“COLLECTIVE EXPERIENCES OF CLIMATE CRISES: ECO-ANXIETY IN PAKISTAN’S 2025 FLOOD VICTIMS”

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Dedication

To my father,
a constant light from afar,

To my mother and brothers,
my anchors and strength,

And to the flood victims,
whose spirit inspires this work.

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Sahab Kazmi

Abstract

Global climate change has multiple adverse effects including floods that not only cause mass destruction but leave lasting psychological imprints on the affected communities. One of the recent catastrophes being 2025 floods in Pakistan which affected millions, forcing them to evacuate, multiple deaths being reported including children. While research has largely focused on economic losses and health problems due to floods but there is not ample research on eco-anxiety and psychological domain framing lived experiences of people. This study explored personal experiences of people especially in terms of eco-anxiety, coping strategies, cultural responses and how after-effects of floods leave enduring psychological legacies. Field visits were carried out in the Manga Mandi town of Punjab, in-depth interviews were conducted on a total of 5 participants 3 males and 2 females respectively that had to displace their homes and were primary earners of their home, based on convenient sampling technique. A qualitative research design was employed followed by a thematic IPA analysis. Based on reiterative reflections, following themes were found that showcase the essence of lived experiences of flood survivors. The themes were (1) mental and emotional impact (2) physiological implications (3) economic and livelihood challenges (4) exposure and risk (5) social and community support (6) coping and resilience (7) spiritual and cultural meaning-making. Findings of this research help to bridge the gap in existing literature in psychological domain and help the government to come up with psychological support policies and disaster responsive strategies to be employed in emergency situations.

Keywords: floods, collective experiences, eco anxiety, climate change, mental health

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Abbreviations	Full Form
APA	American Psychological Association
IPA	Interpretative phenomenological Analysis

List of Symbols

Symbol	Full Form
%	Percentage
P no	Participant number

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Final Ice age ended 11,700 years ago marking the end of last glacial period and beginning of the Holocene, current geological epoch. These intense climatic changes in past would occur due to natural phenomena like Milankovitch cycles that influence Earth's climate for a longer period of time (Hays et al., 1976). However, the agency cause of climate change in present times is mainly due to human activities i.e. Anthropogenic climate change (Karl & Trenberth, 2003). There is an ample evidence for human driven climate change, 95% of Earth's warming since 1950s is due to anthropogenic activities (IPCC, 2021). Such as Increased concentrations of Carbon dioxide CO2, Methane CH4 and Nitrous oxide NO2 collectively known as greenhouse gases (GHGs) are reported to be 409.9 (±0.4) parts per million (ppm), 1866.3 (±3.3) parts per billion (ppb) and 332.1 (±0.4) ppb, respectively for the year 2019 (IPCC, 2019).

This anthropogenic climate change caused by human's impacts the humans, however developing countries of the world are more vulnerable and prone to damages caused by these rapid climatic changes resulting in disasters due to their poor economic conditions. Jonkman (2005) reported that the greatest number of human's lives lost due to floods is in Asian river floods.

Pakistan being one of the developing countries also continues to bear the burden of these climatic variations as German Watch's Global Climate Risk Index (GCRI) ranks Pakistan as the country affected most by the climatic variations for the year 2022 (Germanwatch, 2025).

Pakistan’s vulnerability to climate change originates from its geographical location and socioeconomic conditions (Ullah & Takaaki, 2016)

Floods are counted among the major consequences of climatic change in Pakistan, the preceding decade Pakistan has faced major floods of 2014, 2022 and small-scale floods (Akbar, 2022), now another hit by recent 2025 floods. In the 2022 floods, 70% of the land submerged in water due to the monsoon rain (Khayyam, 2020). These floods usually advance through regions of Punjab, KPK, Gilgit Baltistan as Ali, Khalid, Akhter, et al. (2020) document in their study how Punjab faced floods and droughts as a consequence of climate change. Flood risk perception of people in Punjab was revealed to be based on demographics like schooling, home ownership, household size, employment status and past flood experiences (Ahmad & Afzal, 2022).

Floods, which are becoming more common and serious because of global climate change, have big effects on people's mental health. These effects are very important but not studied enough in disaster research. Knowing these effects is key to creating better disaster plans and mental health support that help people and communities become stronger in places where floods happen often. Because of climate change, floods are happening more and causing more damage around the world.

Lack of psychological support further exacerbated long term psychological issues that impacted populations already struggling with socioeconomic stressors (Yousuf, 2023). These disasters cause a lot of stress on people, leading to problems like anxiety, depression, and PTSD.

Even though floods clearly affect people's mental health, most studies in South Asia focus on the physical and economic damage. They don't pay much attention to the emotional and

psychological effects on those who survive. Not looking at eco-anxiety and other mental health issues makes it harder to plan and provide good mental health services in areas affected by disasters.

Studies show that many people affected by floods in South Asia have depression, anxiety, PTSD, and changes in behavior. This shows how important it is to provide mental health support. A study in Sindh found that 54.4% of flood survivors had depression, and 59.2% had severe PTSD a few months after the flood (Khan et al., 2022)

In areas of Pakistan affected by floods, cultural values like patience, gratitude, and belief in God play a big role in how people deal with stress. But as cities grow and more people become individualistic, traditional ways of coping are changing. This change affects how people experience and show mental health issues.

The 2025 floods claimed the regions of Pakistan triggered by the heavy pre-monsoon rains in June, 2025. 6 million people are reported to be affected with 1000 fatalities including 250 children and 2.5 million people displaced (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 2025). The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) documents more than 8,400 houses, 239 bridges and nearly 700 km of roads have been damaged (United Nations Office at Geneva, 2025). Punjab being the food basket of the country suffers the most resulting in croplands under water, sweeping harvests leading to inflated food prices, wheat flour prices alone reported 25% increment in September's first week (NDMA). Around 1.05 million acres of farmland swamped and 5.1 million people have been affected with 1.9 million people evacuated in the inundated region of Punjab (UNICEF, 12 Sep 2025).

Lived experiences of people facing such havoc caused by disasters due to climatic change not only reveal the material loss but also curation of human narratives after the disaster and how it helps in recovery as shown by Mearidy-Bell (2013) in her study that young adolescent victims of natural disasters mostly hurricane depicted multiple behavioral changes. Akbar (2022) also pointed out the same in context of 2022 floods in Pakistan that how lived experiences and other factors impact decision making for the unseen contingency like evacuation, seeking shelter and recovery.

Floods affect people's lives in multiple domains like personal, social, psychological, physical and cultural. Physically, Being around floodwaters makes people more likely to get sick. Standing water and broken buildings can lead to diseases spread by insects, infections, and injuries. Research shows that when floods happen, there are more cases of illnesses linked to water, more chances of getting bitten by mosquitoes, and worse cleaning conditions. This is especially true in areas where it's hard to get medical help (Farah et al., 2023).

Floods drain people economically. Floods often cause problems for the economy, leading to damaged homes, ruined stores, loss of jobs, and difficulty getting enough food. Studies show that when people's ways of making a living are disturbed, it not only makes it hard to afford basic needs but also increases stress and mental health issues. This shows a close link between financial struggles and mental well-being (Rahman et al., 2025).

People are prone to multiple risks while facing floods. The level of danger people face during floods, like being forced to move, having trouble moving around, or buildings getting damaged, directly affects how at risk they are. Before the flood, things like heavy rain can make

the situation worse and mess up everyday life, which shows why it's important to take steps to reduce risks before a flood happens (Farah et al., 2023).

Communal support helps people combat the situation in floods. Social networks and strong community ties are important in helping people cope after floods. Studies show that when people work together, support each other, and come together as a community, it helps reduce stress and makes it easier for people to adapt. This highlights the importance of including community strength in planning for disasters (Greene et al., 2015).

Flood survivors use different ways to deal with the situation, such as depending on friends and family, adjusting their daily routines, and following traditions from their culture. Studies show that being strong personally, handling emotions well, and getting help from the community are important for bouncing back, especially when there isn't much help from government or other organizations (Ahmad et al., 2025).

Religious beliefs and cultural views influence how people understand and deal with floods. Finding comfort through faith and creating meaning during such events helps people manage emotions and feel supported mentally. This shows that disaster responses should take into account different cultural and spiritual backgrounds.

Floods cause severe economic losses and infrastructure damage, in addition adversely effect physical health of people (Du et al., 2010). But one dimension that often gets neglected is the mental health, climate change severely impacts mental health (Berry, Bowen, & Kjellstrom, 2010). People often suffer from solastalgia-distress due to climate change as after affects (Albrecht et al., 2007).

