



An Exploration of Sociodemographic Determinants to Accessing Justice from a Socio-legal Approach

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Abstract: Sociodemographic variables are knowable and provide information on the individual's social, economic, and personal position. Access to justice has not always remained uniform; it has been subjective to various factors, including the sociodemographic of the litigants. This study examined popular sociodemographics as the determinant of justice accessibility from a socio-legal approach. The study used a quantitative methodology and cross-sectional design. It was exploratory and descriptive in type. 547 district court litigants in Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan participated in this study. A survey method was used to collect the data on a closed-ended questionnaire, which was analyzed by applying IBM SPSS version 22. Overall, the study rendered important empirical results and revealed that sociodemographic indicators are related to justice accessibility, except for one religious affiliation. Additionally, the study identified a weak socioeconomic status of the litigants. The study concluded that sociodemographic variables are the factors that determine the justice accessibility of an individual. Justice accessibility can be increased by improving the socioeconomic conditions of the litigants and conducting more studies on a larger scale to understand the relationship of sociodemographics with access to justice.

Key Words: Sociodemographic, Determinants, Accessing Justice, Socio-legal Approach, Exploration

Introduction

Access to justice is termed as the ability of individuals to resolve their legal issues utilizing a variety of justice and legal services. Such services consist of the formal courts, legal information, representation by the counsel, ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution), and enforcement mechanisms (OECD, 2019). Access in the terminology of access to justice denotes "to reach". While justice signifies a lawful right and can be secured according to the law. Hence, accessing justice from this point of view is a mechanism of reaching something that we are lawfully entitled to, and the same is our right. In another sense, it is an ability to obtain a remedy for the violation of any right or entitlement and reach the system of justice, including courts, under the approved standards of national and international law (Saleem et al., 2011).

Access to justice term provides different meanings. In a broader sense, it represents services owned by the state, such as legal, welfare, education, and health services. In this regard, the notion of access to justice constitutes a system of equality, ensuring social justice wherein equal opportunities and treatment can be afforded. This broader concept of accessing justice also attracts the equal allocation of social as well as public services and goods. Moreover, this wide scope of the principle of accessibility of justice is established on the universal doctrine of equality that requires the preparedness by the institutions,

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especially the legal institutions, and eventually public reach to the justice system equally. Consequently, the injustice can be redressed, and the rights of the public can be restored (UNDP, 2005). The term accessibility of justice should not be confined to the extent of reforming the judiciary only. It is a term that has some broader horizons, including other elements of the justice system, such as police, prosecutors, witnesses, and even bar associations (Mughal, 2012). Apart from the broader meaning, the term access to justice has a descriptive sense as well. Descriptively, it indicates the degree to which the public reaches the services that have a legal nature and are essential for the vindication as well as protection of legal rights (Cornford, 2016, p. 28).

Demographics describes statistically the characteristics of any population based on elements like age, sex, and race. The data in a demographic analysis statistically denotes the socioeconomic information comprising education, employment, income, marriage, birth, and death rates (Hayes, 2024). Sociodemographics combine social and demographic elements to describe people in a particular population. Sociodemographics talks about the different social and demographic characteristics that assist in identifying what the members of the group have in common. Hence, sociodemographics describe the age, employment, education, income levels, religion, race, ethnicity, and migration of the participants (Busayo, 2024). Aubagna (2020) categorized sociodemographics into three main branches. Firstly, the sociological (social) is comprised of age, gender, the composition of the family, and the size of the household. Secondly, the demographics as geographic characteristics consisting of city, county, region, and country. Third, economic characteristics, such as education and profession, are also listed in the sociodemographics.

However, justice accessibility has not always remained uniform; it is being influenced by many factors, including the sociodemographic of the litigants. Socioeconomic position, information access, geography, persistent discrimination of social norms, etc., are among the sociodemographic determinants of the accessibility of justice (Bosio, 2023, as cited in Saboo, n.d.). Gramatikov et al. (2021) identified variables of sociodemographics like age, gender, work status, education, and a litigant living in a rural or urban setting as resisting factors for justice accessibility.

