.5%
	Hindu& Muslims	4.5%
	Bralvi & Deobandi	24.5%
Socioeconomic Factors due to sectarian violence	Poverty	29.5
	Unemployment	19.5
	Illiteracy	31.5
	Others	19.5
Community Perception regarding sectarian violence	Political Manipulation	45%
	Inability of the law enforcement Agencies	35%
	Inability of Religious Leaders	25%
Educational and Cultural Impacts	School Closure	57
	Decline Cultural events	77
	Bias Curriculum	41
The condition of the People of Sukkur Division during religious occasions	Very Unsafe	09%
	Unsafe	23%
	Neutral	41%
	safe	27%
Cause of sectarian violence	Economic Disparity	08%
	Political Influence	18%
	Religious Intolerance	33%
	Lack of religious education	41
Common Triggers for Sectarian Violence in Sukkur Division	Religious Procession and celebrations	55%
	Personal disputes	7.5%
	Economic Hardships	3.5%
	Others	34%

Coefficient Analysis

The correlation coefficient is a statistical measure that quantifies the degree of association between sectarian violence and educational achievement as well as the direction of that relationship.

Hypothesis:

H0 (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant relationship between education levels and sectarian violence.
H1 (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant relationship between education levels and sectarian violence.

Formula for Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (r):
Where:
- **X** represents education level
- **Y** represents incidents of sectarian violence

The coefficient (r) will range between -1 and 1:
- **r > 0**: Positive correlation (higher education level reduces sectarian violence)
- **r < 0**: Negative correlation (higher education level increases sectarian violence)
- **r = 0**: No correlation

2. Chi-Square Test Analysis
By using the chi-square test, the relationship between the low, medium, and high education level categories and the frequency of sectarian violence was investigated.

Hypothesis:
H0: Education level has no significant association with sectarian violence.
H1: Education level has a significant association with sectarian violence.
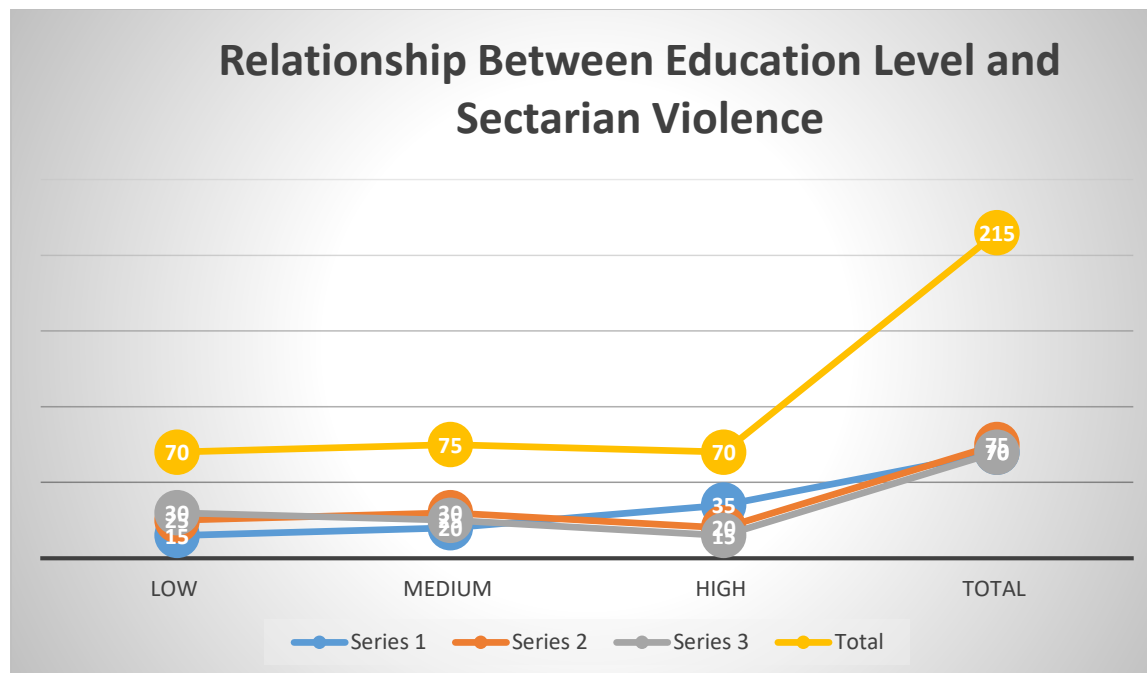
Formula for Chi-Square Test ()
Where:
- **O** is the observed frequency
- **E** is the expected frequency

Recorded sectarian events using a contingency table of educational levels forms a chi-square test. To find out the statistical relevance, the significance level—p-value—is set at 0.05.