An additional determinant to this domain is Eco-anxiety which can be defined as a chronic fear of environmental doom (APA & ecoAmerica, 2017). Research shows that climate anxiety and governments lack of adequate measures affect young people and impair functioning in daily life (Hickman et al., 2021). Another research while shedding light on eco-anxiety, explains the climate change anxiety is associated to emotional not behavioral responses to climatic variations (Clayton & Karaszia, 2020). Budziszewska & Jonsson (2022) also worked with lived experiences of psychotherapy patients who experienced and reported signs of climate change and eco-anxiety claiming how lived experiences of people demonstrate eco-anxiety.

Although there has been extensive research on physical and economic losses of floods Internationally (Looney, 2010) and in South Asian context such as study reporting how flood impacts economic status, livelihood, poverty in the North-West region of Pakistan (Khayyam,2020) but not enough research in the psychological domain. There's very limited focus on narratives and lived experiences.

Previous studies have looked at the psychological, physical, and financial effects of floods (Fernandez et al., 2015; Rahman et al., 2025), but they haven't fully explained how these effects connect and affect people who have experienced floods in a complete way. Most of these studies look at numbers, like how common mental health problems, physical illnesses, or loss of income are, but they don't deeply explore how people actually feel and live through these experiences.

Even though social support and community bonds are seen as helpful things (Greene et al., 2015), there isn't much research on how people deal with everyday difficulties, how they

cope, and how they find meaning through spiritual or cultural beliefs, especially in places like Pakistan in South Asia.

Many studies also don't look at eco-anxiety and the mental stress caused by climate change, which are becoming bigger issues in areas that are often hit by floods. Because of this, there's a need for a more personal and in-depth approach to understand how flood survivors feel, how they cope, and how they show resilience. This study fills that gap by using a method called Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to look at all the different parts of the flood experience like psychological, physical, social, economic, and spiritual aspects so we can get a full picture of what people go through.

This study fills the gap in literature by looking at the real-life experiences of people affected by floods in different areas like their mental health, physical health, relationships, money, and spiritual well-being. These aspects have not been closely studied before. The research offers useful information to help with mental health care, ways to respond to disasters, and programs that support communities in rebuilding their lives. By including the stories of survivors, the study also helps bring people together and makes them feel part of a community.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 Global climate change

Global climate change is not just a climate issue now but a global mental health issue as well. As more extreme weather events like floods, droughts, and storms happen more often and are stronger, people and communities feel lasting stress, anxiety, and a sense of helplessness. This is especially true for those who are more vulnerable, like young people, who often feel worried, sad, and unsure about the future because of the damage to the environment and how it affects their daily lives (Hickman et al., 2025).

What we once used to treat as a scientific forecast has now become a real-world manifestation. Global climate change that used to occur from natural variations centuries ago is now driven by anthropogenic activities. Since 1970s, not only natural variations but human activities lead to climate change in physical and biological systems of the planet leading to warming of oceans among all continents (Rosenzweig et al., 2008). Research shows that using PCM (Parallel Climate Model) a simulation model run by human induced greenhouse gases leads to increase in the heat content of planet's oceans thus proving that warming of oceans in the last 45 years is anthropogenic (Barnett et al., 2001).

This anthropogenic climate change is due to multiple reasons one of them being increased concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHGs). Increased concentrations of Carbon dioxide CO2, Methane CH4 and Nitrous oxide NO2 collectively known as greenhouse gases

(GHGs) are reported to be 409.9 (±0.4) parts per million (ppm), 1866.3 (±3.3) parts per billion (ppb) and 332.1 (±0.4) ppb, respectively for the year 2019 (IPCC, 2019).

As the awareness of global climate change increases among people they are recognizing its tangible hazards as UNFCCC (2024) reports that even if you implement all nationally determined contributions (NDCs), planetary emissions in 2030 will only be 2.6% less than 2019 levels. UN claims that climate plans remain insufficient, highlighting in another UNFCCC report that planetary emissions are expected to go 10.6% more than 2010 levels by 2030, resulting in 2.5 °C warming by the end of the century (UNFCCC, 2022).

2.1.2 Global warming and natural disasters

Human driven climate change eventually impacts the humans. This intense climate change leads to warming of oceans, ice caps and glaciers melting, more intense and erratic rainfalls, more intense and frequent heatwaves, rising sea levels, land degradation, stronger storms, hurricanes, cyclones and many other natural disasters. Scientists have predicted that even if emissions of greenhouse gases and other planetary emissions stop today, our planet will still be facing 40-60 years of climate change and its inevitable consequence will be increase in severity and recurrence of natural disasters (Haddow, Bullock, & Haddow, 2017).

Natural disasters have taken their course all around the world be it fire outbreaks in the state of California or flood surges in India. Research suggests by using a supplemental data analysis that surges in fire outbreaks in the past decade is due to climate change and climate model projects that fires will become more intense and more severe under future warming (Jones et al., 2022). Mujumdar et al. (2020) studied floods and droughts in the context of climate change

in India; he reported increased frequency of localized rainfall on sub-daily and daily timescales leading to enhanced flood risk over India.

2.1.3 Global humanitarian crises

Natural disasters lead us to global humanitarian crises such as impact people's livelihood, cause disease outbreaks, displacement and food insecurity. Insights gathered through a report about rural riverine Bangladesh proves about hazards of the natural disaster as it reveals its consequences to be erosion impacts, food insecurity, migration drivers, displacement of people ultimately showcasing humanitarian crises (Alam et al.,2020). Similarly, another research finding while highlighting the global humanitarian crises reveal that people of color, those with lower incomes, sexual minorities, gender minorities, disabilities or unfavorable social determinants of health (SDOH) such as food insecurity were more likely to showcase displacement (Aung & Sehgal, 2025). Thus, the above-mentioned researches prove that be it Bangladesh or the US, post natural disaster outcomes lead to human suffering on a world-wide scale.

Humanitarian literature also showcases disaster migration and climate refugees. UNHRC's No Escape report reveals how climate change poses threat on humanity, worsening living conditions, leading to poverty and environmental degradation, which in turn drives forced displacement. Statistics in the results revealed that most displacements were due to weather related disasters that have caused 220 million internal displacements, which averages to 60,000 displacements a day. More than 120 million people are forcibly displaced worldwide, where 75%

of forcibly displaced people live in countries with high to extreme exposure to climate-related hazards (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], 2024).

2.1.4 Psychology and climate change

Natural disasters not only cause physical destruction, economic loss, and displacement but also have significant psychological effects on affected communities. Beyond the immediate damage to infrastructure and livelihoods, survivors often face acute stress, anxiety, grief, and trauma as they deal with sudden loss and uncertainty. American Psychological Association and ecoAmerica (2021) report lists that emotional consequences triggered by climate change include insecurity, anger, depression, powerlessness, exhaustion and eco-anxiety. Further stating that eco-anxiety and emotional distress are intertwined and can lead to more severe psychological symptoms such as substance abuse and suicidal ideations. A research about tsunami in Indonesia provides evidence that displacement induced from the disaster is linked with a heightened risk of physical as well as mental health disorders (Jang, Ekyalongo, & Kim, 2021).

Studies indicate that events like floods, earthquakes, and hurricanes can lead to long-term mental health issues, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and persistent fear. Data presented in the report underscores that after experiencing acute events like wildfires or floods people experience trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder PTSD, anxiety, depression and consistent thoughts of self-harm and in longer term it can heighten the risk of mood disorders and social violence (American Psychological Association & ecoAmerica, 2023).

Psychological consequences of floods persist even after the physical recovery begins, highlighting the importance of damage caused by natural disasters that extend well beyond the

visible damage. Thus understanding the psychological impacts of a disaster goes hands in hands with physical and other impacts in order to develop a complete and effective humanitarian and recovery efforts.

2.1.5 Pakistan and climate change

Pakistan constantly ranks among the most vulnerable countries to climate change despite being the negligible contributor of greenhouse gas emissions. World Bank Climate Change Knowledge Portal consistently ranks Pakistan among top 10 countries affected most by the climate change in the climate-risk country profiles (World Bank, 2021).

Its diversified geography stretching from melting Himalayan glaciers to drought prone plains, further faced by socio-economic challenges, limited adaptability and huge population has heightened the countries susceptibility to climate changes and crises. Rapid changing rainfall patterns, intense heat waves, unpredictable monsoons and melting of glaciers are further disrupting countries agricultural sector, water security and development. International Growth Centre (IGC) Pakistan "Sustainable Pakistan" report tells that smaller cities of Pakistan which are heavily dependent on farming are at high risk from climate changes. It further talks about infrastructure in cities like drainage systems are not up to the par which further intensifies the risk (Shaikh, 2025).

