



**FORMAN
CHRISTIAN
COLLEGE**
(A CHARTERED UNIVERSITY)



BI-ANNUAL NEWSLETTER

13TH EDITION

JANUARY – JUNE 2026

HIGHLIGHTS

- Organized a Seminar: The Legal Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- Organized a Seminar: Population Dynamics and Demographic Dividend
- Published the top 15 student essays and dissemination of publication
- Paper submission and Presentation by PRC
- Guest Lecture on Policing in Pakistan: Evolving Dynamics
- Film Screening: Return to Sender: Women of Color in Colonial Postcards & the Politics of Representation
- Workshop on Univariate & Bivariate Analysis
- PRC Open-House: PRC Certification Program in Demography and Population Studies
- Dialogue: Advocating Family Planning with Parliamentarians, Ministers & Development Partners"
- Policy Dialogue: Beyond Big Envelopes: Turning Punjab's Budget into Child Outcomes
- Film Jansheen Launch Event
- Event: International Day of the Midwife (IDM)
- PRC Research Assistant Thesis Submission
- Advanced Data Visualization & Storytelling Training
- PRC participates in Budget Literacy and Legislative Oversight Workshop
- PRC, FCCU Participates in Provincial Consultation on Establishing the Punjab Forum of Women with Disabilities
- FCCU to Serve as a Forum for Dastak Society to Host Future Disability Inclusion and GBV Awareness Events
- PRC FCCU attends Learning Event on Population and Family Planning
- Quarterly Meeting of the Punjab Forum of Women with Disabilities (PFWWD)
- PRC Research Associate Publishes Article in The Nation
- PRC Director Visits Research Wing of the Directorate of Training, Research & Production
- Meet the PRC Research Assistant



SEMINAR ON THE LEGAL RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The Population Research Center (PRC) at Forman Christian College hosted a seminar titled **"The Legal Rights of Persons with Disabilities" on 26th February 2026**, focusing on the inclusion, rights, and empowerment of persons with disabilities in Pakistan. The event brought together experts, academics, government representatives, and activists to discuss challenges, gaps in policy implementation, and practical interventions to create meaningful change.

Dr. Jonathan Addleton, Rector FCCU, inaugurated the seminar by highlighting that disability is a societal, not individual, concern. He stressed the importance of representation and participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making, emphasizing empathy, collective responsibility, and incremental steps such as quotas and inclusive facilities to create systemic change. The event was followed by a welcome address by Dr. Sikandar Hayat, Dean of Social Sciences at FCCU, who presented the statistical and policy landscape of disability in Pakistan, noting discrepancies between reported figures and actual prevalence. He highlighted the major determinants of disability, the challenges in implementing existing policies, and the urgent need for societal mindset change alongside legal frameworks to empower persons with disabilities.



Further Ms. Tania Duraani, Punjab Provincial Coordinator & Gender/GBV Programme Analyst, UNFPA, in her special remarks, focused on UNFPA's gender-sensitive and intersectional approach, emphasizing how disability intersects with other forms of marginalization, particularly for women and girls. She showcased practical initiatives for accessibility, representation, and participation, calling on society to actively challenge barriers and ensure that persons with disabilities are included in decision-making.





Next, the guest Speaker Ms. Sana Khurshid, lawyer and disability rights advocate, shared her inspiring journey of overcoming a life-changing accident and highlighted the importance of viewing disability through a rights-based lens. She emphasized inclusion, representation, and the principle of “Nothing About Us Without Us.”



Dr. Aslam Bajwa, Provincial Lead at Greenstar Social Marketing Pakistan, spoke about his experiences living with a disability and discussed the challenges faced by persons with disabilities in Pakistan. He stressed the need for greater awareness, implementation of existing policies, and a shift in societal attitudes.



Sir Fahad Aftab, Assistant Professor of English, highlighted the importance of inclusive education and accessible learning environments. Drawing on his experience mentoring students with disabilities, he emphasized empowerment, empathy, and practical support measures.



In his concluding remarks, Dr. M. Vaqas Ali, Director of PRC, underscored the importance of meaningful representation, effective policy implementation, and collective responsibility in promoting disability inclusion and building a more equitable society.

SEMINAR ON THE POPULATION DYNAMICS AND DEMOGRAPHIC DIVIDEND



The Population Research Center (PRC) at Forman Christian College (A Chartered University) organized a seminar on “Population Dynamics and Demographic Dividend” on 5 March 2026. The event brought together students, faculty members, and Dr. Luay Shabaneh, Representative of UNFPA Pakistan, to discuss Pakistan’s demographic trends, opportunities, and policy challenges. The seminar emphasized the importance of investing in human capital to harness the country’s potential demographic dividend.

The event featured remarks from Dr. Jonathan S. Addleton (Rector, FCCU), Dr. Mohammad Vaqas Ali (Director, PRC), Dr. Luay Shabaneh (UNFPA Pakistan Representative), and Dr. Gloria Calib (Associate Vice Rector, FCCU).



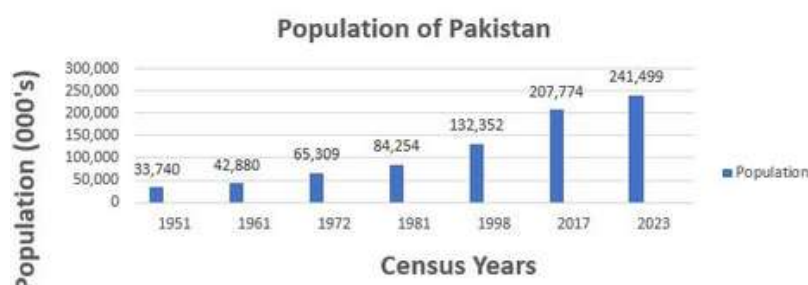
In his welcome address, Dr. Jonathan Addleton highlighted the importance of collaboration between academic institutions and international organizations in addressing population-related challenges. He emphasized that demographic change is not only statistical but also social in nature, and underscored the transformative role of education in shaping societies.

Dr. Mohammad Vaqas Ali noted that Pakistan is currently experiencing a critical demographic phase, with nearly 63% of its population in the working-age group. He stressed that the demographic dividend can only be realized through strategic investments in education, reproductive health, youth employment, women's participation, and human capital development.



Dr. Luay Shabaneh explained that the focus of modern demographic policy has shifted from population size to population quality. He highlighted that around 22 million children remain out of school in Pakistan and emphasized the need for greater investment in health, education, women's empowerment, and skills development. He also called for stronger policy coordination and accountability among government institutions and civil society.

Concluding the seminar, Dr. Gloria Calib highlighted the opportunities and challenges presented by Pakistan's large youth population. She emphasized the importance of education, women's empowerment, and addressing social issues such as child marriage, while encouraging students to become agents of positive change in society.



