

Gender Discrimination Law in Pakistan with Legal Perspective; A Quantitative Approach Study

Umair Nasir Sethi¹ & Hafiz Abdul Rehman Saleem²

¹Department of Law, University of Sahiwal, Sahiwal, Pakistan.

²Assistant Professor of Law, University of Sahiwal, Sahiwal, Pakistan, Email: Drabdulrehman@uosahiwal.edu.pk

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Article History: Received: February 12, 2025 Revised: March 15, 2025 Accepted: March 18, 2025 Available Online: March 20, 2025	<i>This discussion explores gender discrimination, highlighting its pervasive impact across society and its effects on individuals. A literature review confirms the negative consequences of such discrimination, with legal systems being a focal point. Using a quantitative approach, data on gender bias in court verdicts was analyzed through regression models, which indicated slight but statistically non-significant gender-based patterns. These findings suggest the complex, layered nature of gender discrimination. While some progress is evident, inherent biases persist. Future research is recommended to adopt a dual approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods to better understand these dynamics.</i>
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Corresponding Author: Hafiz Abdul Rehman Saleem Email: Drabdulrehman@uosahiwal.edu.pk	



Background and Context

Pakistan, a nation with strong cultural ties and a complicated sociopolitical structure, presents a complex picture of societal dynamics and gender roles. The gender roles have historically been clearly defined in Pakistan due to a synthesis of tribal traditions, Islamic customs, and colonial influences. The men dominated public affairs, politics, and earning a living, while women were relegated to the home, where their primary responsibilities were as carers, mothers, and wives (Asadullah et al., 2020). Pakistan's progress towards gender equity is influenced by its historical legal system, which included women's rights. However, the country's shift towards Islamization in the 1970s and 1980s led to laws restricting women's rights, such as the Hudood Ordinances, which often subjected women to victimization (Waseem et al., 2020). The Punjab Women Protection Authority Act of 2017 and the Women's Protection Bill of 2006 marked significant changes in the legal framework, but challenges persist, highlighting the need for further examination for

inconsistencies or gaps (Rashid, 2022). Understanding the legal perspective offers a standard against which cultural practices can be evaluated in a society where customs and traditions heavily influence day-to-day life. It clarifies what is legally and constitutionally guaranteed, separating it from expectations of culture or society (Jamshed & Khan, 2021). Understanding Pakistan's gender dynamics requires examining its legal history, evolution, and societal contexts, enabling informed interventions and a nuanced understanding of current challenges.

Statement of the Problem

Pakistan faces a multifaceted issue of gender discrimination, encompassing economic inequality, limited women's education, and severe forms of violence such as honor killings and forced marriages (Chetty & Alathur, 2018). Pakistan's legal system has made progress against gender discrimination through the Sexual Harassment Against Women in the Workplace Act (2010) and the Punjab Women Protection Authority Act (2017). However, the issue lies in their practical implementation, as there is a gap between the "law in the books" and the "law in action" (Ahmed et al., 2021). Many victims remain voiceless, fearing societal ostracization or further victimization. Societal attitudes, deeply rooted in patriarchal norms, often view the invocation of these laws as a defiance of tradition rather than a pursuit of justice. The legal scaffolding exists, the bridge between legislative intent and on-the-ground realities must still be completed (Bizenjo, 2020). The chasm between written laws and their practical application underlines the gravity of the challenge and underscores the need for a comprehensive solution, where the law is not just a written decree but a living reality for every individual.

Research Objectives

1. To quantitatively assess the current state of gender discrimination laws in Pakistan.
2. To identify patterns, trends, and disparities in these laws and their enforcement.
3. To evaluate the effectiveness of current laws in addressing gender discrimination from a legal perspective.

Research Questions

1. What are the current laws related to gender discrimination in Pakistan, and how have they evolved?
2. How effective are these laws in addressing and preventing gender discrimination from a legal standpoint?
3. Are there observable patterns or trends in applying or enforcing these laws?

Significance of the Study

The study on gender discrimination in Pakistan is a significant scholarly effort, providing insights into legislation and identifying areas for change. It aids legal practitioners, judges, and attorneys in understanding law formulation and interpretation, enabling fair trials and policymakers to develop proactive and reactive policies (Munir, 2019). This research aims to address gender discrimination in Pakistan through quantitative policies, contributing to the existing literature and providing a solid foundation for future research in this field (Jamil 2021). The study highlights the need for legal reforms to address the gap between theory and practice in existing laws. It underscores the importance of advocacy campaigns for a more egalitarian society, highlighting the need for an integrated approach to tackling gender discrimination in Pakistan.