Further studies highlight that climate change is no longer anticipation but lived reality of people of Pakistan who suffer from unpredicted monsoons, smog, intense heat waves that continue to shape their daily lives. Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) reports 8 million displacements due to 2022 floods in Pakistan (World Bank, 2022).

2.1.6 Floods in Pakistan

One of the biggest disasters in Pakistan's history is 2010 super floods. Multiple resources report long-lasting and strong impacts. It is reported nationally and internationally that heavy monsoon rains caused by strong La Niña, incited big river floods and sudden flash floods in the Indus Basin Area covering one-fifth of the country (IPCC, 2014). Experts report large amount of people living in flood prone areas that made the disaster even worse. Besides the infrastructural damage studies reveal a huge amount of social and economic problems, displacement of over 20 million people, agricultural sector's blockage, disrupted farming which took a long time to recover (Mustafa & Wrathall, 2013). 2010 floods are a living proof of climate change hazards.

The 2014 floods in Punjab have been stated as an important regional event caused by a combination of climate extremes and infrastructure delicacies. Heavy monsoon rainfall in Jhelum and Chenab led to heavy inflows in rivers, damaging riverbanks and destroying protection structures for floods (PDMA, 2015). Research findings reveal 185 fatalities, displacement of 2.3 million people and major infrastructural and agricultural losses (Rahman, Khan, & Ali, 2017).

2022 floods are the most analyzed one in literature among recent climate led disasters about vulnerability. Heavy rains led to landslides, infrastructural damage and economic losses (Bazai, Khan, & Shah, 2025). Areas damaged by the floods include Balochistan, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Southern Punjab. Many studies also highlight long-term economic and social crises like loss of livelihood, weak government support, poverty which made the experience even worse with 33 million people being affected by the crises (UNDP, 2022). Thus 2022 floods

revealed how rapidly changing climate is making Pakistan more and more vulnerable day by day.

The most recent floods in Pakistan are the 2025 floods that further tell us about the recurring patterns of floods in the country. Experts have reported major problems like drainage, people living in informal settlements very close to river banks as one of the leading cause of intensified havoc caused by floods. People in poorer urban areas were hit the hardest and most exposed to risks caused by the floods.

Climate Data Processing Centre (CDPC) states the finding in it's the Pakistan Meteorological Department PMD's Monsoon-2025 report 23% more rain than usual, some areas with even bigger amounts like Punjab with 34%, Gilgit-Baltistan with 31%, Sindh with 26% and Balochistan with 28%. The report further highlights the major cause of floods as unusual rainfall and increasing temperatures which made 2025 monsoon more hazardous (Pakistan Meteorological Department, 2025).

2.1.7 2025 Floods in Pakistan

The floods of 2025 in Pakistan, caused by heavy pre-monsoon rains in June 2025, devastated several regions. Pakistan's particularly strong monsoon season began on 26 June. As of 12 September 2025, heavy rains and flash floods have resulted in 946 deaths, including 255 children, and 1,062 injuries, including 320 children across the country (UNICEF, 2025, P. 1).

Punjab went through its worst flooding in many years, affecting 5.1 million people and forcing 1.9 million to leave their homes in villages along the Chenab, Ravi, and Sutlej rivers. So

far, the floods have taken 260 lives, including 98 children, and injured 660 others. Healthcare services struggling, with 100 OTP centers closing, leaving about 5,000 children at risk of serious malnutrition. The government has set up 727 relief camps, helping over 6,000 people who have been displaced, and 339 medical camps that have treated more than 11,000 patients UNICEF, 2025, P. 3).

2.1.8 Lived experiences and floods

One of the foundations of disaster psychology is Quarantelli's work stating that disasters are social rather than purely natural events, their impact is mainly determined by vulnerabilities faced by the society, infrastructural and institutional structures and communal support rather than the physical crises itself (Quarantelli, 2005). He argues that disasters reveal the hidden image of societal weaknesses that already exist like poverty, inequality, and mismanagement and governance failures. His work highlights the need to focus on improving management and support systems as strengthening societal structures plays a pivotal role in weakening disaster impacts than environmental control efforts alone.

Study on tidal flooding impacts on social and emotional wellbeing of people living in Queens, New York reveals that while there is more literature on physical impacts of floods, the emotional aspect and experiences of people often get neglected. Findings reveal that local people in the flood prone areas are very well aware of the local flood patterns and adapt accordingly with community and local governments help. Overall the research sheds light on the people's real life experiences and the need to study them more to get holistic results (Campbell et al., 2021).

There is much literature on climate researches and disaster researches but not much has been analyzed about lived experiences of people facing the situation firsthand especially gender differences. By the efforts made through Flood Action Plan in Bangladesh, it is demonstrated how men and women are affected differently by the crises and how dangers and solutions are designed to deal with them actually depends upon gender and class (Sultana, 2010).

Another study in Sunamganj, Bangladesh sheds light on to the importance of maintaining institutional diversity and adaptability at local level which is important for converting social learning into useful strategies that strengthens community against adverse impacts of the disaster (Azad, Haque, & Choudhury, 2021).

2.1.9 Eco-anxiety and climate related psychological conditions

Eco-anxiety is the consistent worry about future climate change and environmental hazards. Clayton and Karazsia (2020) define it as a psychological issue that includes worrying a lot, overthinking about the problem constantly, sleeplessness, and physiological symptoms tied to concerns about the future of our planet. It is followed by consistent feeling of fear about ecological problems and climate change and impacts daily living (Clayton & Karazsia, 2020; Lutz, 2023).

There are other multiple psychological terms that help explain eco-anxiety such as Eco-grief which is defined as consistent sadness about losing species, habitats, and eco-systems to environmental variations. Cunsolo and Ellis (2018) define this grief as natural reaction to these losses and relate it to real time suffering of people from climate change.

Albrecht defined the term solastalgia as sadness and stress due to change or disappearance in home or surroundings thus creating a bridge between the emotional connections of people with that place (Albrecht, 2005).

Another term that defines eco anxiety is environmental doomism characterized by the belief that ecological adversities are unavoidable, exacerbating the feelings of hopelessness (Albrecht, 2005; definition of environmental doomism).

People who face climate disasters hands on are more prone to eco anxiety. These disasters may include repeated floods, wildfires and other climate crises which lead people to experience fear and excessive worry about future events. . Panu (2020) and Hickman et al. (2021) report these people to have strong mental stress, making it worse for already vulnerable people.

Hickman et al (2021) reports findings that over 10,000 young adults showed persistent anxiety about the environment which is further demonstrated by troubles with sleep, hunger, social life. Thus all the age groups are severely impacted by the consequences of climate change both physically and emotionally.

2.1.10 Personal and household impacts

Flood severely impacts people on personal levels as well impacting their daily lives, how they work or feel in faces of adversity. Families are left in crowded places like camps with little or no privacy. These situations disrupt the order of traditional roles making familial system uncertain where basic priority becomes just surviving. Adjusting to a foreign place can be very

challenging, leading to long-term stress and uncertainty as normal routines are replaced with just surviving (Greene, 2011; IJRAR, 2020; PMC, 2025).

Floods impact every member of the family even children. Even before they are born, being around extreme weather can alter their neurological functioning, which affects them for a long time. Shut down of schools, families having to move, it can make it even harder for children to get a good education, which impacts their future (Mohamed et al., 2025).

Even older people get affected by climate crises. Age is a factor that makes them more fragile than others leading them to get hurt more often at times of adversity. They get attached to their homes and often feel upset to leave their homes (CIRCA Redesign, 2025; Madani Hosseini, 2024). It is important to establish support strategies for older people at times of adversity.

Overall, collective way how a family responds to the disaster impacts people's wellbeing. Climate crises cause multiple issues for families including physiological, psychological and social issues which are demonstrated in literature that climate crises impacts both children and parents mental wellbeing (PMC, 2025).

2.1.11 Community impacts

Floods impact communities on multiple levels. Informal support systems are necessary to deal with post flood crises. Close people like neighbors, familial support are the early representatives of communal support required during the flood that leads to more stable emotions. Community's roles go beyond instant relief and involve maintenance of community morale and encouraging coping mechanism (Aldrich & Meyer, 2015).

Collective recovery is further triggered due to emotional consequences of floods. Shared rituals, collective gatherings and praying together serves as a healing space for communities at times of adversity to grieve and reestablish socially and have a sense of belonging (Norris et al., 2008).