Source:

<https://www.inp.net.pk/article-detail/inp-wealthpk/fast-growing-population-spells-disaster-for-pakistan>

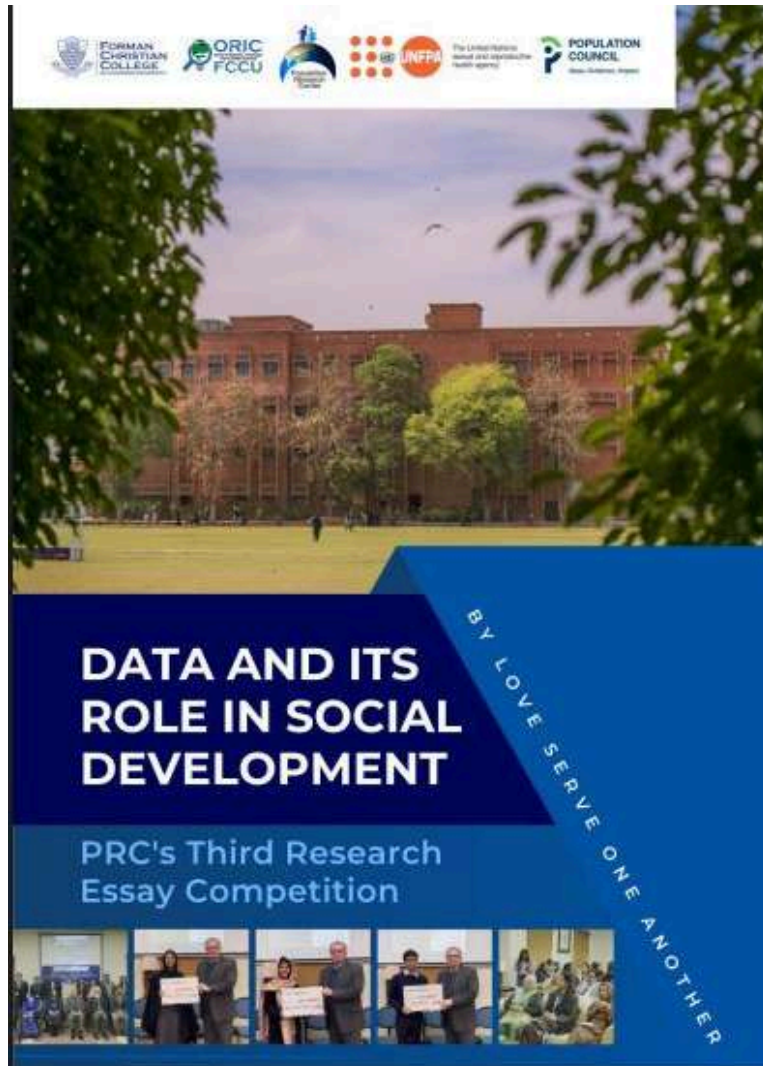
PAPER SUBMISSION AND PRESENTATION BY PRC

Ms. Khizra Nasir, a member of the PRC team, submitted and presented her paper titled "Gender Equality and Public Spending through the Lens of Education" at the Second FHSS Conference 2026, held at Information Technology University on 13th February 2026. The conference focused on the theme "Development Trajectories: Poverty, Inequality, and Human Capital in the Global South." The abstract of the paper is as follows:

Abstract: The current research analyzes the link between gender equality (primary education) and development expenditures for Pakistan using time series data from 1993 to 2024. Autoregressive distributive lag models (ARDL) were used to examine the association between gender equality and developmental expenditures, crude birth rates, rate of urbanization, and GNI per capita. Results revealed that variables were stationary at the level or first difference. After testing for stationarity, the bound test for cointegration showed the existence of a long-run relationship between variables. Results showed that government expenditures and GNI per capita have a positive and significant impact on the gender equality index, while crude birth rate and rate of urbanization negatively and significantly affect the gender equality index. These results ask for a stable and equitable distribution of resources while increasing public spending on education, aiming to increase gender equality. In addition, the negative association between gender equality and urbanization rate calls for inclusive urban education planning while incorporating education in health sector agendas.



PUBLISHED THE TOP 15 STUDENT ESSAYS AND DISSEMINATION OF PUBLICATION



The Population Research Center (PRC) at FCCU organized its third research essay and presentation competition on the theme "Data and Its Role in Social Development," funded by ORIC FCCU, on December 3, 2025, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Students were invited to write essays on one of the following topics:

- *Harnessing Big Data for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)*
- *The role of Data in Disaster Management and Climate Resilience*
- *The role of data in healthcare, education and development sector in lower and middle countries*
- *Artificial Intelligence and Data-Driven Development*
- *The Future of Smart Cities: Data as a Tool for Urban Development*
- *Measuring Success: The Role of Data in Evaluating Development Programs and Policy Making*

Shortlisted students presented their essays during the ceremony. A distinguished panel of judges, Dr. Ali Bhatti (Chairperson, Department of Economics), Dr. Shamaila Athar (Chairperson, Department of Sociology), Dr. Khadija Shakarullah (Chairperson, Department of Geography), Ms. Anum Shahzad (Assistant Director, Urban & Development, P&D Board), and Ms. Rukhsana Kauser (Director, TR & P, Health & Population Department) evaluated the presentations of the top five participants. All participants were awarded shields and certificates.

The PRC shortlisted the top 15 essays and selected the top three for first, second, and third prizes. These top five candidates also presented their essays during the ceremony. Additionally, PRC decided to include the top 15 essays in its Annual PRC Booklet 2025. The PRC team transcribed, edited, and finalized the top 15 essays for publication. The booklet was subsequently published by PRC in coordination with the Communications and Purchase Departments.

GUEST LECTURE ON POLICING IN PAKISTAN: EVOLVING DYNAMICS

The Population Research Centre (PRC) and Department of Sociology at FCCU organized an insightful guest lecture on 20th April 2026, featuring Dr. Syed Kaleem Imam, a distinguished retired police officer with over three decades of national and international experience. Drawing from his extensive career in Pakistan's civil services and United Nations missions, Dr. Imam delivered a thought-provoking session on the evolving dynamics of policing, crime, and justice.

In his lecture, Dr. Imam emphasized that crime is not merely a legal violation but a socially rooted phenomenon, often driven by economic inequality, weak institutions, and social disorganization. He explained key criminological theories, such as strain theory, to highlight how societal pressures can lead individuals toward deviant behavior. He further elaborated on the concept of policing as not just law enforcement, but a balance between maintaining order, ensuring justice, and building public trust.