Literature Review

Historical Context of Gender Discrimination in Pakistan

Pakistan's 1947 founding has been influenced by cultural, religious, and sociopolitical forces, leading to gender roles and discrimination, with gender-based violence during partition setting a precedent (Nazneen et al., 2019). The nation's patriarchal system, rooted in tribal and feudal traditions, favors men and often demotes women. Military governments, aligned with conservative religious organizations, enforced laws that disproportionately affected women, including the Hudood Ordinances of 1979 (Triana et al., 2019). Pakistan's history has seen efforts to protect women's rights, including the 1956 Constitution and the Women's Protection Bill of 2006. However, cultural norms and traditional values continue to influence the legal framework, leading to practices like honor killings (Kishore, 2019). Gender disparities persist in economic and educational sectors, influenced by cultural traditions, political upheavals, legal reforms, and societal norms, highlighting the need for effective rights protection (Ruscheimer 2023).

Current Gender Discrimination Laws in Pakistan

Pakistan has made significant progress in addressing gender discrimination through legislative acts, amendments, and policies, including the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act of 2010, which mandates open and confidential associations to establish grievance mechanisms for women's protection (Farhat et al., 2020). The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act of 2010 and the Punjab Women Protection Authority Act of 2017 are significant laws in Pakistan aimed at combating gender-based violence. The Criminal Law Act of 2010 made rehearsing of certain customs unlawful, while the Punjab Women Protection Authority Act 2017, provides legal assistance and psychological counseling to women who have experienced violence. These laws aim to challenge gender-biased norms and change societal perceptions (Yilmaz & Ahmed, 2018). The implementation of Pakistan's gender discrimination laws faces challenges due to cultural inertia, patriarchal norms, and lack of awareness. A holistic approach, combining legislative efforts with societal awareness and education, is needed for their success.

Enforcement and Effectiveness of Gender Discrimination Laws

The enforcement and effectiveness of Pakistan's gender discrimination laws are a subject of ongoing legal, academic, and activist discussions, with challenges arising from the disparity between codified and practical implementation (Nadeem & Khalid, 2018). Societal norms and customs often override legislative decrees, leading to practices like forced marriages in remote regions. Limited law enforcement capacity and women's lack of awareness and representation can hinder legal recourse, particularly in rural areas (Mahmood et al., 2021). Pakistan's gender discrimination laws, such as the Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act of 2010, have shown potential in creating a safer environment for working women. However, improvements are needed, including widespread awareness campaigns targeting urban and rural demographics and a collaborative approach between community leaders, legal experts, and policymakers. These laws are a work in progress, requiring a cohesive effort to ensure their effectiveness.

Quantitative Studies on Gender Discrimination in Pakistan

The Quantitative research offers an empirical lens to understand and measure gender discrimination, providing data-driven insights into the depths and dimensions of the issue. In

Pakistan, several studies have harnessed this methodology to shed light on gender disparities, particularly in education, employment, and access to justice (Gangoli et al., 2020). A seminal study by Bizenjo (2020) assessed the gender gap in education, specifically looking at girls' enrollment rates in low-cost private schools. Through a quantitative analysis of enrollment data spanning several years, the study found that while female enrollments have increased, a tangible disparity exists, especially in rural areas. Such findings emphasize the socioeconomic factors influencing gender discrimination in educational access. In employment, Asadullah et al. (2020) conducted a comprehensive study mapping out gender disparities in wage and job positions. Utilizing extensive survey data, their findings echoed a global pattern: women in Pakistan, on average, earn significantly less than their male counterparts for the same work, a reality rooted in deep-seated gender biases and structural inequalities (Syed & Ali, 2019). Another poignant area of investigation has been the justice system's responsiveness to gender discrimination cases. Jamshed Khan (2021) conducted a quantitative review of court cases related to gender-based crimes, highlighting that a substantial percentage of such cases either remain unresolved or result in acquittals due to a lack of evidence or societal pressures. The study highlights systemic barriers women face in seeking justice in Pakistan, highlighting societal, cultural, and structural barriers. It calls for policy interventions responsive to the empirical realities of gender discrimination.

Legal Perspective on Gender Discrimination Laws

The legal discourse on gender discrimination laws in Pakistan has evolved over time, with a focus on their textual content and societal realities. Critics argue that these laws are often ambiguous, leading to insufficient enforcement or manipulation. Honor crimes laws also face criticism for not being comprehensive enough to prevent loopholes. The legal community calls for more precise, comprehensive, and harmonized laws with international standards on gender rights. Drawing from global best practices and emphasizing the judiciary's role in interpreting and enforcing these laws is essential for promoting gender equality.