Researches in Malaysia talk about the need for community cohesion and governmental participation. Moreover, by adding local knowledge, public involvement, and encouraging collaboration among government and civil society, flood coping can be improved. These studies state that community-based measures offer both immediate assistance and long-term strategies for achieving final contentment (Abidet al, 2024).

2.1.12 Economic impacts

Floods also cause economic and livelihood challenges that are devastating in nature both physically and psychologically. These issues include unemployment, loss of livelihood, debt, inability to borrow loans that have a significant impact on mental health causing anxiety, depression and despair (George et al., 2021).

This crises impacts rural and informal sector workers more like farmers, daily wage workers leading to widespread financial instability (Yousuf et al., 2023).

The economic disruptions due to floods not only cause physical damage but impact people mentally as well.

2.1.13 Cultural context (individualist vs. collectivist)

Hofstede and Triandis discuss differences between individualist and collectivist culture and define them as individualist culture being driven by self-reliance while collectivist culture being dependent on communal support, cohesion and interdependency (Hofstede, 2001; Tirandis & Saunderson, 1995).

Pakistan is a collectivist society where interdependency among people and shared values have a very important place in the society. Social believes are embedded in cultural and spiritual values like patience (sabr), gratitude (shukr) and collective submission to God (Khan & Hassan, 2020).

Pakistan is a collectivist society in contrast US is an individualist society. Researches have shown that middle class and upper class populations at the times of adversity exhibit behaviors rooted in individualism, with less to no reliance on communal support. As Wegmann et al. note, "Middle-class and wealthier demographics' cultural values are more centered on individualism and s elf reliance, so communalism is practically not there (Powell & Wegmann, 2025).

2.1.14 Coping and resilience

Coping and resilience involves a range of processes including meaning making of the event, faith based coping, personal stories and future worry. These allow people to face the traumatic situations. Coping can be divided into three main types in literature based on Lazarus and Folkman’s stress and coping model which are problem focused, emotion focused and

avoidance coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). The coping types are in relevance to person's personality traits.

2.1.15 Gaps in literature

There are multiple studies that talk about phenomenological experiences of natural disasters but in western context. Although there has been extensive research on physical and economic losses of floods Internationally (Looney, 2010). There is an ample amount of research on eco anxiety concentrated on youth in the western context especially among youth. In South Asian context such as study reporting how flood impacts economic status, livelihood, poverty in the North-West region of Pakistan (Khayyam, 2020) but not enough research in the psychological domain. There's very limited focus on lived experiences.

2.1.16 Theoretical Framework

This study is based on the theoretical framework based on the narrative theory that states that people make meaning of the situations through their stories (Riessman, 2008). Further diving into the purpose of the study to find out collective experiences of people facing the adversity, research is based on collective memory theory which highlights how shared traumas are remembered by people (Alexander, 2004). Further basis of this research are demonstrated by environmental psychology which frames eco anxiety as a community mental health issue.

2.2 Problem statement

Pakistan is highly vulnerable to climate change and faces recurring floods every year which are devastating in nature both physically and psychologically. Literature has revealed

multiple researches on economic and physical impacts of floods but psychological domain remains neglected. One of the major psychological consequences of climate change and recurring floods is consistent worry about the future manifested in forms of eco anxiety. Collective and lived experiences of people are central to understanding how people make meaning at the time of adversity and cope with the situation. Thus there is lack of focus on how communities narrate their lived experiences especially in terms of psychological consequences of floods such as eco anxiety.

2.3 Rationale and significance

The research makes valuable contributions to the literature of natural disasters and holds significance on multiple domains. Firstly, it provides new data and information on flood victims who have gone through and survived flood disasters-including data related to their mental, socio-economical and spiritual aspects. The factor that sets this research apart is that the study is conducted through a method of Interpretative Research Analysis (IPA) that provides descriptive data on the experiences faced by the flood victims as opposed to the previous researches that have provided numerical data. The data collected through IPA, therefore, holds more significance as it allows to study the experiences of victims in more depth, which is not possible merely through surveys and numerical data. The study shows the importance of using IPA methods in studying disasters. It further elucidates that the data collected through a descriptive method like IPA enables a better approach for carrying out the study and, also adds valuable information to the already known numerical data. Also, the finding is not just limited to the academic implications but also has applications in the real-world. By sharing the information on the effects of floods; how people react to such disasters, coping mechanisms used by people and

emotional effects on victims, the findings can contribute towards the disaster management and rehabilitation programs by associating with different organizations, mental health workers and government bodies. The programs include emotional support, counseling and other management plans to combat natural disasters. In addition, the results of the study can also aid in the making of better policies and plans, thereby enabling a much effective disaster management plan that fulfills both practical as well as emotional needs.

To summarize, the research offers useful ideas to prepare for and respond to the disasters by connecting theory, hands-on experiences, and practical applications.

2.4 Research objective

To study about collective experiences of local communities in Punjab pertaining to eco-anxiety as repercussions of 2025 floods.

2.5 Research question

How do local communities in Punjab narrate their collective experiences pertaining to eco-anxiety as repercussions of 2025 floods?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Background

The research was conducted in November 2025 in Manga Mandi town of Lahore district in Punjab, Pakistan. Heavy monsoon rains in 2025 led to heavy river inflows causing serious floods which further caused large scale evacuations of people in several areas of Lahore including Manga Mandi town of the district (The Express Tribune, 2025)

Some people reported witnessing 1988 floods as well, but at that time they were very young so memories were vague and unclear. They compare 2025 floods with 1988 floods as being more devastating in nature, causing more disruption and overall impact of the flood. People who actually lived through the disaster report it as a traumatizing event of their life which they can never forget.

3.2 Research design

A phenomenological, qualitative approach was used in the study to actually understand lived experiences of the people and psychological impacts of the 2025 floods of victims. Qualitative approach was used as it allows us to delve deeper into how people understand and give meanings to major life events such as those which include trauma, disruption and uncertainty about the environment. Field visits were carried out to conduct semi-structured interviews so that participants can share their detailed experience, while letting the conversation flow naturally to uncover hidden emotions and experiences to capture personal, psychological

and environmental aspects of the floods. This helped to paint a detailed picture of how people dealt with short term and long term consequences of the disaster. Thus study sheds light on depth rather than covering wide range of topics in accordance with the phenomenological research and making sure that participants lived experiences are the heart of study.

3.3 Population and sampling

A convenient sampling technique was adopted to reach the target participants. This meant choosing people who were displaced from their homes during the floods. Five participants, 3 men, 2 women who are primary earner of their homes took part in the interviews. The number of participants was complied with saturation, which was reached at 5 participants.

3.4 Inclusion criteria

- Residents of Punjab directly affected by 2025 floods
- Had to displace due to commotion
- Adults (30 - 45 years)
- Individuals who are primary earners of their family
- Willing to share personal/community experiences
- Are able to communicate narratives in selected interview language i.e. Urdu, Punjabi
- Individuals who are willing to provide consent

3.5 Exclusion criteria

- People facing any psychological condition (pre-existing: not caused by floods after-effects)

- People who displaced their homes due to other reasons not flood.

3.6 Measures

3.6.1 Demographic form

Demographic form was presented first that contained basic knowledge about the participant's demographics like name, age, gender, marital status, education, occupation, income, residence. Some basic flood related background information like type of residence at the time of floods, duration of displacement and governmental aid received or not.

3.6.2 Interview guide

Interview guide was made in order to understand lived experiences of people during the 2025 floods several domains including personal, social, psychological, eco anxiety, communal support system. Questions were kept open-ended so real experiences of people can be studied, people talked about what they felt, how they faced the situation and what they observed in their surroundings. Guide was built based on research regarding floods and natural disasters. First a pilot study was conducted to make sure it was clear, respectful and no misleading questions are present. Questions were flexible and further probing was done to get the full picture of what people actually felt.

3.7 Data collection and analysis

3.7.1 Data Collection

Data was collected by conducting semi structured, face to face interviews with victims of floods who displaced their homes. The duration of each interview was 20-25 minutes and these were conducted in secure and comfortable environment. Interviews were audio recorded after gaining participants permission. Prior to the interview, each participant filled a consent form to show their willingness to participate in the research and a demographic form that briefed about their background. Data was collected to focus on the lived experiences of flood survivors regarding floods.

3.7.2 Informed Consent

A self-designed informed consent was filled prior to the interview to ensure that participants are aware about the purpose and implications of study, features of the study, and their rights to withdraw at any time they feel uncomfortable and that their confidentiality will be maintained throughout. At the end they were thanked for their participation.