On the other end, the socio-legal approach is a methodological approach used in legal research (Snigdha, 2023; Watkins, 2017). McConville (2017) has defined the socio-legal approach as an interdisciplinary perspective of legal research that uses different methods from other fields, including social sciences and humanities. Utilizing the methods of social sciences, the socio-legal approach analyzes the law and identifies its association with society. Banakar and Travers, (2005) are of the same view and stated that the socio-legal approach can be utilized in social sciences to collect the data and analyze it to understand the social phenomenon. So, Socio-legal research, which has its roots primarily in the social sciences, can be considered theoretical, methodological, and pragmatic. A form of socio-legal study basically means that the legal researcher is tasked with navigating the deep intricacies that are ingrained in the culture.

Objectives

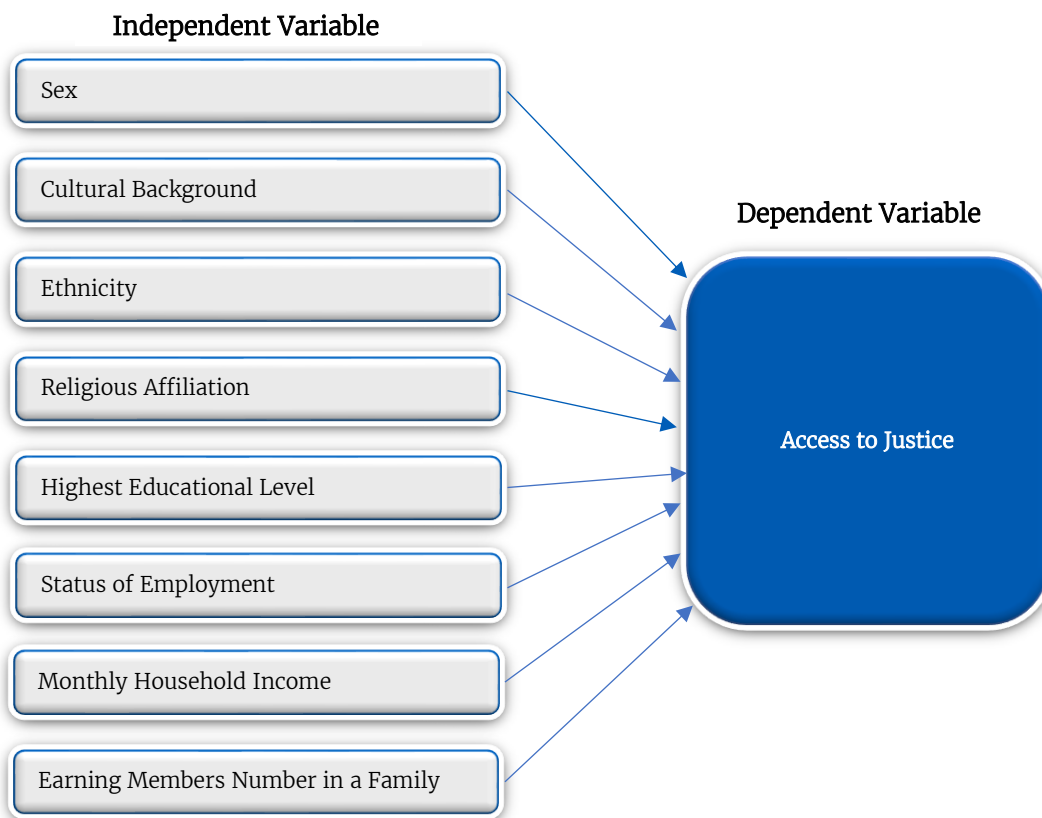
In order to fill the gap in the earlier literature on access to justice, this study aims to examine the different sociodemographics as the determinants of accessing justice from the socio-legal point of view.

Hypothesis

1. The sex of the litigants and access to justice are significantly associated.
2. The cultural background of the litigants and access to justice are significantly associated.
3. The ethnicity of the litigants and access to justice are significantly associated.
4. The religious affiliation of the litigants and access to justice are significantly associated.
5. The highest educational level of the litigants and access to justice are significantly associated.
6. The litigant's status of employment and access to justice are significantly associated.
7. The monthly household income of litigants and access to justice are significantly associated.
8. The earning members number in a family and access to justice are significantly associated.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework of this Study



Literature Review

Fung and Dong (2024) recognized access to justice as a key social determinant of health. The study identified the sociodemographic, health, and civil justice system perception using the cross-sectional design and legal epidemiological method. To determine the relationship between ATJ and sociodemographics and how the ATJ is a social determinant of health, the study used age, marital status, educational level, monthly income of a household, household size, sex and sexual orientation, native language, birthplace, and ethnicity as the sociodemographic having relationship with ATJ from the perspective of health. Dahlvik and Pohn-Weidinger (2021) studied the sociodemographic composition of the people who use the ombuds office to access administrative justice and explored the impact of institutional design on access to justice. The main objective of this study was to analyze using sociodemographics the extent of the inequalities that are present in the accessibility of civil justice has the occurrence in administrative justice as well. Quiceno et al. (2022) identified a correlation between socioeconomic elements (sociodemographics) and efficiency aspects, intending to know the relationship between social and environmental variable factors and justice provision services.