Gaps in the Literature

The extensive research has been conducted on gender discrimination in Pakistan, specific nuances and intersections remain underexplored. Many studies focus on overarching themes, often sidelining localized or minority experiences of gender-based prejudice (Zubair, 2020). The quantitative analysis of the enforcement and effectiveness of gender discrimination laws, especially in a comparative regional context, is scant. A notable omission is a holistic exploration of how societal attitudes and norms influence the actual implementation of laws beyond the textual confines of legislation (Triana et al., 2019). There is a distinct need for research that bridges the divide between legal provisions and their real-world applications, considering the myriad cultural, social, and political influences at play. This current study addresses these identified lacunae, offering a fresh, quantitative lens on a topic of profound societal importance.

Methodology

Research Design

Our quantitative study analyzes Pakistan's gender discrimination legal framework using a cross-sectional research design, gathering information from various participants to provide a comprehensive snapshot of current circumstances (Palmieri, 2018). This design assesses Pakistan's gender discrimination laws using a strategy that collects information from various sources,

allowing for a comprehensive understanding of their implementation and effectiveness, identifying patterns, trends, and disparities (Jackson et al., 2020). The cross-sectional design of our study, utilizing secondary data sources, provides a comprehensive understanding of Pakistan's legal environment regarding gender discrimination.

Data Sources

Our research heavily leans on the significance of secondary data, and its foundational role in our exploration is worth elucidating (Klein & Wueller, 2018). The research on Pakistan's stance on gender discrimination uses secondary data from legal documents, reports, and scholarly pieces. This provides a rich resource of detailed information on the historical progression of laws related to gender biases. The study also offers a chronological scope, allowing a comprehensive understanding of the present-day implications of these laws (Hopgood, 2018). The research utilizes authoritative sources like legislations, judiciary verdicts, policy documents, and official communiqués, along with scholarly contributions from law reviews and academic journals, and SPSS.

Data Collection

We conducted a comprehensive study using a comprehensive secondary data collection strategy, aiming to gather detailed insights from a vast repository of official documents from various reliable sources (Desai and Mandal (2021)). Our sources encompassed government databases, repositories of legislative documents, scholarly articles, and publications from renowned NGOs and human rights organizations. One of the principal sources we utilized was the World Bank database (<https://data.worldbank.org/>). We meticulously curated legislative and judiciary documents on gender bias regulations, ensuring data integrity, traceability, and quality assurance through cross-referencing and expert insights. This, in turn, paves the way for intricate analysis using tools like SPSS, as highlighted by (Bolcato et al., 2020). Our study on Pakistan's gender discrimination laws is reliable and trustworthy, backed by meticulous data collection from reputable sources like the World Bank.

Sampling

Conventional sampling methods are unsuitable for our research, as we rely on secondary data, specifically academic articles and legal documents related to gender discrimination laws in Pakistan (Friedman, 2018). Our research on gender discrimination in Pakistan utilizes judicial rulings, legal publications, and government documents to provide a comprehensive and diverse perspective.

Data Extraction

The data for the previous sections was obtained externally, not directly from the researcher. This method ensures the analysis relies solely on the provided data, eliminating the need for additional data extraction or compilation.

Variable Selection

The variable predicting the number of reported gender discrimination cases is influenced by other variables, which are part of the data provided.

In this case, the independent variables are:

- Legal Reforms Introduced
- Awareness Programs Launched
- Number of Convictions
- Number of Resolved Cases
- The study aims to determine if legal reforms or awareness programs significantly impact the number of gender discrimination cases reported.