3.7.3 Data Analysis

Interpretative Data Analysis (IPA) was used to analyze data in order to understand actual lived experiences of people during the 2025 floods. First the interviews were transcribed from audio recordings, followed by reiterative reflections by the researcher as she carefully read through each line, one by one to undercover the codes that depict participant's experiences. Then these codes further help to undercover themes that naturally arise from participants stories. Super ordinate themes, Sub ordinate themes and codes were identified after detailed analysis further supported by quotes from participants. Since lived experiences were to be examined individual experiences were looked at first followed by holistic study of all interviews together.

Thus common patterns were found based on how people faced the crises, stress, ways to cope, communal support, eco anxiety and how they felt being exposed to risk firsthand. By repeatedly studying the notes, researcher created a clear set of themes that connected participants lived experiences at the times of adversity. Thus method allowed us to deeply understand what participants actually went through at the time of adversity.

3.8 Procedure

Participants were given consent forms and demographics form first to let them be aware of the research and get a brief background of them. Then data was collected by using interview guide. In-depth, semi structured, face to face interviews were conducted after carrying field visits to Manga Mandi town of Lahore district. Convenient sampling technique was used to reach the target participants, this employs choosing participants who were displaced from their homes as a consequence of flood. Five participants, 3 men, 2 women who are primary earners of their family took part in the interviews. The number of participants was complied with saturation, which was reached at 5 participants.

Researcher carried out field visits, conducted interviews with participants, interviews were kept short 20-25 minutes because people were still coping and rebuilding their life after the floods. Researcher asked for participant's permission via informed consent and they were made aware of their right to withdraw at any time and confidentiality of their data. The interviews were audio recorded first then transcribed to undercover themes highlighting lived experiences of flood victims.

Participants revealed detailed accounts of their flood experiences, including how it impacted their daily lives, how they dealt with it psychologically, role of communal support, anticipation and worry about future events i.e. eco-anxiety. Data were analyzed using IPA analysis and emerging themes were crafted.

3.9 Ethical considerations

Participants had the right to take part in the study on their own accord without any burden, and they were made aware of their right to withdraw at any time they felt uncomfortable. Before starting they were given informed consent which clearly highlighted the purpose of the study.

Confidentiality was maintained to keep participant's information private and all data was kept anonymous. It was made sure that participants felt comfortable by allowing them to stop or pause anytime they felt upset. All the research material was kept secure, only researcher eas allowed access to them. Interviews were done in compliance with respect to everyone's feelings, their situation and cultural or religious background.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Demographic table

Table 4.1

Participant no (P)	Name	Age	Gender	Marital status	Occupation	Duration of Displacement
1	NB	40	F	Married	Daily wage worker	1 week
2	AA	32	M	Married	Daily wage worker	1 month
3	FB	30	F	Married	Daily wage worker	1 month
4	LM	45	M	Married	Farmer	1 month
5	IL	32	M	Married	Daily wage worker	2 months

IPA Analysis table

Table 4.2

Superordinate Theme	Subordinate-Theme	Codes	Quotes
Mental and Emotional Impact	Fear, Threat & Anticipation	Fear	رات کو اتنا اندھیرا ہو
		Feeling scared	جاتا تھا بجلی بھی نہیں
		Fear of the dark/night	تھی اور زیادہ اندھیرا ہو جاتا تھا جس کی وجہ
		Fear of snakes	سے بڑا خوف (P1) تھا۔
		Anticipation of floods	پھر اتنے زیادہ ہمارے دروازے کے آگے ایک نالہ تھا اس میں

سے اتنے سانپ نکلے

اتنے سانپ نکلے کیا

بتاؤں میں آپ

کو۔اس کے ڈر سے ہم

لوگ چارپائی پر چڑھ

(P1) کے بیٹھ گئے۔

Stress & Anxiety	Excessive worry	تو اس وقت تو میرا
	Anxiety	ذہن اتنا پریشان تھا
	Overthinking	مجھے سمجھ نہیں آ رہی
	Eco-anxiety	تھی کدھر جاؤں کیا
	Stress	(P1) کروں۔
	Uncertainty	پریشانی سوچ سوچ کے ابھی آگے کیا ہو گا ۔پہلے یہ سوچ کے ٹینشن کہ ابھی جائیں گے کدھر پھر جب تمبو میں گئے، تو پیچھے گھر کی ٹینشن، مویشی کی ٹینشن، روزگار کی

ٹینشن کیا کمائیں۔ بہت
.(P5)پریشانی تھی۔

اس کے بعد بھی پھر نیند ہی نہیں آتی تھی یہ سوچ سوچ کر کے اب کیا کریں گے ۔(P1)	Sense of hopelessness	Psychological Strain
راتوں کی نیند ایسے اڑ گئی جیسے کسی نے چھین لی ہو۔ بارش کی ہلکی سی آواز بھی دل کے اندر گھبراہٹ پیدا کر	Sleeplessness	

			(P2)دیتی تھی۔
		Mental exhaustion	ذہنی دباؤ کی سب سے بڑی وجہ بے بسی (P4) تھی۔
Physiological Implications	Illness Exposure	Malaria	میری بیمار بھی ہو گئی
		Exposure to mosquitoes	اس کو ملیریا ہو گیا (P1)۔
		Disease outbreaks	
		Bugs	کپڑوں سے بدبو آ رہی
		Insects	تھی اتنی زیادہ، اندھیرا اتنا تھا، بتی نہیں تھی ، مچھر اتنے زیادہ ، سانپ نکل آئے تھے اتنا ڈر لگ رہا تھا

۔(P1)

Physical Harm	Physical injuries	دو تین دفعہ موٹر
		سائیکل سے گرے
		بھی ہیں۔ چوٹے بھی
		لگی ہیں ظاہر ہے جب
		گیلا فرش تھا تو گرنے
		(P1)ہی تھا ہم نے۔
	Fatigue	اب بارش ہو تو دل
		دھڑکنے لگتا
		ہے۔(P4)
	Tiredness	ایک تو ویسے اتنے تھکے

			ہوئے ہوتے
			(P1)تھے
	Unsafe Living Conditions	Unhygienic living conditions	کپڑوں سے بدبو آرہی
			تھی اور کوئی کپڑے
			(P1)نہیں تھے
			ہر طرف بس گندہ،
			بدبودار پانی
			(P2)تھا۔
Economic & Livelihood Challenges	Household & Property Loss	Loss of household items	اور بیٹا سب سے بڑا
			دکھ یہ تھا کہ ہمارا گھر
			جو برسوں کی محنت
			سے بنا تھا وہ اتنے کمزور
			ہو گیا کہ دیواریں ٹوٹ

گئیں، کمرے بیٹھ گئے

اور چھت بھی جگہ جگہ

(P2)سے ٹپکنے لگی۔

دکان کا سامان گیلا Shops destroyed

ہو کر خراب ہو

(P2)گیا۔

روزگار تو اتنا خراب ہوا Loss of income Livelihood Damage

کہ نہ اس وقت کام ہو

سکتا تھا اور نہ اب ہو

سکتا ہے۔اب بھی کام

نہیں ہو سکتا ابھی تک

اثر ہے۔فسل ساری

تباہ ہو گئی جو فصلیں

			لگانی تھی اب جگہ بھی
			ایسی صحیح نہیں رہی کہ
			ہم دوبارہ اس پہ
			فصلیں
			(P3)لگائے۔
		Loss of livelihood	بیٹا میں نے جیسا کہ
			پہلے بتایا بچے ہمارے
			فیکٹریاں جاتے تھے
			10 ،15دن کوئی وہ
			فیکٹریاں بھی نہیں جا
			سکے پانی کی وجہ
			(P5)سے
	Basic Necessity shortage	Lack of basic necessities (food, water, shelter); Food insecurity	17،16اور پانی بھی
			دن تک ان پر جمع ہوا
			تھا روزی روٹی بھی

نہیں مل رہی تھی ہمیں بتی بھی نہیں تھی اور پانی میں کچھ چیز وغیرہ بھی نہیں مل رہی تھی بہت خراب تھے روٹی بھی نہیں مل رہی تھی ۔(P3) کوئی آنے جانے کا کوئی وسائل نہیں تھے، نہ بجلی نہ پانی اور اپنا گھر بھی چھوڑ کے ہم گئے (P5)ہوئے تھے۔		
دو مویشی میرے بیمار ہو گئے۔ایک نے تو	Livestock trapped or lost (cows)	Livestock