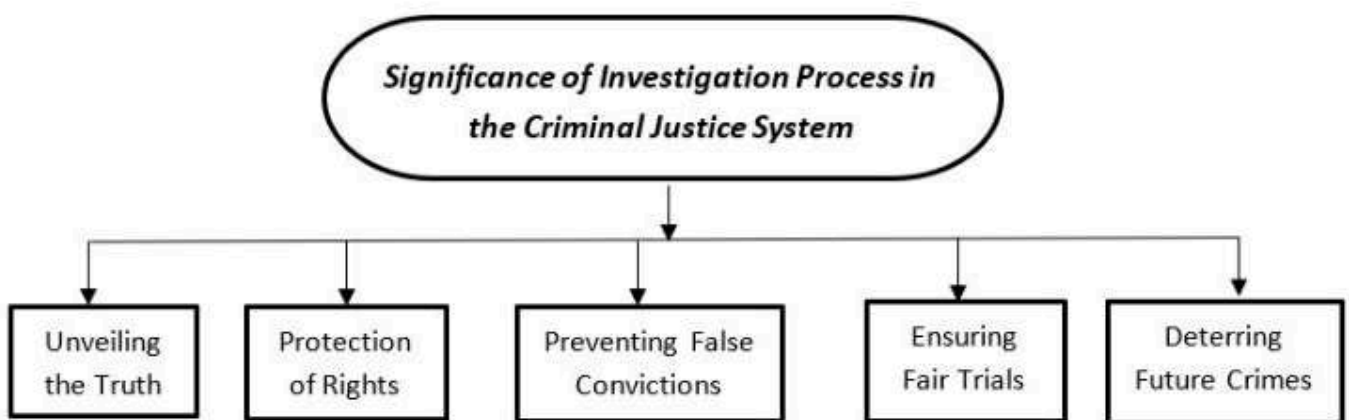


The lecture strongly resonates with PRC's thematic focus on social development, governance, and community well-being. By linking crime and policing to broader social structures, Dr. Imam's talk reinforced the idea that issues such as inequality, population pressures, and weak social systems directly impact societal stability and development. His insights encouraged students to think critically about the intersection of public policy, social justice, and institutional reform in shaping a more equitable society.



A major focus of the lecture was the structural and operational challenges within Pakistan's criminal justice system, including political interference, resource constraints, delayed justice, and a significant trust deficit between the public and law enforcement agencies. Dr. Imam stressed the importance of modern policing approaches such as community policing, digitalization, and intelligence-led strategies to address contemporary crimes like cybercrime and organized crime.

Importantly, he highlighted that effective policing cannot function in isolation; it requires active community participation and strong institutional frameworks. He underscored that trust and legitimacy are central to successful law enforcement, where citizens comply with laws not out of fear, but due to confidence in the system.



Source : <https://cssprepforum.com/criminal-justice-system-investigation-process/>

FILM SCREENING

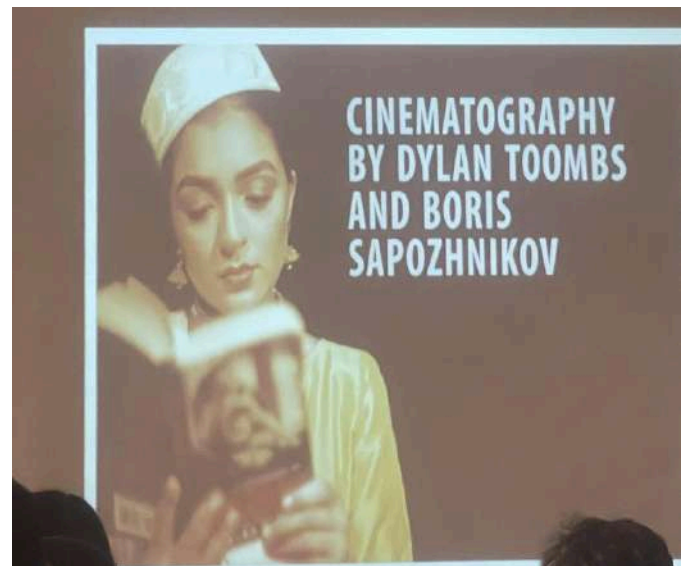
RETURN TO SENDER: WOMEN OF COLOR IN COLONIAL POSTCARDS & THE POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION

The Population Research Center (PRC) successfully organized a film screening on April 28 at E Block, Room 214, as part of its ongoing research initiative titled "Exploring Women's Rights & Gender Equity." The event brought together students and faculty for an engaging exploration of history, media, and representation.

The featured documentary, *Return to Sender: Women of Color in Colonial Postcards & the Politics of Representation*, directed by Ms. Mara Ahmed, offered a critical examination of colonial-era photography and its lasting impact on the portrayal of women of color. The film delves into how images of Indian women, widely circulated as postcards during the British Raj, were framed through an Orientalist gaze often reinforcing stereotypes and power hierarchies.

Through a powerful narrative approach, the documentary juxtaposes archival imagery with contemporary voices of South Asian women, who actively challenge, reinterpret, and reclaim these historical representations. The screening not only highlighted the politics embedded in visual culture but also encouraged viewers to question dominant

narratives that persist in modern media. The film is part of a project funded by the New York State Council on the Arts and originally premiered at the Cinema Arts Centre in October 2023, followed by critical discussions on representation in mainstream media.

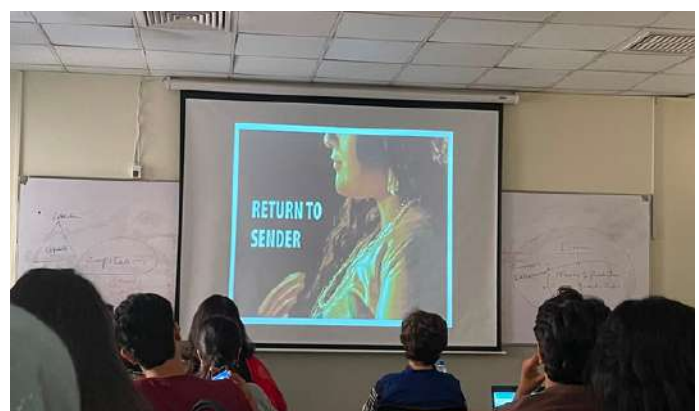


During her presentation, Ms. Mara Ahmed provided valuable context to the film, emphasizing that colonial images were not neutral documentation but carefully constructed tools of power and control. She explained how photography during the colonial period functioned as a means of "othering," portraying women of color as exotic, passive, and voiceless subjects. Ms. Ahmed highlighted the importance of reclaiming these narratives by centering the voices of those historically marginalized. She noted that "representation is never innocent, it reflects who holds the power to look, frame, and define."



She further discussed how contemporary reinterpretations serve as acts of resistance, allowing women to rewrite their own stories and identities. She underscored the interconnectedness of identity, colonial histories, and modern geopolitical boundaries. She also encouraged students to critically engage with visual media and to question whose perspectives are being amplified or silenced.

The screening was followed by an interactive discussion where participants reflected on themes of gender, colonial legacy, and media representation. Attendees appreciated the film's nuanced approach and its relevance to ongoing conversations about equity and inclusion.