Adongo et al. (2023), using gender and costs as the determinant of justice accessibility, identified that for women, informal courts are affordable and easily accessible, especially for those women who are not able to use formal courts due to high costs. They also utilized another sociodemographic of rural communities and recommended the integration of the informal courts with formal procedures to provide equal access to justice to the people of rural areas. Bilchitz (2017) focused on the sociodemographics of education and funding (income). The study addressed the question of improving justice accessibility, particularly from the perspective of socioeconomic rights. The study also addressed the obstacles caused by the shortcomings of the sociodemographics of education and income. Lundgren (2023) described the self-represented litigants and highlighted their issues in terms of sociodemographics they face while accessing justice. Many economic, social, and geographic sociodemographic indicators affected the self-represented litigants, eventually, their justice accessibility remained unmet. The reasons behind this hindrance to access to justice were the various sociodemographics like low income and education, shortage



of legal resources or assistance, and low digital literacy rates. Moreover, the study identified that owing to these sociodemographics, the power remains imbalanced in the courtrooms, and justice accessibility for such self-represented litigants is reduced as well.

Akarçay and Polat (2023) reported that social indicators of low educational level and religious affiliation both reduce justice accessibility in terms of the reporting of crimes by both men and women. Women are affected more due to other sociodemographic indicators like marital status, low income, and gender-related social pressure, consequently, the justice reachability of women is hindered. Awareness is another social indicator that this study identified as a resisting factor of justice accessibility. Islam et al. (2024) focused on the challenges in reaching the system of criminal justice. The study revealed that socioeconomic status and other sociodemographics like discrimination are the significant hindering factors to accessing the justice system, particularly the criminal justice system. Mule (2018) discovered poverty, shortage of legal assistance and awareness, and illiteracy as sociodemographic indicators impeding justice accessibility, especially for women. Similarly, Du Toit (2021) focused on social determinants of the right of access to justice in terms of sociodemographics. This study further identified that sociodemographics, like the economy, affordability, availability, resources, education, and information, affect the accessibility of justice. Waziri (2014) identified that socioeconomic indicators, such as people with higher levels of education, are vulnerable to corruption, which results in resistance to their justice accessibility. Jesus Cala et al. (2016) explored the sociodemographic indicators as the probable predictor variables for justice accessibility.

Socio-legal is a common perspective that has been employed by sociologists studying the impacts of various sociodemographics. Bermúdez Figueroa et al. (2023) used a socio-legal paradigm on the variable gender to address the issues of gender inequality occurring in public and private spheres of social life. Thoene (2015) worked on the sociodemographics of informal employment, labour legislation, and social protection from a socio-legal approach. This study proposed that pure legal or economic perspectives ignore critical issues and prevent the formulation of regulatory policies. Hence, the socio-legal perspective assists in the formulation of policies from both social and legal perspectives. Cotterrell (1997) discussed the socio-legal approach representing the law as institutionalized doctrines in the context of different aspects of social life; ultimately, the actual significance of the law is realized.

Methodology

This study used a quantitative methodology and was both exploratory and descriptive in type. However, the study was designed as cross-sectional. The participant's number for this study was 547, and the purposive sampling technique was employed to collect the data. Purposive sampling can be used in quantitative and qualitative approaches to the research (Tongco, 2007). Besides, Asiamah et al. (2022) stated that the utilization of the non-probability technique of sampling has become a norm in quantitative research. A survey method was used to collect the data on a closed-ended questionnaire from the litigants in the district courts of Karachi, Sindh, Pakistan. The items of this questionnaire were adapted from Cala et al. (2016), Fung and Dong (2024), Hall and Dornan (1990), and Sargisson et al. (2020). The sociodemographics used in these studies were sex, age, education, the status of employment, marital status, birthplace, ethnicity, monthly income of a household, size of household, and native language. The questionnaire was translated into Urdu and Sindhi due to the language competency of the participants. Applying IBM SPSS version 22, data were analyzed descriptively first, and secondly, the hypotheses were tested using the chi-square test. The variables were presented in the form of percentages and frequencies in the descriptive analysis. Whereas, for the hypotheses testing, the statistical significance was shown as (p -value <0.05). Cronbach's Alpha reliability for the access to justice scale was identified as .803.