Table: Contingency Table 1 for Chi-Square Test

Education Level	Low Violence	Medium Violence	High Violence	Total
Low	15	25	30	70
Medium	20	30	25	75
High	35	20	15	70
Total	70	75	70	215

Relationship Between Education Level and Sectarian Violence

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH	TOTAL
Series 1	15	20	35	76
Series 2	30	30	20	75
Series 3	30	28	15	70
Total	70	75	70	215

3. Interpretation of Results
• Should a Pearson's r be noticeably positive: lower sectarian violence is linked to increased degrees of higher education?
• Should a Pearson's r prove to be noticeably negative: Higher degrees of education correlate with more sectarian violence, maybe resulting from ideological radicalization?
• If the Chi-square p-value is 0.05: sectarian violence is much influenced by educational level.

• There is no notable correlation between education and sectarian violence if Chi-square p-value exceeds 0.05.

Results
The study tries to find whether education helps to reduce sectarian violence in Sukkur Division. Statistical testing allows policy recommendations to be developed to handle educational changes meant to lower sectarian tensions.

Results and Discussions
The sociological research on sectarian violence in the Sukkur Division is summarized and commented on in this chapter. This analyzes the data about the study's aims and theoretical framework to get valuable insights. This chapter examines participants' descriptions of sectarian violence's causes, effects, and patterns. The findings are structured thematically, focusing on economic and political reasons for sectarian conflicts, religious institutions and leadership, and community views on violence. To emphasize participants' varied viewpoints, thematic analysis is used to analyze qualitative data, while statistics summaries, charts, and tables illustrate quantitative data. This multi-method approach ensures a complete picture. The "Discussions" section compares the Sukkur Division to sectarianism in Pakistan and other afflicted locations, combining the findings with earlier research. This chapter frames sectarian strife using sociological theory and empirical data. Sectarian violence affects inter-church connections, identity formation, and social cohesiveness.

The results and arguments help decision-makers, researchers, and community leaders make informed and effective decisions. This is done by understanding the complex institutional, social, and cultural connections that cause sectarian strife. Sectarian violence involves religious or sectarian disputes. Violence and discrimination are common in these conflicts. This type of violence has persisted throughout Pakistan, particularly in Sindh's Sukkur Division. Sociological analysis examines social structures, historical tensions, political influences, and religion's role in division to determine Sukkur's sectarian violence's causes, manifestations, and effects. Also explored are the communal and social cohesion impacts of these confrontations. The sociological study of sectarian violence in the Sukkur Division has illuminated the social, political, and economic variables that fuel sectarian strife. Community members, municipal officials, law enforcement, and civil society organizations report that sectarian violence has hurt Sukkur, Khairpur, and Ghotki's economy, society, and security. Sociological analysis of sectarian violence in the Sukkur Division shows that contemporary socio-political circumstances have exacerbated the region's historical grievance-based sectarian split. The research shows that sectarian violence affects Sunni and Shia populations as well as Christian and Hindu minorities. Despite their lack of engagement in sectarian hostilities, these groups often face violence and intimidation in inter-communal relationships due to a fractured society. Despite many obstacles, peace building in the Sukkur Division is possible. Those representing civil society organizations and municipal leaders underlined the significance of education, communication, and economic prosperity in reducing sectarian violence. Educational activities that promote religious tolerance and intercultural understanding are thought to help raise a generation less vulnerable to sectarian ideas. Economic programs that alleviate inequality and poverty could also deter sectarian organizations that exploit these shortcomings. Many believe that the government, religious leaders, and civil society can minimize sectarian violence in the Sukkur Division with persistent efforts (Cohen et al., 2017). Despite the long and tough route to peace. Political and institutional players significantly affect sectarian tensions, as this chapter has shown. Also covered in this chapter are some important subjects. Selective police enforcement and poor governance often cause violence, although community-driven peace efforts and interfaith involvement have helped. Even yet identical situations often cause violent occurrences. The conversations also emphasize the need to address systemic imbalances, which cause violence. Differences include economic and educational opportunities. This examined sectarian violence's social effects. Sectarian violence has been highlighted for its negative effects on social isolation, communal bonds, and trust. The experiences of impacted individuals and communities demonstrate the human toll of these conflicts and the need for comprehensive and long-term solutions. This showed that sectarian-motivated violence requires many approaches. Local communities, civic society, and politicians must work together to address core concerns and promote inclusion and tolerance for positive results. Based on these ideas, Sukkur Division initiatives to promote lasting peace and social harmony have been developed.