			کھانا پینا چھوڑ دیا اور چند دن بعد مر گیا۔ یہ نقصان میرے لیے بہت بڑا تھا کیونکہ مویشی کسان کے لیے صرف جانور نہیں ہوتے، وہ اس کی جمع پونجی اور سہارا ہوتے ہیں۔ (P4)
Exposure and Risk	Displacement Issues	Floodwater causing displacement	ہم پورا ایک مہینہ تمبوؤں میں رہیں اور پھر اس کے بعد ہم اپنے گھر واپس آئے ہیں۔ (P5)
		Roads blocked; Difficulty accessing work	کام پہ جا نہیں سکتے تھے ساری راستوں

پہ پانی جمع ہوا

تھا(P1)

اور بیٹا سب سے بڑا	Houses at risk of collapsing	Infrastructure Hazards

دکھ یہ تھا کہ ہمارا گھر

جو برسوں کی محنت

سے بنا تھا وہ اتنے کمزور

ہو گیا کہ دیواریں ٹوٹ

گئیں، کمرے بیٹھ گئے

اور چھت بھی جگہ جگہ

سے ٹپکنے لگی۔ جو دیوار

آپ ابھی سامنے دیکھ

رہی ہیں وہ بھی پورے

کی پوری گر گئی تھی۔

ہم نے بعد میں خود

دوبارہ مٹی لا کر اس پر

(P2)لپائی کی۔

		Pre-flood rains halting work	جب بارش ہو جاتی ہے تو جگہ گیلی ہو جاتی ہے پھر انٹ بھی گیلی ہو جاتی ہیں تو بٹھا نہیں چل سکتا۔ تو وہ تو ہمارا بارش کی وجہ سے ویسے ہی کام بند ہو گیا (P1)تھا۔
Social and Community Support	Family & Relational Support	Relatives'& siblings' support	کچھ رشتہ داروں نے کوشش کی کہ ہمیں اپنے پاس رکھیں، کوئی کھانا دے گیا، کوئی

بچوں کے کپڑے لایا۔ (P4)	Employer help	
جن کے گھر ہم کام کرتے تھے باجیاں پھر انہوں نے ہمیں پیسے دیے (P1)		
چیزیں ساری ادھر ادھر جو بھی تھا ہم نے کہا ان کو رہنے دو جان بچانے کی کرو، باقی چیزیں بعد میں دیکھی جائیں گی اور ہم سب بڑے مل جل کے سب نے کام کیا۔ بڑا حوصلہ ہو جاتا ہے	Community support Neighbor support Unity during crisis Collective efforts to save lives; Reconciliation among people Community solidarity	Community Cohesion

			۔(P5)
		No government support	حکومت نے کوئی مدد نہیں کی۔ (P5)
Coping and resilience	Basic Need Scarcity	Hunger	کہیں آگ لگانے کی جگہ نہیں تھی گیس
		Lack of food	بھی نہیں تھی کھانا کیسے پکاتے۔ کھانے پینے کے لیے بہت زیادہ پریشان (P1) تھے۔
	Emotional Strain	Children crying	بجلی بند ہو گئی تھی، اندھیرا تھا، بچوں کے رونے کی آوازیں تھیں، اور باہر بس پانی

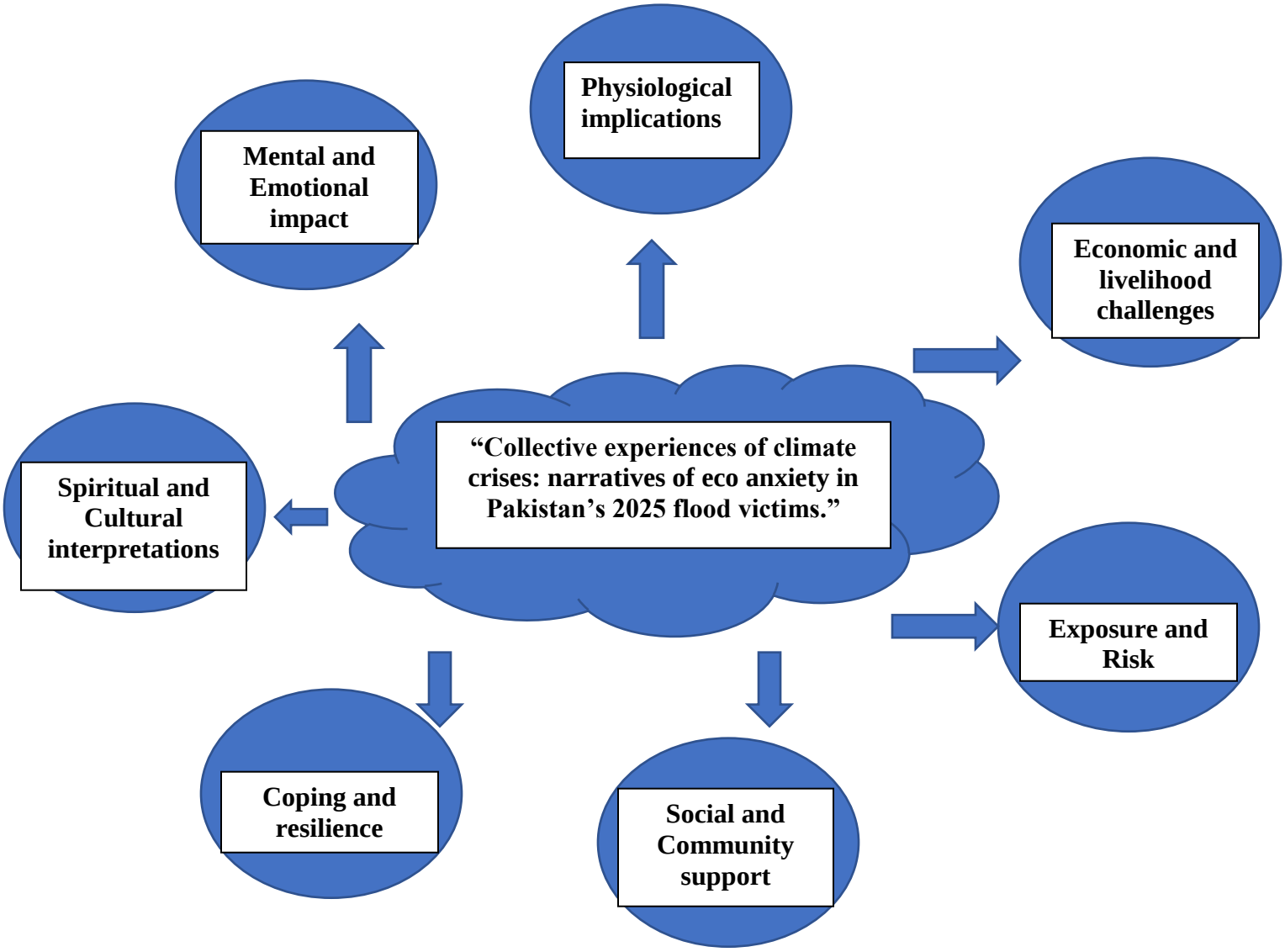
		کا شور۔ میں نے یہ
		منظر اپنی زندگی میں
		کبھی نہیں دیکھا
		(P4) تھا۔
Hardships of Daily Life	Struggle to meet daily needs	اور پانی بھی 16، 17
		دن تک ان پر جمع ہوا
		تھا روزی روٹی بھی
	Displacement hardships	نہیں مل رہی تھی
		ہمیں بتی بھی نہیں
		تھی اور پانی میں کچھ
		چیز وغیرہ بھی نہیں
		مل رہی تھی بہت
		خراب تھے روٹی بھی
		نہیں مل رہی تھی
		(P3)۔

Spiritual & Cultural Interpretations	Religious Meaning-Making	Perceiving floods as God's rage	اچھا ہی ہوا ایک طرح ہم یہی کہہ رہے تھے کہ اللہ کا کوئی عذاب ہی نازل ہو گیا ہے اب سب مل کے اس کا جو ہے سامنا کریں(P1)
	Faith-Based Coping	Facing challenges together through faith	اتنا خوف آتا ہے اب تو بس اب ہم اللہ سے دعا کرتے ہیں کہ یا اللہ تو ہمیں معاف کر دے۔(P1)
		Praying for help	دل میں ہر وقت بس ایک ہی دعا تھی کہ اللہ خیر کرے اور پانی کی

رفتار کم ہو

جائے۔(P2)

Figure: 4.1



Based on reiterative reflections, following themes were found that showcase the essence of lived experiences of flood survivors. The themes were (1) mental and emotional impact (2) physiological implications (3) economic and livelihood challenges (4) exposure and risk (5) social and community support (6) coping and resilience (7) spiritual and cultural meaning-making

4.1 Mental and Emotional Impact

This super-ordinate theme talks about the mental and emotional impacts faced by people affected by floods.