Results

This study has explored sociodemographics as the determinant for accessing justice from a socio-legal perspective. The findings suggest a relationship between different sociodemographics and access to justice. The data in the descriptive portion also highlights the importance of sociodemographics for justice accessibility. Besides, almost all the hypotheses were supported by the data revealing the dependency of accessibility to justice on the litigant's sociodemographic characters.

Table 1

Distribution of Frequency and Percentage for Sociodemographic Characteristics

Sociodemographic	Characteristic (n=547)	f	%
Sex	Male	341	62.3
	Female	206	37.7
Marital Status	Unmarried	118	21.6
	Married	349	63.8
	Separated	45	8.2
	Divorced	23	4.2
	Widow	12	2.2
Ethnicity	Urdu	231	42.2
	Sindhi	150	27.4
	Balochi	63	11.5
	Punjabi	66	12.1
	Pashto	36	6.6
	Any Other	1	0.2
Religion	Islam	425	77.7
	Christianity	67	12.2
	Hinduism	43	7.9
	Parsis	12	2.2
Cultural Background	Rural	214	39.1
	Urban	333	60.9
Highest Educational Level	No Formal Education	16	2.9
	Primary or Below	41	7.5
	Secondary	101	18.5
	Higher Secondary	180	32.9
	Bachelor's Degree	185	33.8
	Master's Degree	21	3.8
	Doctorate	3	0.5
Status of Employment	No Members of the Family is Employed	16	2.9
	Pensioner (Retired)	36	6.6
	Working at Shop/Home/Transport	117	21.4
	Service in Public Organizations	115	21.0
	Private Sector Job	91	16.6
	Self-employed	66	12.1
	Independent Business	14	2.6
	Company Owners	4	0.7
	Any other Employment	88	16.1
Earning Members Number in a Family [Excluding the Participant]	No Earning Members	103	18.8
	Only 1 Member	325	59.4
	Only 2 Members	96	17.6
	More than 2 members	23	4.2
Monthly Household Income	PKR 25000-40000	158	28.9
	PKR 40001-60000	278	50.8
	PKR 60001-100000	73	13.3
	PKR 100001-150000	22	4.0
	PKR 150001-200000	12	2.2
	PKR 200001 and above	4	0.7
House Status	Own	183	33.5
	Rented	352	64.4
	Government	12	2.2



Sociodemographic	Characteristic (n=547)	f	%
Rooms of the House	1-2	388	70.9
	3-4	127	23.2
	5 or more	32	5.9
Vehicles	Bike	292	53.4
	One Car	90	16.5
	Two or More Cars	4	0.7
	Every Member of the family Possesses a Car	3	0.5
	None of the above	158	28.9
Agricultural Land	None	470	85.9
	Barren Land	49	9.0
	Own Cultivated Agricultural Land	28	5.1

Table 1 is generated to explain the sociodemographic characteristics of the participants in the sample. It was shown that out of the total participants 547, there were 341 (62.3%) males. While the number of female respondents was 206 (37.7%). The results indicated that male respondents were greater in number than females. Females report their cases in less proportion to the courts. Besides, there are many other reasons for the lack of reporting on female problems in our society. Furthermore, respondents' distribution from the perspective of marital status is also given. It was identified that a greater number of the participants were with marital status as married, 349 (63.8%). The number of unmarried respondents was 118 (21.6%), followed by 45 (8.2%) separated, 23 (4.2%) divorced, and 12 (2.2%) widow participants respectively.

The frequency distribution in the sample from the point of view of belonging to a particular ethnic group reveals that out of a total sample of 547, there were 231 (42.2%) respondents of this study belonging to the ethnic group of Urdu, followed by the second largest ethnic group Sindhi 150 (27.4%). Meanwhile, 66 (12.1%), 63 (11.5%), and 36 (6.6%) participants belong to the Punjabi, Balochi, and Pashto ethnic groups, respectively. Moreover, only one participant recorded the belongingness with any other ethnic group. The respondent's religious affiliation is also summarized, in that the majority of the participants, 425 (77.7%) of this study, were associated with Islam. The second largest religious group in this study was Christianity, with a total number of participants 67 (12.2%). At the same time, Hinduism and Parsis, respectively, are found to be the third and fourth largest religious groups, with 43 (7.9%) and 12 (2.2%) in the sample of this study.