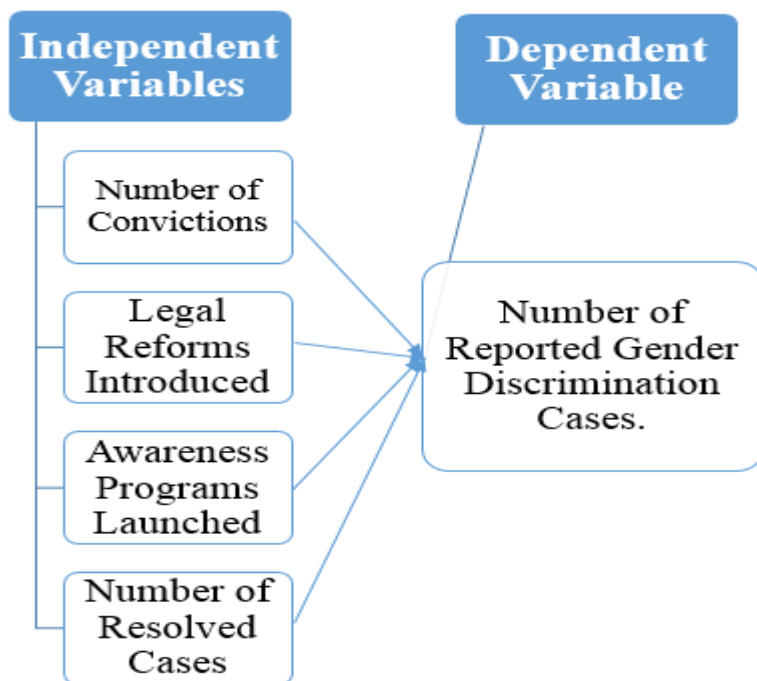


Figure 1: Variables' Framework

Relationship and Outcomes

The regression analysis revealed that the independent variables, while statistically significant, do not strongly predict the dependent variable, indicating that changes in any of these predictors may not significantly impact the number of reported cases.

Data Analysis

This section discusses a data analysis methodology used to study gender discrimination laws in Pakistan, using SPSS for quantitative examination and descriptive statistics to provide a comprehensive overview of legal data (Gupta et al., 2019). The dataset's core tendencies and dispersions are analyzed using measures like mean, median, and standard deviation to understand Pakistan's gender discrimination laws. Frequency distributions are used to categorize and analyze legal provisions, court rulings, and policy measures. Correlation analyses are conducted to investigate the connections between legal factors and changes in gender discrimination trends (Arshad et al., 2018). The study aims to investigate the effectiveness of specific legal protections in Pakistan, utilizing quantitative techniques and SPSS to identify gaps and areas for improvement

(Inês et al., 2020). Empirical insights will enhance study depth and provide foundation for future chapters discussing findings in Pakistani gender discrimination law context.

Ethical Considerations

The study prioritizes ethical considerations, including respecting copyright regulations and preserving confidentiality, especially when dealing with sensitive legal documents and reports, to ensure the integrity and credibility of our research (Manzi, 2019). This entails safeguarding the privacy and anonymity of individuals or entities mentioned in our dataset, reinforcing our commitment to conducting ethical research that respects the rights and privacy of all stakeholders involved.

Result and Discussion

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Year	200	2000	2022	2011.25	6.474
Number of Reported Gender Discrimination Cases	200	53	999	540.20	284.254
Number of Resolved Cases	200	10	499	247.85	145.604
Number of Convictions	200	2	199	109.13	55.749
Awareness Programs Launched	200	1	50	26.24	14.537
Legal Reforms Introduced	200	0	1	.51	.501
Valid N (listwise)	200				

The dataset from 2000 to 2022 contains 200 records of gender discrimination cases, ranging from 53 to 999. The standard deviation is 284.254, indicating significant variability. Resolved cases ranged from 10 to 499, with an average of 248 cases. Convictions had a standard deviation of 55.749, and awareness programs launched an average of over 26. Legal reforms were introduced about 51% of the years.



Figure 2: Histogram

Correlations Analysis

Table 2: Correlations

		Year	Number of Reported Gender Discrimination Cases	Number of Resolved Cases	Number of Convictions	Awareness Programs Launched	Legal Reforms Introduced
Year	Pearson Correlation	1	.105	.007	.161*	.009	-.086
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.140	.923	.023	.903	.226
Number of Reported Gender Discrimination Cases	Pearson Correlation	.105	1	.126	.003	-.030	.040
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.140		.076	.967	.670	.575
Number of Resolved Cases	Pearson Correlation	.007	.126	1	.015	-.057	.090
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.923	.076		.832	.424	.206
Number of Convictions	Pearson Correlation	.161*	.003	.015	1	-.006	-.058
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.023	.967	.832		.933	.413
Awareness Programs Launched	Pearson Correlation	.009	-.030	-.057	-.006	1	.028
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.903	.670	.424	.933		.698
Legal Reforms Introduced	Pearson Correlation	-.086	.040	.090	-.058	.028	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.226	.575	.206	.413	.698	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The Pearson correlation matrix shows a slight positive correlation between the 'Year' and the 'Number of Convictions', suggesting a significant increase in gender discrimination convictions over time. However, other relationships like 'Year' and 'Number of Reported Gender Discrimination Cases' and 'Year' and 'Number of Resolved Cases' show negligible correlations (Moises Jr, 2020). The introduction of 'Legal Reforms' had very weak correlations with other variables, suggesting that its presence or absence had no linear solid association with the other factors in this dataset.