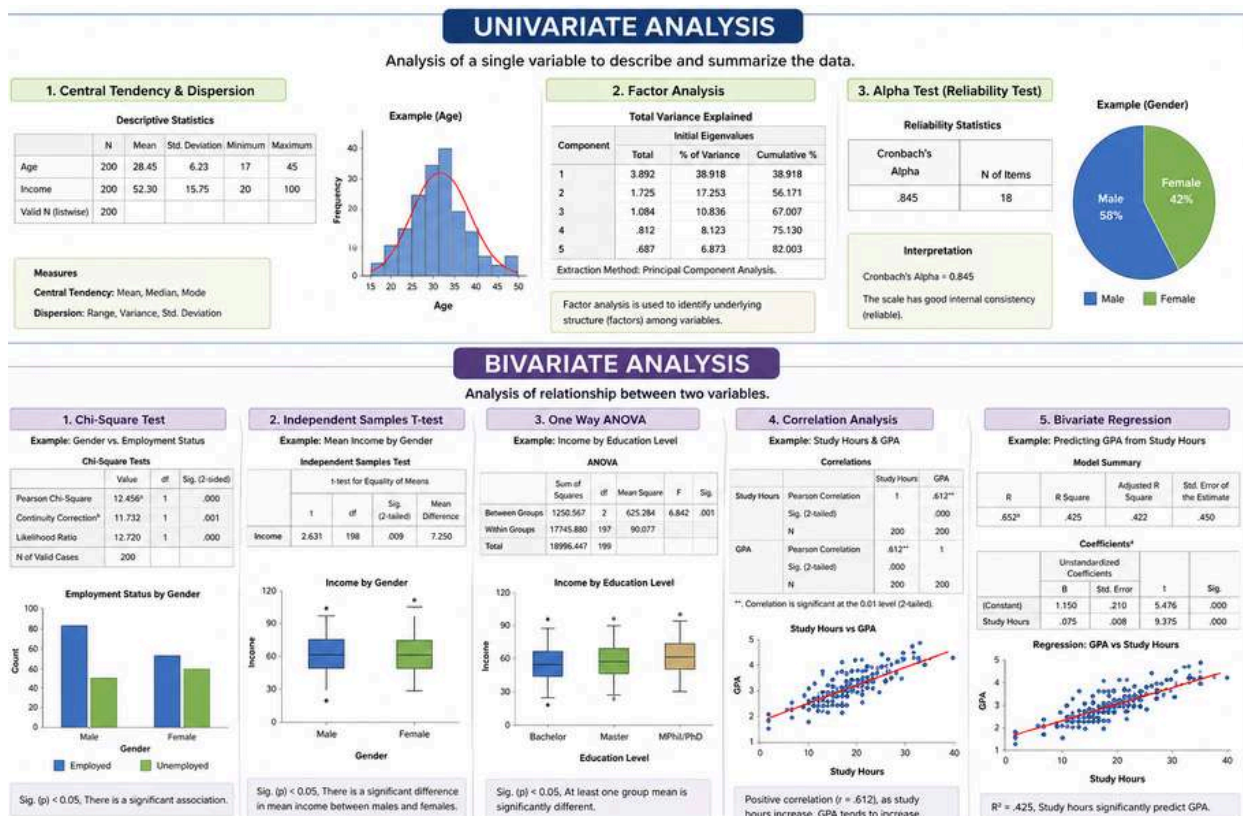


WORKSHOP ON UNIVARIATE & BIVARIATE ANALYSIS

Dr. M. Vaqas Ali, Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Director, Population Research Centre (PRC), conducted a comprehensive workshop titled **"Univariate and Bivariate Analysis using SPSS."** The workshop was specifically designed for Bachelor's and MPhil students to strengthen their quantitative data analysis skills and enhance their understanding of statistical techniques commonly used in academic research.

The training provided participants with both theoretical concepts and practical hands-on experience using SPSS. The workshop covered key topics in Univariate Analysis, including measures of central tendency and dispersion, factor analysis, and reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha. Participants also explored Bivariate Analysis techniques such as the Chi-square test, Independent Samples T-test, One-Way ANOVA, Pearson correlation, and Bivariate Regression.

Through interactive demonstrations and practical exercises, students gained valuable experience in selecting appropriate statistical tests, interpreting SPSS outputs, and applying statistical methods to research data. The workshop equipped participants with essential analytical skills required for conducting high-quality empirical research and academic projects.



PRC OPEN-HOUSE: PRC CERTIFICATION PROGRAM IN DEMOGRAPHY AND POPULATION STUDIES

The Population Research Center team members Ms. Syeda Zain Fatima (Administrative Officer) and Khizra Nasir (Research Associate) collaborated with different social sciences departments Economics, Statistics, Sociology and Geography to organize the Open House and visited baccalaureate classes to engage directly with students and discuss the significance of the certification program, addressing their questions and inquiries. Students were provided with details about the courses, program timeline, and registration process. Additionally, departmental representatives/course instructor explained how the certification program relates to their specific subjects. It was emphasized that the program would equip students with the skills to critically evaluate existing policies and initiatives on population management and control, both globally and regionally, with a particular focus on Pakistan.



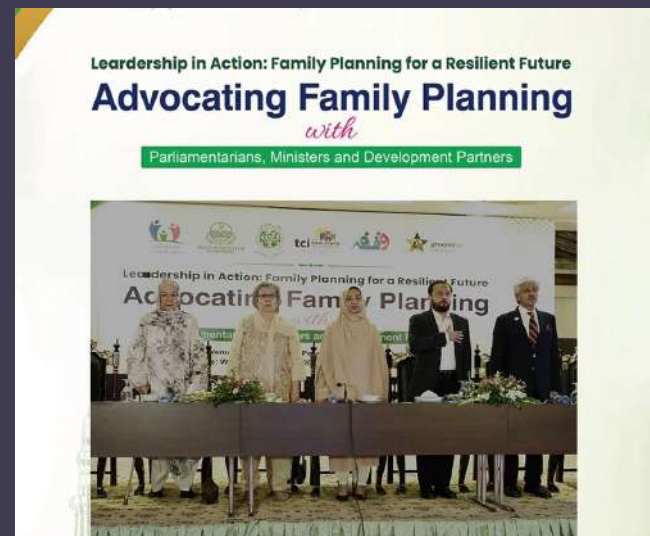
DIALOGUE: ADVOCATING FAMILY PLANNING WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS, MINISTERS & DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Dr. M. Vaqas Ali, Director Population Research Center (PRC), attended the dialogue titled **"Advocating Family Planning with Parliamentarians, Ministers & Development Partners"**, held at Palace Hall, Pearl Continental Hotel, Lahore, on Wednesday, 13 May 2026.

The dialogue brought together distinguished parliamentarians, policymakers, health sector leaders, and development partners to deliberate on the significance of family planning, population welfare, and collaborative policy approaches for the sustainable development of Punjab.

The event was graced by prominent dignitaries and speakers, including Aurangzaib Haider Khan, Khawaja Imran Nazir, Salman ur Rashid, Usman Ali Khan, Shahrukh Hassan, Syed Aziz ur Rab, Nadia Saquib, Saira Afzal Tarar, and Hafiz Waqas.