The calculated descriptive statistics in Table 1 also reveal the distribution of the respondents from a cultural background perspective. In this context, it was shown that out of a total sample of 547, the majority of the participants, 333 (60.9%) of this research, belong to urban cultural backgrounds. The rest of the respondents, 214 (39.1%), are from rural cultural backgrounds. The frequency distribution of the highest educational level of the participants disclosed that the participants of this study, in the majority, were holding bachelor's degrees 185 (33.8%). Higher secondary qualification is the second largest, 180 (32.9%), followed by the respondents who possess a secondary education of 101 (18.5%). Only, 3 (0.5%) participants possess a Doctorate educational level, and 21 (3.8%) respondents are having Master's educational level. Meanwhile, 16 (2.9%) and 41 (7.5%) participants, respectively, had no formal education and possessed primary or below qualifications.

The participant's employment status was also calculated, and the summarized descriptive statistics values revealed that the largest employment status distribution of the participants was 117 (21.4%), who were working at a shop, home, or transport. The second largest status of employment distribution of the respondents was service in public organizations 115 (21.0%), followed by 91 (16.6%) as the third largest employment distribution of the participants having private sector jobs. Besides, 66 (12.1%) participants were self-employed. The number of retired (pensioners) respondents was 36 (6.6%). Additionally, 14 (2.6%), 4 (0.7%), and 16 (2.9%) respondents, respectively, have independent businesses, company owners, and no family member was employed. Descriptively, in this study, the earning members in a family, excluding the respondent, were also calculated. The response distribution in the sample identified that out of a total sample of 547, there were 325 (59.4%) participants who provided their responses that they have

only one earning member in the family. The most significant descriptive finding of this item was that 103 (18.8%) respondents stated that they had no earning members in their families except for them. Meanwhile, 96 (17.6%) respondents recorded their responses that there were two earning members in their families excluding them. Only 23 (4.2%) participants were of the view that they have more than two earning family members if they were excluded. Apart from this, the monthly household income of the participants was also explained. The frequency distribution in the sample revealed that a large number of 278 (50.8%) of the respondents of this study earn PKR 40,001-60,000 per month. The second largest earning group was 158 (28.9%) earning PKR 25,000-40,000. There were 73 (13.3%) respondents whose earning was PKR 60,001-100,000. Only 04 (0.7%) participants earned PKR 200,001 and above. The data further imply that the monthly household income of the respondents was not high. Hence, it can create financial hindrances in their access to the justice system.

The results explain that out of a total of sample 547, a good number of 352 (64.4%) participants had houses on rent. Secondly, 183 (33.5%) respondents were possessing own house. Only 12 (2.2%) of the participants were living in government houses. The findings further predict that the litigants were in the majority living in rented houses as they have a weak financial position to purchase their own houses. Moreover, the results also present descriptively the number of rooms in the houses of the respondents in the sample. It was identified that the largest number of the participants, 388 (70.9%), had only one to two rooms in their houses. The other largest number of the participants, 127 (23.2%), were living in houses having three to four rooms. However, the number of the participants who lived in a house having five or more than five rooms was 32 (5.9%). The findings implied that the majority of the litigants were living in houses with one to two rooms.

In this study frequency distribution of the responses of participants in the sample about the possession of a vehicle or equivalent were also calculated. It was shown that 292 (53.4%) respondents possessed only a bike. Moreover, it was also evident from the results that a good number of 158 (28.9%) of the participants did not have any vehicle. Besides, 90 (16.5%) and 4 (0.7%) participants recorded their responses that they possessed one or two cars. The descriptive statistics further showed that only 3 (0.5%) respondents have a car for every member of the family. Based on these descriptive results, it can be implied that the litigants do possess a weak socioeconomic status. The summary of the distribution of the responses about the possession of agricultural land by the participants was also presented. It is shown in Table 1 that a majority of 470 (85.9%) respondents did not possess agricultural land. A small number of the participants, 28 (5.1%), recorded their responses that they possessed cultivated agricultural land, followed by 49 (9.0%) responses of the respondents that they owned barren land. These results, furthermore, endorse the weak socioeconomic condition of the litigants.