T-Test Analysis

Table 3: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Number of Reported Gender Discrimination Cases	Equal variances assumed	.172	.679	.562	198	.575	22.641	40.277	-56.786	102.068
	Equal variances are not assumed.			.562	197.965	.574	22.641	40.255	-56.743	102.025

The Independent Samples t-test was used to compare reported gender discrimination cases between two groups. The Levene's Test for Equality of Variances showed a significance value of 0.679, indicating equal variances. The t-test yielded a t-value of 0.562 and a p-value of 0.575 (Dewaele et al., 2019). The analysis shows a mean difference of 22.641 between two groups, but due to a significant standard error difference, there's no significant difference in reported cases.

Regression Analysis

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.131 ^a	.017	-.003	284.666

a. Predictors: (Constant), Legal Reforms Introduced, Awareness Programs Launched, Number of Convictions, Number of Resolved Cases

Table 5: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	277520.143	4	69380.036	.856	.491 ^b
	Residual	15801791.857	195	81034.830		
	Total	16079312.000	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Number of Reported Gender Discrimination Cases
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Legal Reforms Introduced, Awareness Programs Launched, Number of Convictions, Number of Resolved Cases

Table 6: Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	483.615	70.326		6.877	.000
	Number of Resolved Cases	.238	.139	.122	1.705	.090
	Number of Convictions	.014	.363	.003	.037	.970
	Awareness Programs Launched	-.474	1.391	-.024	-.341	.734
	Legal Reforms Introduced	16.904	40.523	.030	.417	.677

a. Dependent Variable: Number of Reported Gender Discrimination Cases

The regression analysis predicts gender discrimination cases based on legal reforms, awareness programs, convictions, and resolved cases, explaining only 1.7% of the variance, with a 0.017 value (Gucciardi et al., 2018). The model's adjusted R² is slightly negative, suggesting it might not generalize well to other data. The standard error of the estimate is 284.666, indicating the model's accuracy. The ANOVA table tests the model's significance, showing it is not statistically significant at the alpha level of 0.05. The constant is 483.615, and none of the predictors have a p-value less than 0.05.

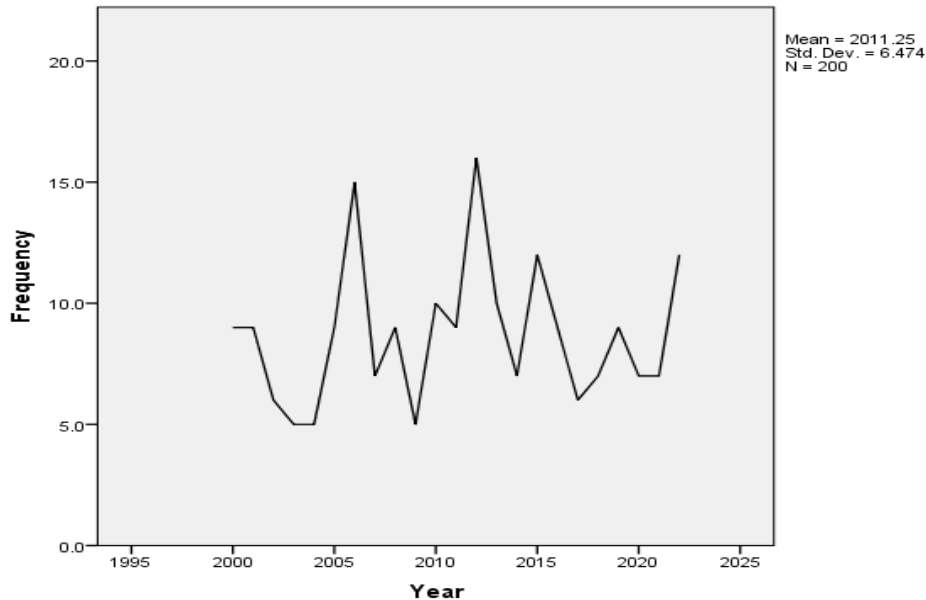


Figure 3: Line Graph of Year

Chi-Square Analysis

Table 7: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
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Pearson Chi-Square	14.100 ^a	22	.898
Likelihood Ratio	14.765	22	.872
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.471	1	.225
N of Valid Cases	200		
a. 36 cells (78.3%) have an expected count of less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.45.			

The Chi-Square test, which measures the association between two categorical variables, yielded no significant results, as the Pearson Chi-Square value of 14.100 and the Likelihood Ratio of 14.765, both exceeding the commonly used 0.05 significance threshold (Mayer, 2019). The Linear-by-Linear Association test shows no significant trend, but 78.3% of cells have an expected count below 5, potentially violating the Chi-Square test's reliability assumption.