Organized by the Directorate General (Population Welfare), Health & Population Department Punjab, the dialogue emphasized the importance of policy advocacy, multi-sectoral collaboration, and public awareness in advancing family planning initiatives and strengthening community well-being to support sustainable development.



POLICY DIALOGUE: BEYOND BIG ENVELOPES: TURNING PUNJAB'S BUDGET INTO CHILD OUTCOMES

The PRC Director Dr. M. Vaqas Ali and various faculty members from FCCU attended the Pre-Budget Experts' Roundtable titled "Beyond Big Envelopes: Turning Punjab's Budget into Child Outcomes", held on 14 May 2026 at Shalimar Hall, Faletti's Hotel, Lahore. The event was jointly organized by the Government of Punjab and UNICEF Pakistan to discuss strategies for improving child outcomes through effective public spending and evidence-based budgeting. The event brought together policymakers, development partners, academics, researchers, civil society representatives, and government officials to discuss the effectiveness of public spending on children and identify priority reforms for improving child outcomes in Punjab. The agenda included presentations on the relationship between public expenditures and child well-being, followed by an expert panel discussion on policy priorities for the fiscal year 2026–27 and beyond.



The participation of PRC members was intended to enhance understanding of current policy discussions related to population, health, education, nutrition, and social protection. As a research center focused on population dynamics and human development, PRC recognizes that investments in children significantly influence future demographic trends, health outcomes, educational attainment, and socioeconomic development. The event provided an opportunity for PRC members to engage with experts and policymakers, learn about evidence-based approaches to improving child well-being, and explore how public investments can contribute to sustainable development outcomes.



FILM JANSHEEN LAUNCH EVENT

The Population Research Center team members Ms. Syeda Zain Fatima (Administrative Officer) and Khizra Nasir (Research Associate) attended the launch event of the drama serial "Jansheen" on 18th May 2026 at Crystal Hall A, PC Hotel Lahore. The event was organized with the support of the Punjab Family Planning Program, Punjab Population Innovation Fund (PPIF), and the Health & Population Department, Government of Punjab.

The launch brought together representatives from academia, development organizations, government departments, media, and public health sectors to introduce a drama series aimed at raising awareness about population and family planning issues through entertainment and storytelling. PRC members attended the event to gain insights into innovative approaches for communicating population and reproductive health messages to the public. As a center dedicated to research on population dynamics, family planning, reproductive health, gender issues, and social development, PRC recognizes the importance of media as a powerful tool for influencing public attitudes and behaviors.

The event provided an opportunity to understand how entertainment-based interventions can complement research and advocacy efforts by translating complex demographic and health issues into relatable narratives for wider audiences.



EVENT: INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE MIDWIFE (IDM)

The Population Research Center team members Ms. Syeda Zain Fatima (Administrative Officer) and Khizra Nasir (Research Associate) attended the International Day of the Midwife (IDM) 2026 event organized at Fatima Jinnah Medical University, Lahore on 21st May 2026. The event was held under the global theme "One Million More Midwives", highlighting the critical role of midwives in improving maternal and newborn health outcomes worldwide. The program brought together representatives from academia, healthcare institutions, government departments, professional associations, and development partners to discuss the importance of strengthening the midwifery workforce.



The participation of PRC members was aligned with the Center's commitment to advancing research, awareness, and policy dialogue on population, reproductive health, family planning, maternal health, and gender equity. Attending the event provided an opportunity to understand current developments in midwifery education and practice and to explore their implications for population health and sustainable development.



PRC RESEARCH ASSISTANT: THESIS SUBMISSION

Ms. Noor ul Sehar, Research Assistant of Poulation Research Center presented her thesis. The thesis topic was around Digital literacy and Maternal Health.

She presented it in front of Dr Farhan Yousaf (Director of Institute of Social and Cultural Studies, University of the Punjab) & Dr Vaqas Ali (Associate Professor, Sociology).

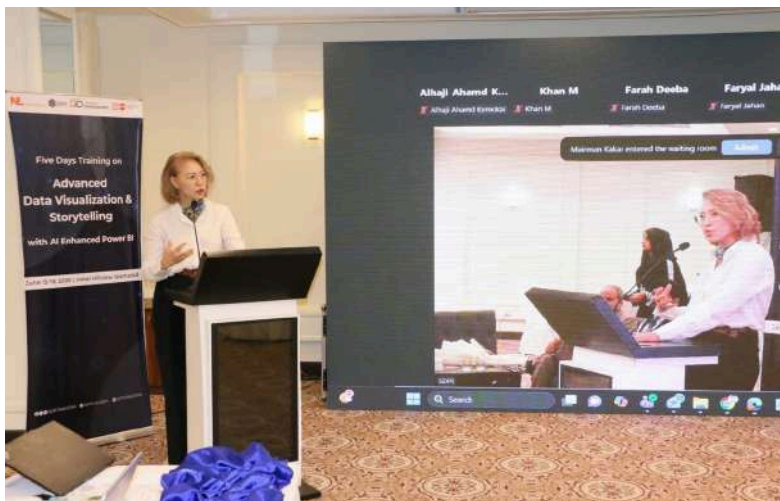


Abstract:

This research study aimed to find how mobile phone ownership and mass media exposure influence ante-natal care utilization. Access to maternal health care remains a significant challenge despite the development and growth of the regions in Punjab. With increasing mobile phone access and usage among people, digital access is potentially a transformative factor for up-taking antenatal care utilization and improving health services utilization. Through the sociological lens, this study has further investigated on how mobile phone access, media exposure influence antenatal care utilization. This is a quantitative study and by using secondary data from the Pakistan Demographic and Health Survey PDHS 2017-18. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) has been used to do the analysis using the bivariate and multi-variate logistic regression technique for analysis. The analysis found that women with internet usage have 2.01% significantly higher chances to complete their ante-natal care visits and 1.18% higher chances of women with mobile phone ownership to complete ante-natal visits. The findings of the study revealed that mobile phone ownership and digital access mainly use of internet have found to be a significant determinant in improving the utilization of ante-natal care among women in Punjab. Keeping this into account, the result also revealed that women's education and wealth are the main predictor of better ante-natal care services utilization.

ADVANCED DATA VISUALIZATION & STORYTELLING TRAINING – ISLAMABAD 15–19 JUNE 2026

Under UNFPA Pakistan's Data for Development (D4D) Initiative, a five day training on Advanced Data Visualization and Storytelling with AI Enhanced Power BI has commenced in Islamabad. Participants from the **Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, the Ministry of Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, provincial Planning and Development Departments, provincial Bureaus of Statistics, Population Research Centres, the Commissionerate of Afghan Refugees, and UN agencies** are strengthening their capacities in data analytics, dashboard development, AI applications, and evidence based decision making.



The training was inaugurated by Dr. Kadyrkulova Gulnara, Deputy Representative, UNFPA Pakistan and is being implemented by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) with support of the Government of the Netherlands. Ms. Noor ul sehar and Mr. Yalmaz Research Assistants from the PRC,FCCU participated in the training.