Hypothesis Testing

In total, 08 hypotheses were framed to identify sociodemographics as the determinant of access to justice. Table 2 reveals that sociodemographics like sex, cultural background, ethnicity, religious affiliation, highest educational level, status of employment, monthly household income, and earning members number in a family are the sociodemographics that determine justice accessibility.

Table 2

Hypotheses Analysis of Sociodemographic Determinants

Sociodemographic Determinants of Access to Justice	Value	df	Sig. (2-sided)	N
1. Sex	6.022	2	.049	547
2. Cultural Background	15.809	2	.000	547
3. Ethnicity	35.596	10	.000	547
4. Religious Affiliation	6.872	6	.333	547
5. Highest Educational Level	63.188	12	.000	547
6. Status of Employment	29.957	16	.018	547
7. Monthly Household Income	50.043	10	.000	547
8. Earning Members Number in a Family	39.588	6	.000	547



Pearson chi-square test was applied to identify the relationship between the different sociodemographics and access to justice. The results of the first hypothesis (H_1), sex of the litigants and justice accessibility, revealed a significant relationship, $X^2(2, N=547) = 6.022, p = .049$. The findings suggested that the sex of the litigant, either male or female, determines the access to justice for such a litigant. The findings of hypothesis number two (H_2) showed a highly significant relationship between the sociodemographic variable cultural background and access to justice, $X^2(2, N=547) = 15.809, p = .000$, the findings of this hypothesis showed that justice accessibility and cultural background of the litigants were significantly related. This further predicted that the cultural background, whether a litigant belongs to urban or rural areas determines the justice accessibility. The third hypothesis (H_3) was also supported by the data of this study at $X^2(10, N=547) = 35.596, p = .000$; a highly significant relationship between the sociodemographic variable of ethnicity and accessibility of justice was identified. Moreover, the results implied that ethnicity, whether, a litigant belongs to Urdu, Sindhi, Punjabi, Balochi, Pashto, etc., ethnic group determines the access to justice for such a litigant. Interestingly, the findings of hypothesis four (H_4) were found to be insignificant at $X^2(6, N=547) = 6.872, p = .333$ and suggested no connection between the sociodemographic of religious affiliation and access to justice. Furthermore, it was revealed that in Pakistan, the system of justice has no concern about the religious affiliation of the litigants. Irrespective of a litigant's belongings with any religion, the relief is provided equally.

Pearson chi-square test was also run to explore the relationship between the highest educational level of the litigants and justice accessibility under hypothesis number five (H_5). A highly significant association was identified between the sociodemographic of the highest educational level and accessibility of justice, $X^2(12, N=547) = 63.188, p = .000$. The findings further implied that education as sociodemographic is a significant determinant for the access to justice. The educated litigant likely has many chances to reach and get the remedy from the justice system easily and such a litigant encounters fewer difficulties to access the justice. The findings of hypothesis number six (H_6) were also found to be significant, $X^2(16, N=547) = 29.957, p = .018$ which suggested a relationship between the sociodemographic variable status of employment and access to justice. Moreover, the results affirmed the employment of a litigant as a determinant of justice accessibility. The seventh hypothesis (H_7) was about the monthly household income. The results supported the hypothesis, $X^2(10, N=547) = 50.043, p = .000$, and revealed a highly significant relationship between monthly household income and justice accessibility. The findings related a good household income to justice accessibility. The results of this hypothesis provided further interpretation as a litigant who has a good household income can access the system of justice easily. It is easy for such a litigant to bear the justice system's expenses along with other routine life expenditures. Under the last hypothesis eight (H_8), the results were also found to be highly significant, $X^2(6, N=547) = 39.588, p = .000$, and showing a relation between the sociodemographic variable earning members number in a family and justice accessibility. It is concluded from the findings that a litigant can easily access the legal system that has more-earning members in a family. The likelihood that a litigant will be able to conveniently access justice and pay for the costs of the legal system is increased when multiple family members contribute their money.

Discussions

This study investigated sociodemographics as the determinants of justice accessibility in a descriptive and exploratory manner. Empirically, applying a socio-legal approach, this study has identified the relationship between the various sociodemographic indicators and access to justice. Moreover, the results of descriptive analysis and hypothesis testing revealed a significant association between the sociodemographic variables and justice accessibility and proved that sociodemographics are the determinant of access to justice. The study furthermore validated the association of sociodemographics and justice accessibility utilizing a large representative sample of 547. These findings are consistent with the previous studies by Fung and Dong (2024), Dahlvik and Pohn-Weidinger (2021), and Quiceno et al. (2022), who, in similar manners, identified the relationship between sociodemographics and justice accessibility.