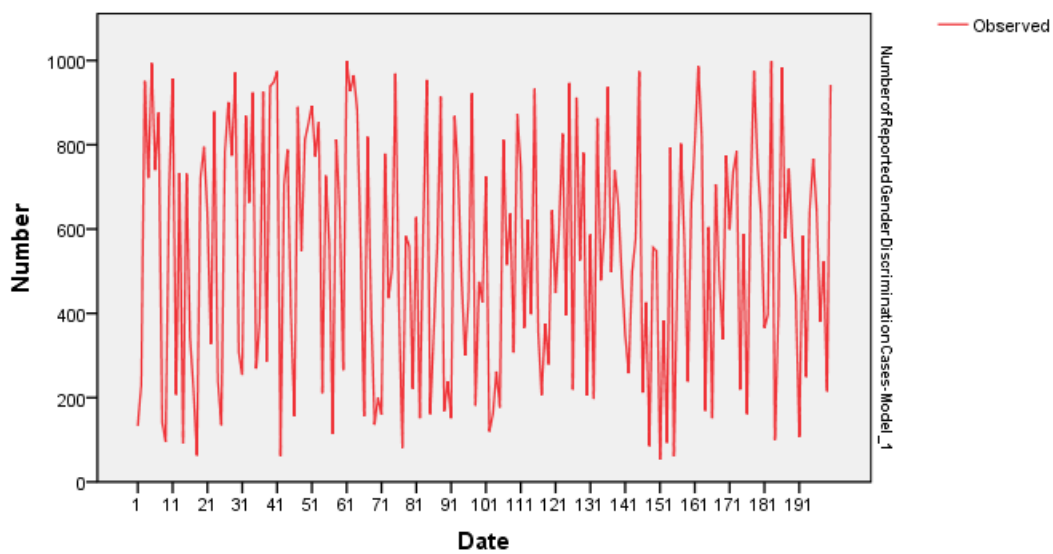
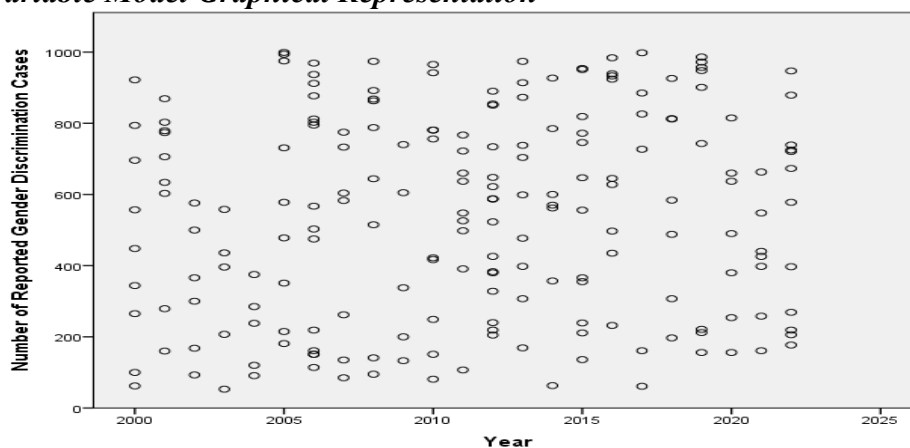
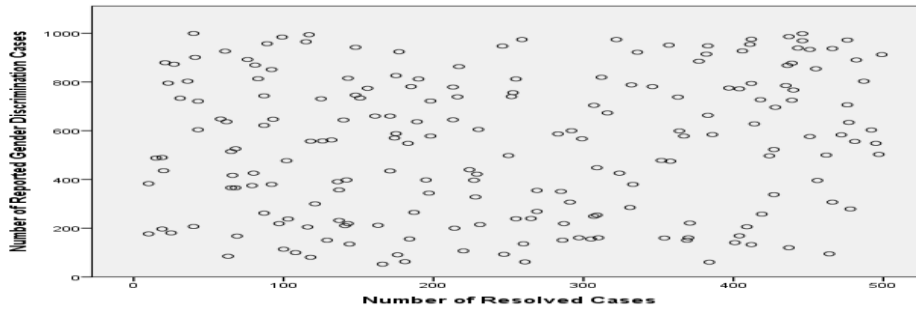