The training commenced with opening remarks by Dr. Sajid Amin (SDPI), who welcomed the participants and highlighted the significance of data-driven decision-making. This was followed by an introduction to the Data for Development (D4D) initiative by Dr. Muqaddar Shah (UNFPA), who provided an overview of the program and its objectives. Dr. Gulnara then shared valuable insights on the growing importance of data and evidence-based policymaking.

The technical sessions were led by Dr. Khurram from Air University, who introduced the training objectives before participants briefly introduced themselves. The participants represented diverse organizations, including the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, Planning and Development Board, Ministry of Planning and Development, and Population Research Centres from Karachi, Islamabad, Peshawar, Lahore, and Quetta.

The first day focused on revisiting concepts learned in the previous Power BI workshop and strengthening participants' understanding of:

- Introduction to Microsoft Power BI
- Key features and capabilities of Power BI
- Exploring data visualization tools and visuals
- Data visualization and storytelling concepts
- The advantages of Power BI over Microsoft Excel, particularly its ability to handle datasets of up to 100 million rows, connect with multiple data sources, provide interactive visualizations, and support collaborative reporting.

The day concluded with a practical task where participants demonstrated and reflected on the concepts learned during the session.



These exercises emphasized the importance of preparing high-quality data before creating meaningful visualizations.

Day three introduced participants to Data Analysis Expressions (DAX), an essential component of Power BI used for creating calculated columns, measures, and advanced analytics.

The second day concentrated on Power Query and the essential processes of data cleaning and transformation. Participants explored the Power BI interface in greater detail and learned how to prepare raw datasets for analysis.

The sessions covered:

- Data cleaning and transformation techniques
- Working with Power Query
- Creating bookmarks and interactive buttons
- Applying different visualization features
- Hands-on activities to reinforce practical learning



Participants also learned techniques for refining datasets through editing, adding, and removing unnecessary information. To strengthen their understanding of data storytelling, participants were divided into two groups for an interactive debate on fund allocation, using visualized data to support evidence-based arguments. The activity demonstrated how effective visualizations can transform data into compelling stories for decision-making.

The fourth day focused on developing complete Power BI solutions by creating collaborative workspaces and interactive dashboards.

Participants learned how to:

- **Create Power BI workspaces**
- **Design professional dashboards**
- **Publish reports using Power BI Service**
- **Develop and manage Power BI applications (Apps)**

The practical sessions enabled participants to understand how organizations can effectively share dashboards and reports with stakeholders for collaborative decision-making.



developed an interactive dashboard and presented key insights through effective data storytelling. The presentation was delivered by PRC team member, Ms.Noor.

Following the presentations, Dr. Naeem Uz Zafar, Chief Statistician at the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, joined the session online and shared valuable insights on the importance of quality data, evidence generation, and effective data utilization for informed policymaking.

The training concluded with closing remarks and a vote of thanks by Dr. Sajid Amin, followed by a group photograph and a team lunch, providing participants with an opportunity to celebrate a successful learning experience and strengthen professional networking.



The final day showcased the knowledge and skills acquired throughout the training. Participants presented dashboards developed during group assignments using real datasets.

Our group, consisting of representatives from the Planning and Development Board Islamabad, Sindh Bureau of Statistics, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bureau of Statistics, and the Population Research Centre Lahore, analyzed data provided by the Sindh Bureau of Statistics on informal education enrolment. Using Power BI, the team



PRC PARTICIPATES IN BUDGET LITERACY AND LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT WORKSHOP 17–18 JUNE 2026

The Population Research Center (PRC), Forman Christian College (FCCU) participated in the two-day Budget Literacy and Legislative Oversight Workshop, jointly organized by UNFPA Pakistan, UNICEF Pakistan, and the Provincial Assembly of the Punjab. The workshop brought together Members of the Provincial Assembly (MPAs) to strengthen their understanding of public budgeting, fiscal planning, and legislative oversight.



Inaugurating the workshop, Punjab Assembly Speaker Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan emphasised that while elected representatives are deeply attuned to their constituents' grievances, robust legislative scrutiny demands a technical understanding of budgetary frameworks.



He stressed that informed debate and strict public expenditure oversight are vital to strengthening democratic governance and ensuring the judicious utilisation of public resources.



The opening technical session, titled State of the Economy, was conducted by renowned economist and former federal finance minister Prof Dr Hafiz A. Pasha.

Dr Pasha briefed the parliamentarians on Punjab's current economic outlook, revenue trends, and the daunting fiscal choices ahead for the 2026–27 provincial budget.

Former Senator Mohsin Leghari facilitated a session designed to demystify complex budget documents, teaching MPAs how to interpret the provincial budget in plain language.

The workshop, attended by Unicef Punjab Chief of Field Office Ramiz Behbudov, UNFPA Provincial Lead Tania Durrani, Program Analyst (Population & Development) UNFPA Muqaddar Shah and legislators from both sides of the aisle.

The workshop focused on public financial management, budget execution, and mechanisms for effective legislative oversight.

PRC, FCCU PARTICIPATES IN PROVINCIAL CONSULTATION ON ESTABLISHING THE PUNJAB FORUM OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

On 1st & 2nd July 2026, the Population Research Center (PRC), Forman Christian College (FCCU) participated in the Provincial Consultation on Establishing the Punjab Forum of Women with Disabilities (PFWWD) and Strengthening Disability Protection Systems to Address Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Child Marriage, and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR). The consultation was organized by Dastak Society with the technical support of UNFPA under the AAWAZ II Programme, funded by UK Aid, in collaboration with the Council on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Punjab. The event was held at the Conference Room (3rd Floor), the Nishat Hotel, Gulberg, Lahore.

The consultation brought together representatives from government departments, disability rights organizations, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), women and child protection service providers, SRHR professionals, and civil society organizations to discuss the establishment of the Punjab Forum of Women with Disabilities (PFWWD) and strengthen disability-inclusive protection systems in Punjab.



FCCU TO SERVE AS A FORUM FOR DASTAK SOCIETY TO HOST FUTURE DISABILITY INCLUSION AND GBV AWARENESS EVENTS

During the consultation, FCCU actively contributed to discussions on promoting inclusive policies, protecting the rights of women and girls with disabilities, and fostering cross-sector collaboration. A significant outcome of the meeting on 1st and 2nd July 2026, was the mutual agreement that **FCCU will serve as a collaborative forum for Dastak Society to organize future consultations, awareness sessions, and capacity-building events at the university.** This collaboration reflects FCCU's commitment to promoting inclusion, advancing research, and supporting community engagement on disability rights, gender equality, and social development.



As women leaders with disabilities came together to shape the future of disability rights and gender equality through the Provincial Consultation on Establishing the Punjab Forum of Women with Disabilities (PFWWD) under National Forum of Women With Disabilities launched by Honourable Member Provincial Assembly of Punjab Salma Hashmi and Honourable Senator Shaista Pervaiz Sahiba.