The sex of the litigants in terms of male and female emerged as a significant sociodemographic variable that determines justice accessibility. This finding in this study is aligned with the previous literature by

Adongo et al. (2023), who identified that, as compared to the informal courts, formal courts are difficult for women to access. This study predicted that the cultural background, whether a litigant belongs to urban or rural areas, determines justice accessibility which is compatible with Adongo et al. (2023), Lapkin (2019), and Cahoon (2023), who determined that people of rural areas face many challenges while accessing the justice system. Moreover, the results of this study exposed that the ethnicity of a litigant is a determinant of access to justice. This finding aligns with Truzzi et al. (2023), who identified ethnic and racial discrimination in justice accessibility. The relationship between the sociodemographic variable religious affiliation and access to justice was identified as insignificant, revealing that there is no association between these two variables. This finding is in contradiction to the previous literature by Akarçay & Polat (2023), who identified a significant association of religious association with access to justice in terms of the reporting of crimes.

The findings in this research further infer that education as sociodemographic is a significant determinant for access to justice. This result is widely corroborated with the earlier literature in the same context, like Akarçay and Polat (2023), Bilchitz (2017), Lundgren (2023), and Waziri (2014). Additionally, the results of this research affirmed the employment of a litigant as a determinant of justice accessibility. Besides, the findings in this study also related a good household income with access to justice. This provided a sense that a litigant who has a good household income can access the system of justice easily. Finally, this research determined that a litigant having more earning members in a family can access justice easily. These findings are compatible with the previous studies conducted by Du Toit (2021), Islam et al. (2024), and Mule (2018).

The sociodemographics also showed a weak socioeconomic condition of the litigants who participated in this study. Eventually, the results connoted that this weak socioeconomic status causes impediments to accessing justice. In this context, it was revealed that the majority of the participants were working at shops, at home, or belonging with transportation manual work. From the earning members' point of view, the majority of the respondents were of the view that they were the sole earning members or they had only one earning member in their families if they were excluded. Moreover, a good number of the participants were earning PKR 40,001-60,000 per month. A majority of the respondents of this study were living in rented houses with one to two rooms. The study significantly identified that more than fifty per cent of respondents had only a bike to travel. However, more than eighty percent of participants did not possess agricultural land as well. Hence, these findings also conclude that the socioeconomic condition of the participants of this study is weak.

Conclusions

Generally, this research aimed to present a methodological overview of the assessment of sociodemographics as the determinant for justice accessibility from a socio-legal approach. In this relationship, the sex of the participants as male and female, cultural background, ethnicity, religious affiliation, highest educational level, the status of employment, monthly household income, and earning members number in a family were the sociodemographics about which the hypotheses were developed. In conclusion, the analysis provided that all the above-mentioned demographics have a significant association and they determine a person's accessibility to the justice system, except the variable religious affiliation. Besides, the research also revealed a weak socioeconomic position of the litigants in Sindh, Pakistan. They earn less per month; mostly they are sole earning members of their families; the majority of them live in rented houses with one or two rooms, have only a bike for their travel, and do not have agricultural land. Additionally, this research has contributed to the perspective of access to justice from a socio-legal approach in Sindh, Pakistan. It has added a new version to the sociological literature.

Recommendations and Limitations

The study identified the litigants' weak socioeconomic conditions in Sindh, Pakistan. Based on this finding, it is highly recommended that economic reforms be initiated to improve the socioeconomic position of the people, which will assist them in accessing and affording the justice system. More qualitative studies on sociodemographic indicators are recommended to comprehend the in-depth relationship with justice accessibility. While constituting the policies related to justice accessibility, the importance and value of



sociodemographic determinants should be kept in mind. Besides, this study have some limitations that are marginal and do not affect substantially the analysis and recommendations. One of these limitations is that this research is only restricted to the district Karachi of Sindh, Pakistan. Hence, its results cannot be generalized to the other districts of Sindh. In this context, more studies from this perspective are recommended, including those on the population of other districts in Sindh, Pakistan, to identify sociodemographics as the determinant for justice accessibility.

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