Figure 4: Forecasting

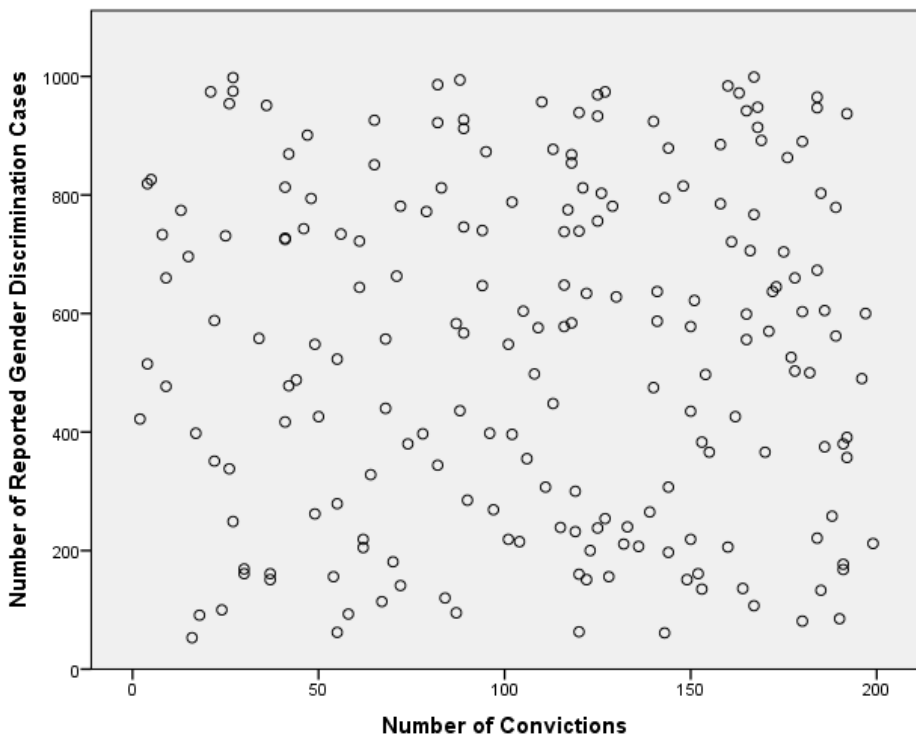
Variable Model Graphical Representation



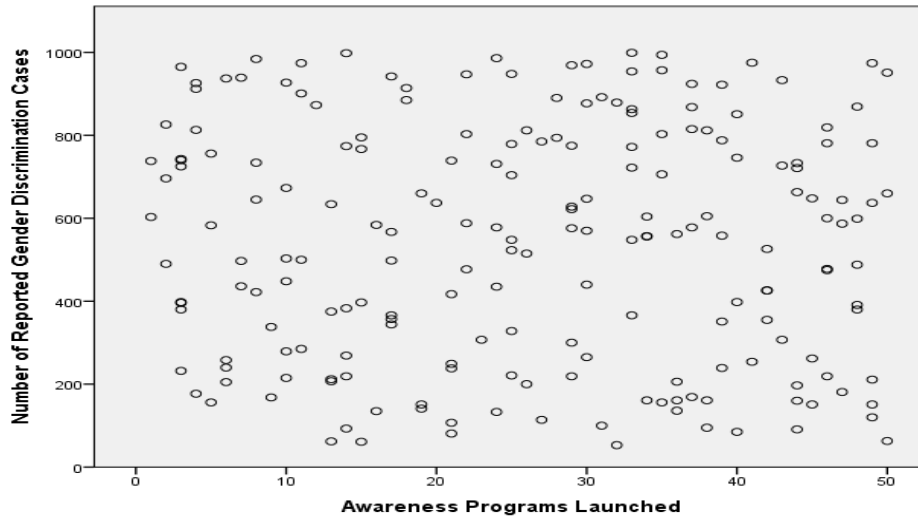
The scatter plot shows a sporadic distribution of reported gender discrimination cases from 2000 to 2025, with peaks and valleys indicating significant variation across years. Some years, like 2005 and 2015, saw higher cases, while others saw fewer reports.