The Forum will champion critical priorities including:

- **Prevention and response to Gender-Based Violence (GBV)**
- **Ending child marriage**
- **Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR)**
- **Improving access to justice, healthcare, education, social protection, and inclusive services**
- **Strengthening disability-inclusive policies and legislation**
- **Building leadership, solidarity, and collaboration among women with disabilities**

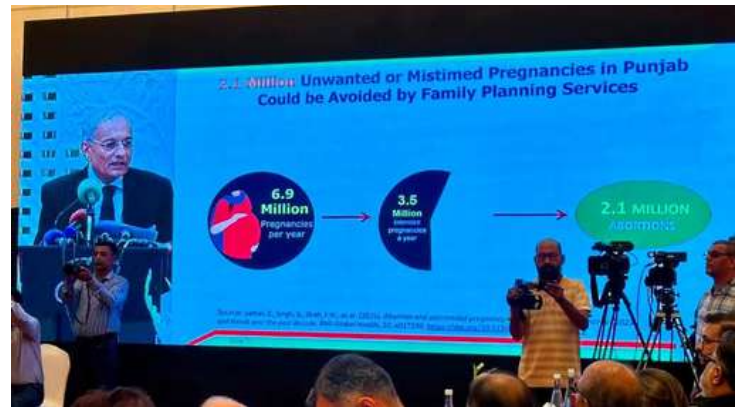


PRC, FCCU ATTENDS LEARNING EVENT ON POPULATION AND FAMILY PLANNING

The Population Research Center (PRC), Forman Christian College (FCCU) attended a high-level learning event on 2nd July 2026, organized by the Punjab Health and Population Department with the collaboration of the Population Council. The event was attended by Provincial Minister for Health and Population Khawaja Imran Nazir, Senior Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb, Country Advisor, Population Council Zeba Sathar, Secretary Health and Population Nadia Saqib, Zakia Shahnawaz, Jehan Ara Wattoo, and British Deputy High Commissioner Ben Warrington, along with representatives from government, academia, and development organizations.



The learning event focused on addressing Punjab's population challenges through strengthened family planning initiatives, evidence-based policymaking, high-quality research, reliable population data, and sustainable development strategies. Participants discussed the importance of integrated approaches to improve health and population outcomes across the province.



The event also highlighted the ongoing integration of the Health and Population Welfare Departments, aimed at delivering more coordinated health and family planning services throughout Punjab. Initiatives such as the Community Health Inspector Programme, Field Hospitals, and Clinics on Wheels were showcased as key mechanisms for expanding access to essential healthcare and family planning services, ultimately contributing to the vision of a healthier and more prosperous Punjab through population stabilization.

PRC, FCCU's participation reflects its continued commitment to supporting evidence-based research, policy dialogue, and collaborative efforts that promote sustainable population and public health outcomes in Pakistan.



QUARTERLY MEETING OF THE PUNJAB FORUM OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES (PFWWD)

The Population Research Centre (PRC), Forman Christian College (A Chartered University), in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and Dastak Society, successfully hosted the Quarterly Meeting of the Punjab Forum of Women with Disabilities (PFWWD) on Monday, July 27, 2026, at FCCU, Lahore. The meeting marked a significant milestone in strengthening provincial efforts to promote the rights, inclusion, and meaningful participation of women with disabilities in Punjab.



The event commenced with welcome remarks by Dr. M. Vaqas Ali, Director of the Population Research Centre and Secretariat of the Forum, Ms. Tania Durrani, Provincial Coordinator, UNFPA Pakistan, and Ms. Saba Shaikh, Executive Director of Dastak Society. The speakers highlighted the importance of creating an inclusive platform that amplifies the voices of women with disabilities and promotes coordinated action for their social, economic, and political empowerment.



The Forum, which was officially declared during the Provincial Consultation on Establishing the Punjab Forum of Women with Disabilities held on July 1–2, 2026, has designated the Population Research Centre (PRC), FCCU, as its Secretariat. The inaugural quarterly meeting brought together representatives from organizations of persons with disabilities, civil society organizations, government stakeholders, development partners, and disability rights advocates to establish the Forum's governance structure and strategic direction.

During the meeting, participants formally shared the signed declaration constituting the Punjab Forum of Women with Disabilities and reviewed and endorsed the Forum's Terms of Reference (TORs). Members also elected the Forum's office bearers, nominated focal persons, and constituted the Steering Committee, laying the foundation for effective governance and collaborative leadership.

The Forum further discussed key organizational matters, including its inclusion as the Punjab Chapter on the National Forum of Women with Disabilities (NFWWD) website, approval of the official PFWWD logo, and the review of recommendations generated during the provincial consultation held earlier this month.

A special session was organized to commemorate World Intellectual Disability Day 2026, focusing on the rights and inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities, particularly women and girls. The session emphasized the importance of accessible services, equal opportunities, protection from discrimination, and greater participation of women with intellectual disabilities in decision-making processes.

The gathering was honored by the presence of Ms. Salma Saeed Hashmi, Chairperson of the Parliamentary Caucus for Children with Disabilities, Provincial Assembly of Punjab, who reaffirmed the government's commitment to strengthening disability-inclusive legislation and fostering collaboration with organizations representing persons with disabilities.

One of the major highlights of the event was the Signing of the Declaration of Commitment, formally connecting the



Punjab Forum of Women with Disabilities with the Parliamentary Caucus for Children with Disabilities. This commitment reflects a shared vision to advance disability-inclusive policies, strengthen institutional collaboration, and advocate for the rights of women and girls with disabilities across Punjab.

Participants concluded the meeting by discussing future priorities, confirming the schedule for the next quarterly meeting, and reaffirming their collective commitment to ensuring that women with disabilities are meaningfully represented in policy dialogue, development planning, and public life.

The event concluded with closing remarks, a group photograph, and a networking lunch, celebrating the beginning of a collaborative journey toward a more inclusive and equitable Punjab.



PRC RESEARCH ASSOCIATE PUBLISHES ARTICLE IN THE NATION

The Population Research Center (PRC), Forman Christian College (A Chartered University), proudly congratulates Ms. Khizra Nasir, Research Associate at PRC and PhD Scholar in Applied Economics, on the publication of her opinion article, "Before the Waters," in The Nation on 2 August 2026.

The article highlights the urgent need for Pakistan to shift from a reactive to a proactive approach in managing flood disasters. Drawing lessons from recurring monsoon floods and the devastating 2022 floods, the author argues that effective disaster management begins long before heavy rains arrive. The article emphasizes that while climate change has intensified flood risks, the scale of destruction is largely shaped by human decisions regarding land use, urban planning, environmental governance, and institutional preparedness.

The article further discusses the role of rapid population growth, encroachment on floodplains, weak urban infrastructure, and inadequate disaster preparedness in increasing Pakistan's vulnerability to floods. It calls for stronger early warning systems, science-based land-use planning, protection of natural drainage systems, resilient



infrastructure, and coordinated action among government institutions, academia, civil society, and local communities. The central message is that Pakistan has the knowledge and capacity to reduce flood risks, provided that timely policy decisions and preventive measures are implemented before disasters occur.