4.1.1 Fear, Threat, and Anticipation

Participants reported intense fear of snakes, dark and possibility of another flood. They constantly felt unsafe and fear retaliated leading them to feel threatened.

Participant 1 reported:

''رات کو اتنا اندھیرا ہو جاتا تھا بجلی بھی نہیں تھی اور زیادہ اندھیرا ہو جاتا تھا جس کی وجہ سے بڑا خوف تھا''

پھر اتنے زیادہ ہمارے دروازے کے آگے ایک نالہ تھا اس میں سے اتنے سانپ نکلے اتنے سانپ نکلے کیا بتاؤں میں آپ کو۔ اس کے ڈر سے ہم لوگ چارپائی پر چڑھ

کے بیٹھ گئے۔''

4.1.2 Stress and Anxiety

Stress and anxiety ruled the situation as people constantly worried about the future and upcoming obstacles. Many reported worrying too much, thinking too much and general feelings of anxiety. Eco-anxiety was also reported as people worried about the future floods leading to heightened stress.

Participant 1 reported:

تواس وقت تو میرا ذہن اتنا پریشان تھا مجھے سمجھ نہیں آرہی تھی کدھر جاؤں کیا کروں

Participant 5 reported:

یریشانی سوچ سوچ کے ابھی آگے کیا ہوگا۔پہلے یہ سوچ کے ٹینشن کہ ابھی جائیں گے کدھر پھر جب تمبو میں گئے، تو پیچھے گھر کی ٹینشن، مویشی کی ٹینشن، روزگار کی ٹینشن کیا کمائیں

۔بہت پریشانی تھی۔

4.1.3 Psychological Strain

Immediate emotions were followed by a bigger mental burden that people experienced. People reported feelings of hopelessness, sleeplessness and mental tiredness.

Participant 1 reported:

اس کے بعد بھی پھر نیند ہی نہیں آتی تھی یہ سوچ سوچ کر کے اب کیا کریں گے۔

Participant 2 reported:

راتوں کی نیند ایسے اڑ گئی جیسے کسی نے چھین لی ہو۔ بارش کی ہلکی سی آواز بھی دل کے اندر گھبراہٹ پیدا کر دیتی تھی۔

Participant 4 reported:

ذہنی دباؤ کی سب سے بڑی وجہ بے بسی تھی۔

4.2 Physiological Implications

This theme highlights the real physical problems faced by victims during and after the flood.

4.2.1 Illness Exposure

People reported getting exposure to illness during the flood. They talked about being more likely to get illness like malaria due to mosquitoes and other diseases from bugs. Being in the flooded environment made them even more exposed to health crises which exacerbated their worries.

Participant 1 reported:

میری بیٹی بیمار بھی ہو گئی اس کو ملیریا ہو گیا۔

Participant 1 reported:

کپڑوں سے بدبو آرہی تھی اتنی زیادہ، اندھیرا اتنا تھا، بتی نہیں تھی، مچھر اتنے زیادہ، سانپ نکل آئے تھے اتنا ڈر لگ رہا تھا۔

4.2.2 Physical Harm

Floods caused physical injuries in addition to illness exposure as well, people reported feeling very tired and worn out.

Participant 1 reported:

دو تین دفعہ موٹر سائیکل سے گرے بھی ہیں۔ چوٹے بھی لگی ہیں ظاہر ہے جب گیلا فرش تھا تو گرنے ہی تھا ہم نے۔

Participant 4 reported:

اب بارش ہو تو دل دھڑکنے لگتا ہے۔

Participant 1 reported:

ایک تو ویسے اتنے تھکے ہوئے ہوتے تھے

4.2.3 Unsafe Living Conditions

Participants reported living in dirty and unsafe places which made them more likely to get sick and uncomfortable. The mix of poor shelter and bad environment made the experience worse.

Participant 1 reported:

کپڑوں سے بدبو آ رہی تھی اور کوئی کپڑے نہیں تھے

Participant 2 reported:

ہر طرف بس گندہ، بدبودار پانی تھا۔

4.3 Economic and Livelihood Challenges

This theme talks about real life money problems and livelihood challenges faced by the people.

4.3.1 Loss of Home and Property

People reported losing lots of personal belongings while evacuating at the time of emergency, they also reported about their homes being destroyed and property loss was reported as well which made people worry. This made it hard for them to earn money and made them worry about their future financial safety.

Participant 2 reported:

اور بیٹا سب سے بڑا دکھ یہ تھا کہ ہمارا گھر جو برسوں کی محنت سے بنا تھا وہ اتنے کمزور ہو گیا کہ دیواریں ٹوٹ گئیں، کمرے بیٹھ گئے اور چھت بھی جگہ جگ سے ٹپکنے لگی۔

Participant 2 reported:

دکان کا سامان گیلا ہو کر خراب ہو گیا۔

4.3.2 Damage to Livelihood

Floods major setback for people was inability to earn livelihood. Many reported stress of not being able to earn and work properly and earning less ever since the floods hit.

Participant 3 reported:

روزگار تو اتنا خراب ہوا کہ نہ اس وقت کام ہو سکتا تھا اور نہ اب ہو سکتا ہے۔ اب بھی کام نہیں ہو سکتا ابھی تک اثر ہے۔ فسل ساری تباہ ہو گئی جو فصلیں لگانی تھی اب جگہ بھی ایسی صحیح نہیں رہی کہ ہم دوبارہ اس پہ فصلیں لگائے۔

Participant 5 reported:

بیٹا میں نے جیسا کہ پہلے بتایا بچے ہمارے فیکٹریاں جاتے تھے 10، 15 دن کوئی وہ فیکٹریاں بھی نہیں جا سکے پانی کی وجہ سے

4.3.3 Shortage of Basic Needs

People frequently reported not having access to basic necessities such as food, cleaning water and shelter. These shortages lead to even more mental and financial burden.

Participant 3 reported:

اور پانی بھی 16، 17 دن تک ان پر جمع ہوا تھا روزی روٹی بھی نہیں مل رہی تھی ہمیں بتی بھی نہیں تھی اور پانی میں کچھ چیز وغیرہ بھی نہیں مل رہی تھی بہت خراب تھے روٹی بھی نہیں مل رہی تھی۔

Participant 5 reported:

کوئی آنے جانے کا کوئی وسائل نہیں تھے، نہ بجلی نہ پانی اور اپنا گھر بھی چھوڑ کے ہم گئے ہوئے تھے۔

4.3.4 Loss of Livestock

People reported their livestock getting stuck or trapped which further exacerbated their financial burden.

Participant 4 reported:

دو مویشی میرے بیمار ہو گئے۔ ایک نے تو کھانا پینا چھوڑ دیا اور چند دن بعد مر گیا۔ یہ نقصان میرے لیے بہت بڑا تھا کیونکہ مویشی کسان کے لیے صرف جانور نہیں ہوتے، وہ اس کی جمع پونجی اور سہارا ہوتے ہیں۔

4.4 Exposure and Risk

This theme talks about how people were exposed to multiple risks.

4.4.1 Displacement Issues

Participants reported leaving their homes which messed up their daily routines and made them more vulnerable.

Participant 5 reported:

ہم پورا ایک مہینہ تمبوؤں میں رہیں اور پھر اس کے بعد ہم اپنے گھر واپس آئے ہیں۔

Participant 1 reported:

کام پہ جا نہیں سکتے تھے ساری راستوں پہ پانی جمع ہوا تھا

4.4.2 Infrastructure Hazards

One of the major hazards of flood was risk of houses falling down and pre flood rains halted peoples work as roads were destroyed. Many people reported their workplace being destroyed or not being able to function as well. This made participants worry excessively about their everyday lives.

Participant 2 reported:

اور بیٹا سب سے بڑا دکھ یہ تھا کہ ہمارا گھر جو برسوں کی محنت سے بنا تھا وہ اتنے کمزور ہو گیا کہ دیواریں ٹوٹ گئیں، کمرے بیٹھ گئے اور چھت بھی جگہ جگہ سے ٹپکنے لگی۔ جو دیوار آپ ابھی سامنے دیکھ رہی ہیں وہ بھی پورے کی پوری گر گئی تھی۔ ہم نے بعد میں خود دوبارہ مٹی لا کر اس پر لپائی کی۔

Participant 1 reported:

جب بارش ہو جاتی ہے تو جگہ گیلی ہو جاتی ہے پھر انٹ بھی گیلی ہو جاتی ہیں تو بٹھا نہیں چل سکتا۔ تو وہ تو ہمارا بارش کی وجہ سے ویسے ہی کام بند ہو گیا تھا۔

4.5 Social and Community Support

This theme talks about people's relationships and communal support at times of adversity.