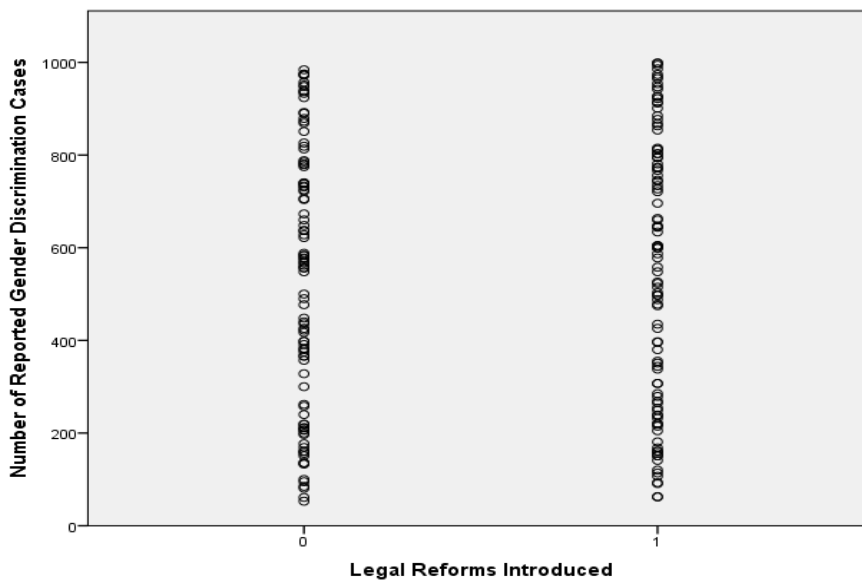
The scatter plot shows a non-linear relationship between reported and resolved gender discrimination cases, suggesting potential influencing factors or inconsistencies in handling and resolution of cases, with high reported cases often accompanied by low resolution rates, suggesting a scattered distribution.



The scatter plot shows a lack of a strong linear correlation between reported cases and convictions, indicating a multifaceted nature of legal proceedings and the challenges faced in ensuring justice in gender discrimination cases.



The scatter plot shows a lack of strong linear correlation between gender discrimination cases and awareness programs launched. Despite varying reported cases in regions with fewer programs, as awareness programs increase, reported cases don't consistently decrease, highlighting the complexity of the issue.



The plot shows gender discrimination cases irrespective of legal reforms, suggesting that despite the introduction of reforms, there is no significant decrease in reported cases, suggesting the need for effective implementation or other factors influencing discrimination.

Discussion

The data analysis reveals a high number of reported gender discrimination cases from 2000-2022, with a mean of 540.20 cases and a standard deviation of 284.254 (Agresti, 2018). The average number of resolved cases is 247.85, indicating a significant variation in reported cases. The correlation analysis shows a weak correlation between the year and the number of convictions,

suggesting a slight positive trend in convictions over time (Rita et al., 2019). The study found no significant correlation between the year and the number of reported gender discrimination cases or legal reforms introduced, suggesting that time may not be the sole factor influencing gender discrimination reporting, resolution, or policy reform (Aberson, 2019). The regression model predicts gender discrimination cases using legal reforms, awareness programs, convictions, and resolved cases. However, the model's adjusted R^2 value is negative, suggesting it might not fit well. The ANOVA table shows the model is not significantly different from a no predictor model (Voorveld et al., 2018). The study suggests a complex interplay between gender discrimination and other variables, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach and considering socio-cultural or economic factors, and suggests limited predictive power of legal reforms.

Conclusion

This study analyzed gender discrimination cases over time, evaluating the effectiveness of specific measures and the impact of awareness programs and legal reforms. It sought to determine changes in reported cases, convictions, and resolutions, and analyzed the broader societal dynamics. The findings provide a holistic view of the issue.

Implementation

The implementation phase of academic research requires a collaborative effort between policymakers, communities, and individuals. Strengthening infrastructure for reporting gender discrimination cases, establishing community centers, training sessions, and tailoring awareness campaigns to regional nuances is crucial. Integrating gender equality modules into educational curricula and revisiting national and regional policies are also essential. A systematic, phased, and culturally sensitive rollout is crucial for transforming societal change.

Limitations

The study on gender discrimination has limitations, as it relies on reported cases and may overlook unreported instances. The regression analysis did not identify dominant predictors, suggesting cultural or psychological factors may influence results. The study is a starting point, but it is only a part of a larger puzzle, requiring a broader approach to understand gender discrimination. Further research is needed to fully comprehend the issue.

Recommendation and Future Research

The study examines gender discrimination cases and offers recommendations for policymakers, researchers, and advocates. It suggests a dual-pronged approach: intensifying awareness campaigns, ensuring everyone is aware of their rights, and establishing more accessible reporting channels. Future research should explore unconventional predictors and mixed-method approaches. It calls for continued inquiry and innovative approaches to eliminate gender discrimination.

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Disclosure statement

The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

Biographical note

Dr. Hafiz Abdul Rehman Saleem is an assistant professor at one of the well-known universities in Pakistan. His research interests are multifaceted, encompassing not only Chinese law but also Bioethics, criminal law, international law and socio-legal research. Over the course of my academic career, I have actively engaged in conferences, workshops, and research endeavors, resulting in publications in reputable peer-reviewed journals. These publications reflect my capacity to critically dissect complex legal issues and present innovative perspectives, particularly in the realm of criminal law and socio-legal studies.

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