The PRC congratulates Ms. Khizra Nasir on this important contribution to the national discourse on climate resilience, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development.

Read the full article: [Before the Waters – The Nation](#)

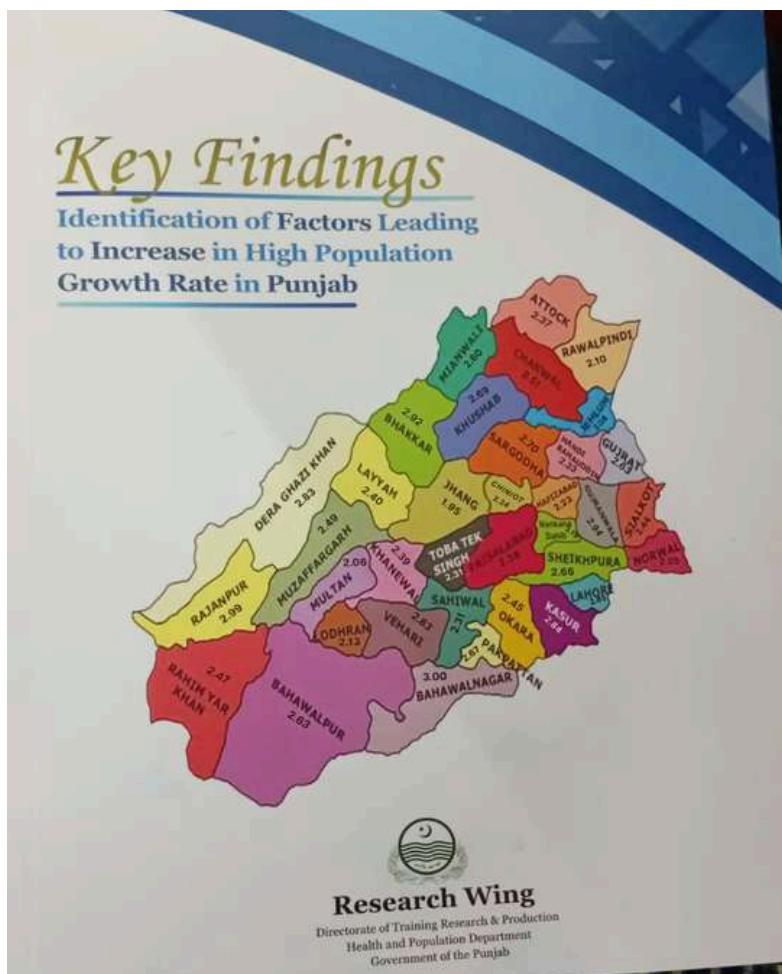
**PRC DIRECTOR VISITS RESEARCH
WING OF THE DIRECTORATE OF
TRAINING, RESEARCH &
PRODUCTION, HEALTH & POPULATION
DEPARTMENT, GOVERNMENT OF
PUNJAB**

Dr. M. Vaqas Ali, Director, Population Research Center (PRC), Forman Christian College (A Chartered University), visited the Research Wing, Directorate of Training, Research & Production, Health & Population Department, Government of Punjab, to explore opportunities for strengthening institutional collaboration in population research.



The meeting focused on identifying areas of mutual interest, including collaborative research on fertility, sexual and reproductive health, and future population-related research projects. Both institutions discussed avenues for developing joint research initiatives that can generate evidence for informed policymaking and contribute to addressing emerging demographic challenges in Punjab.

During the visit, the Research Wing shared an overview of its ongoing research activities and presented the key findings of its recent study on the identification of factors contributing to the high population



growth rate in Punjab.

The keyfindings highlighted important demographic and socioeconomic determinants of population growth and emphasized the need for evidence-based interventions to support sustainable population management.

To strengthen academic engagement, Dr. Vaqas Ali proposed creating opportunities for FCCU students to visit the Research Wing and learn about its research methodologies, projects, and policy-oriented work. Such exposure would help bridge the gap between academic learning and practical research in the field of population studies.

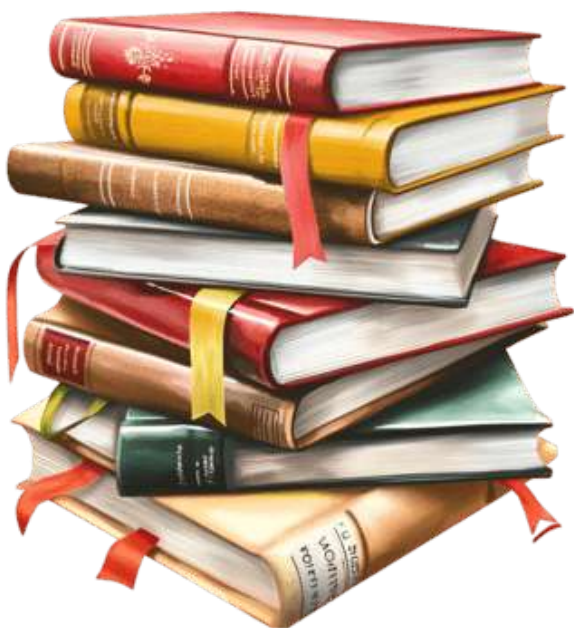
Dr. Vaqas Ali also mentioned that the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Population Research Center, FCCU, and the Health & Population Department remains in effect, reaffirming both institutions' shared commitment to expanding collaboration in research, knowledge exchange, and capacity building. The meeting concluded with a mutual commitment to further strengthening this partnership through joint initiatives that advance population research and support evidence-informed policy development in Punjab.



MEET THE PRC RESEARCH ASSISTANT

My name is Yalmaz Alam, a SUSI Scholar and final-year undergraduate student. Prior to joining FCCU, I was the Pre-O-Level English and Humanities teacher at Bloomfield Hall School in my home city of Multan. I am majoring in Linguistics and have a Double Minor in Sociology and Political Science. I am currently a Senior Tutor at the FCCU Writing Center and a Research Associate at the FCCU Population Research Center.

After completing an internship at the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, I joined the PRC as a transcriber in late-2024. Soon after, with my selection by the U.S. Department of State for the Study of the U.S. Institutes Program, I got to study Public Policy at UMass Amherst and then went on to study Social Policy at Lingnan University in Hong Kong on an exchange semester.



It was after this training that Dr. Vaqas invited me to be Lead Author on a policy report on fertility that was eventually published in State of Pakistan Population Report 2025 by NUST-UNFPA and my role within the PRC evolved into what it is currently.

I was glad to have been nominated by the PRC for the D4D Advanced Training Workshop on Power BI and it was a worthwhile experience that allowed me to engage with senior officials in a formal setting. I will also soon be presenting my undergraduate thesis at the University of Edinburgh and I am grateful to Dr. Vaqas for his guidance and mentorship that has played a part in shaping me to become a better academic. I look forward to contributing to the PRC and academia through my research.



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