4.5.1 Family and Relational Support

People reported feeling calmed down a little bit due to family members and siblings support. Some people reported that relational support allowed them to cope with the situation.

Participant 4 reported:

کچھ رشتہ داروں نے کوشش کی کہ ہمیں اپنے پاس رکھیں، کوئی کھانا دے گیا، کوئی بچوں کے کپڑے لایا۔

Participant 1 reported:

جن کے گھر ہم کام کرتے تھے باجیاں پھر انہوں نے ہمیں پیسے دیے

4.5.2 Community Cohesion

Besides family, people reported that their neighbors and community came together and faced the crises together. They showed dissatisfaction with governments no support and that the community worked together to come out of this situation.

Participant 5 reported:

چیزیں ساری ادھر ادھر جو بھی تھا ہم نے کہا ان کو رہنے دو جان بچانے کی کرو، باقی چیزیں بعد میں دیکھی جائیں گی اور ہم سب بڑے مل جل کے سب نے کام کیا۔ بڑا حوصلہ ہو جاتا ہے۔

Participant 1 reported:

کہیں آگ لگانے کی جگہ نہیں تھی گیس بھی نہیں تھی کھانا کیسے پکاتے۔ کھانے پینے کے لیے بہت زیادہ پریشان تھے۔

4.6 Coping and Resilience

This theme talks about how people face the situation and coped with it.

4.6.1 Basic Need Scarcity

Participants reported scarcity of basic needs like food, water, shelter.

Participant 1 reported:

کہیں آگ لگانے کی جگہ نہیں تھی گیس بھی نہیں تھی کھانا کیسے پکاتے۔ کھانے پینے کے لیے بہت زیادہ پریشان تھے۔

4.6.2 Emotional Strain

People reported feeling a lot of emotional stress, as demonstrated by children crying, and families dealing with consistent overthinking and worries.

Participant 4 reported:

بجلی بند ہو گئی تھی، اندھیرا تھا، بچوں کے رونے کی آوازیں تھیں، اور باہر بس پانی کا شور۔ میں نے یہ منظر اپنی زندگی میں کبھی نہیں دیکھا تھا۔

4.6.3 Hardships of Daily Life

Participants reported facing multiple challenges in their daily life ranging from scarcity of basic resources to inability to go to work, displacement from their homes demonstrating how hard it was to be normal and stable.

Participant 3 reported:

اور پانی بھی 16، 17 دن تک ان پر جمع ہوا تھا روزی روٹی بھی نہیں مل رہی تھی ہمیں بتی بھی نہیں تھی اور پانی میں کچھ چیز وغیرہ بھی نہیں مل رہی تھی بہت خراب تھے روٹی بھی نہیں مل رہی تھی۔

4.7 Spiritual and Cultural Meaning-Making

This theme talks about how people faced the situation be religious and cultural meaning making.

4.7.1 Religious Meaning-Making

Participants reported feeling flood as Gods rage , making sense of the crises through means of their religion.

Participant 1 reported:

اچھا ہی ہوا ایک طرح ہم یہی کہہ رہے تھے کہ اللہ کا کوئی عذاب ہی نازل ہو گیا ہے اب سب مل کے اس کا جو ہے سامنا کریں

4.7.2 Faith-Based Coping

Participants reported coping the disaster by means of their faith, as they shared the difficulties together and prayed God to ask for help showing the importance of spirituality.

Participant 1 reported:

اتنا خوف آتا ہے اب تو بس اب ہم اللہ سے دعا کرتے ہیں کہ یا اللہ تو ہمیں معاف کر دے۔

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS

The study revealed findings about how victims of 2025 floods dealt with the crises, revealing that impact goes beyond just losing things. The results reveal multiple themes covering psychological, physiological, economic, social and spiritual factors that holistically contribute to consistent worry about the future leading to eco anxiety.

Major psychological effects revealed in the study were intense fear, consistent worry, stress and anxiety. People consistently felt worried about the future events related to floods and had eco anxiety, shown by their consistent worry about the future climate change events. These manifestations match with earlier research showcasing that natural disasters cause both acute and chronic stress (Norris et al., 2002). People reported being aware of their vulnerability and environmental change and worried consistently about it showcasing eco anxiety.

Physiological issues including illness exposure like malaria, diseases from bugs, being hurt due to slippery roads, tiredness and unhygienic living conditions were reported which is further supported by existing literature stating that communities in flood prone areas are at elevated risk of diseases and injuries (Ahern et al., 2005). These physiological issues also impact to mental worry among victims further leading to eco anxiety.

People reported economic issues as one of the main stressor that caused them to worry a lot. Loss of livelihood was reported by multiple participants as floods destroyed their working conditions. They lost their personal belongings, livestock, income, basic needs. These findings

are consistent with previous researches stating economic disruptions exacerbate mental stress (Paton and Johnston, 2001). This economic stability impacts mental wellbeing of flood victims.

The interconnectedness of physical and mental risk is a crucial part of what disaster studies talk about, showcasing how physical dangers, being unable to move around, and uncertainty about the environment all add to stress and make it harder for people to adapt (Wisner et al., 2004).

Despite all the challenges and hardships, people reported that social support was the key way people dealt with challenges of the floods. They resorted to their neighbors instantly at the time of adversity and then their siblings, relatives for further support. They further stated that being part of the community and facing challenges together made them feel at ease and helped them to face the disaster with courage (Kaniasty & Norris, 1993).

The study found that being resilient in faces of adversity isn't something fixed, it keeps on changing depending on the situation, the resources available, past experiences, and who people rely on.

People also reported that religious and cultural meaning making helped them cope better in the situation. Some reported floods as sign of Gods rage and kept on praying as a way to face it, their belief that god will help them in times of adversity made the situation bearable. Existing literature also talk about importance of faith based coping in times of natural disasters (Pargament, 1997).

Overall all these findings showcase lived experiences of people revealing multiple challenges such as physiological, psychological, economic, illness exposure that lead to consistent worry about the climate change and future events manifested in form of eco anxiety and how people make meaning of the situation by faith based coping and communal support when there is lack of governmental and institutional support.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed multiple themes in context of psychological, physiological, economic, exposure and risk faced by the victims of flood which led them to consistently worry about the future climate change and events leading to eco anxiety. The remaining themes covered the coping spectrum that how people make meaning of the situation by faith based coping, communal support and coping strategies. During the research, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis method helped in explaining the lived experiences of the victims in more depth.

5.1 Limitations

The study lacks generalization as the data is taken only from a small group of people belonging to a small region- therefore the study has limitations. Another short come of the research is that the data was taken through self-reports, so it depends on how accurate the information is that they are giving.

Additionally, the study lacks the data of victim's long-term experiences focusing only on the short-to-medium term experiences. The analysis is based solely on the data collected from the participants and is analyzed through researchers' understanding for it is an IPA study.

5.2 Suggestions

- Data to be collected from different regions to see the impact of flood on people from a broader perspective including the experiences of people belonging to multiple cultures.
- To understand the lasting mental, socio-economic and physical impact on people, take long-term data of the flood victims.
- Establish mental health disaster management program; also test the program beforehand for its effectiveness.
- As there is a strong connection of most people with culture and spirituality, include these aspects in management plan to help people build strength.
- Government leaders to be involved to deal with such natural disaster issues at grass-root level ensuring a better disaster management plan especially in areas that are more prone to floods.

5.3 Implications

- The findings are beneficial for both academic as well as real-world experiences.
- It is foremost important to ensure that the flood victims are given mental health aid like counseling to combat their traumatic experiences and help them deal with stress and anxiety.
- Health and safety education during floods are crucial for the victims to avoid the risk of getting physical health problems such as through contaminated water, harmful insects etc.
- In order to minimize the after-effects of the disaster, give financial support for their basic needs related to food, health and education.

- Bringing communities together by developing strong connections to help people work together and fight challenges in a much better way.
- Associate cultural and spiritual aspects in disaster management plans to allow people to find meaning and manage their emotions.
- There is an importance of research methods such as Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to evaluate the experiences of the victims of the disaster.

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APPENDICES