Conclusion
The study shows that political, social, religious, and historical factors complicate sectarian conflict in the Sukkur Division. The division has gradually developed sectarian divisions, especially in recent decades while accommodating several religious congregations. Economic inequality, political manipulation, and religious extremism raise tensions. Violence has increased due to the state's failure to address inequality and its sometimes-sectarian involvement. Political and religious leaders exploiting these differences for power has made unity and reconciliation harder.
The sociological study of sectarian violence in Sukkur found that while many factors cause the conflict, the effective measures are likewise complex. Sectarian reconciliation requires a thorough approach. Economic justice, government reforms, and religious tolerance should underpin this

strategy. Education, media, and civil society are crucial to public opinion and interfaith discussion to end violence. Activities that foster mutual understanding and peaceful cooperation among youths and a strict legal framework that handles sectarian violence may help maintain regional stability. Expanding law enforcement's position ensures impartiality in tackling sectarian prejudice and builds community confidence. In addition, the media must handle sectarian issues sensitively and avoid sensationalism that could escalate tensions. Grassroots initiatives can promote peace and reconciliation, but a coordinated approach that includes government, religious institutions, and civil society organizations is needed to create a sustainable framework for social harmony.

Sectarian violence in the Sukkur Division is fueled by various political, religious, and historical factors. Sectarian and ethnic identities are highly established due to the region's historical history of colonial legacies and post-independence upheavals. Due to discriminatory legislation and political manipulation, these identities have become more split, creating a sectarian warfare-friendly culture. Community enmity has been developed by intergenerational sectarian animosities and religious discourse manipulation. This emphasizes the need to address these issues at their source. Institutional failures and cultural factors are crucial to Sukkur's sectarian strife. Disparities in healthcare, education, and economic opportunity deepen divides. Corruption, ineptitude, and external influences often prevent law enforcement and the judiciary from acting as impartial mediators. Due to impunity and weak conflict resolution, violent perpetrators have gone unpunished. Sociological research shows that institutional reform is needed to promote justice, equality, and social cohesion. Media and socio-cultural narratives shape Sukkur views and sectarian violence. The spread of biased or disputed material on social media and sensationalized news has increased social divides. Informal networks and religious assemblies spread marginalizing narratives, which normalize hatred. A coordinated effort is needed to promote many narratives, facilitate interfaith dialogue, and curb hate speech through legislation and grassroots measures. Community initiatives can reduce sectarian violence in Sukkur. Community activities, including children, educators, and religious leaders, can connect ideologically opposing groups. Educational initiatives that emphasize critical thinking, coexistence, and the region's cultural heritage may minimize contentious viewpoints. Inclusive governance and community policing may also restore trust in institutions and individuals, laying the groundwork for long-term peacemaking. Sociologists cannot overstate the role of local communities' agencies in peacebuilding. A comprehensive plan that addresses structural, ideological, and social factors is needed to alleviate sectarian violence in Sukkur. To reduce economic inequities, authorities must support inclusive growth, justice, equity, and representation. Dismantling sectarian stereotypes via interfaith activities, media reforms, and education is essential to peace. Civil society, government, and religious leaders must remain committed to eliminating dividing structures and fostering unity. Sukkur Division may promote social harmony and growth by emphasizing sociological insights and community-driven solutions. The sociological study of sectarian violence in the Sukkur Division Illuminates Pakistani sectarianism. Addressing key concerns and improving social cohesion could lead to peaceful coexistence in Sukkur and beyond, regardless of sectarian membership. Reconciliation requires time, collaboration, and, most importantly, a determination to overcome differences to achieve oneness.

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