

# An Investigation of Social Sustainability Awareness in Textile Industry: A Case of Kotri

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## Abstract

One of the main sources of generating carbon dioxide (a potent greenhouse gas) is cement industry. This research Companies in developing nations such as Pakistan neglect social issues and have also been overlooked when it comes to sustainability challenges. Manufacturing companies are the basic foundation of any nation's progress. Many businesses have incorporated sustainability into their practices and are working hard to accomplish their sustainability goals. Sustainability is divided into three categories: economic, environmental, and social. In order to be sustainable, the organization must incorporate economic, environmental, and social components of sustainability into their operations because many practitioners and academics have focused on the economic and environmental components of sustainability, social sustainability has received less attention in the literature and in practice, particularly in emerging countries. According to pervious literature social sustainability is untouched topic in the context of Pakistan manufacturing industry. The Purpose of this research is to investigate the awareness of social sustainability in textile industry of Pakistan (case of Kotri). The research design of this study is quantitative in nature and survey questionnaires has been conduct for data collection from the managers and employees of textile sector. The findings show that there is a lack of awareness of social sustainability in the textile industry, which is the most major hindrance to its acceptance and adoption. This paper contributes to a better understanding of the importance of social sustainability in the manufacturing industry by raising awareness.

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**Keywords:** *Social Sustainability; Awareness; Textile Industry.*

## 1. Introduction

Nowadays, the term "sustainability" is used in a number of different fields and industries. Countries are spending a significant portion of their budgets to upgrading their infrastructures in accordance with sustainable development and sustainability standards. Environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and social sustainability are the three main pillars of sustainability. The Brundtland Commission coined the phrase "sustainable development" to describe development that "meets current demands without compromising future generations' ability to satisfy their needs" [1]. Companies are increasingly attempting to get a competitive edge by incorporating sustainability into their business strategy in today's society. The triple bottom line principles, which address economic, social, and environmental concerns, are at the heart of the sustainability discussion [2]. As a result, both the public and private sectors are focusing their efforts on addressing economic and environmental problems. The social components of sustainability are thought to be hidden behind these concerns [3]. Individuals view nature as infinite, causing environmental and societal degradation through irresponsible use that disregards standards and guidelines. Due to the harm caused by various industries and businesses, sustainable applications have grown in importance and requirement for all of society. Environmental, economic, and social factors all play a role in sustainability. In particular, social sustainability is a societal feature that promotes long-term conditions for human well-being, particularly for vulnerable individuals or groups [4]. Social sustainability is concerned with how social challenges can be addressed in a manner that maintains the organization's long-term survival. Goals such as equality, wellbeing, freedom, women's rights, emotional stability, and diversity, which have become important concerns in every society to be tackled, are examples of social sustainability [5]. The majority of research on organizational sustainability has concentrated mainly on environmental and economic consequences, with little attention paid to the social aspect of sustainability [6]. Although several large corporations have acknowledged and are adopting economic and environmental elements of sustainability into their operations, yet they have shown little interest in addressing and incorporating social problems [7]. Emerging economies have a proclivity for increasing production and profitability without considering sustainability. Natural resources are being

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depleted by pollution of air, water, and soil as a result of rapid population increase and industrialization [8], and industries are failing to consider social issues. As a result, developing a sustainable manufacturing strategy and putting into practice is important. Workforce in the textile sector must cope with a variety of health and safety hazards, depending of the unit in which they work. The well-being of employees in the industry is jeopardized by a large number of workers, poor health and safety regulations, and the government's failure to enforce laws [9]. Determining global social sustainability metrics is difficult due to a lack of conceptual clarity, in the manufacturing industry, and particularly in emerging economies like Pakistan. Therefore, managers have lack adequate awareness of the social issues at hand, as well as how to assess and deal with them. Since the literature lacks research on the social sustainability from the perspective of Pakistan's manufacturing industry, this study aims is to investigates the awareness of social sustainability in the textile industry (case of Kotri textile sector) using a quantitative method.

## 2. Literature Review

The ability of companies to enhance value by promoting human and social capital in the communities in which they operate is known as social sustainability [10]. Social sustainability is the integral part for attaining sustainable development and paying attention to social problems within the organization is the foundation for achieving sustainability. The majority of research on organizational sustainability has concentrated mainly on environmental and economic consequences, with little attention paid to the social aspect of sustainability [6]. Social sustainability is one of the three pillars of sustainable development that has received the least attention. Social sustainability is primarily concerned with quality of living, social justice, philanthropy, human rights, education equality, worker rights, and a variety of other pertinent societal problems. [5]. When it comes to the manufacturing industry, more research is needed to investigate the social sustainability element in developing nations [11]. Organizations must balance responsibility for economic, environmental and social considerations when implementing the sustainability practices [12]. As previously said, social sustainability is one of the three pillars of sustainability. Despite the fact that social sustainability is just as important as the other two pillars, [13] [14] point out that scholars have not given it enough regard for people's everyday concerns. Education, well-being, gender equity, household livelihood status, such as pay and social expenditure, employment and unemployment rate, poverty, workplace environment, freedom, and women's participation in social activities and politics, are all characteristics of social sustainability. According to [3] basic social elements such as equality and fairness, poverty, wellness, education, culture, demography, and employee involvement within a business can promote economic and environmental sustainability. Although scholars and practitioners in the manufacturing industry pay close attention to economic and environmental sustainability, social dimensions receive less attention. Social issues have been particularly difficult in emerging countries as unfair labour conditions continue to upset trading partners [11]. Industries that adopt social sustainability in the developing country have better social performance as regard of human rights, child labour, and protection, as well as shorter lead times, higher product quality, and enhanced product reliability, resulting in improved customer and supplier performance and positive buyer-supplier relationships [6]. Studies have highlighted certain fundamental ethical principles, such as equality, trust, solidarity, justice, and honesty, as being at the core of social sustainability [3]. Industries are reluctant to adopt sustainable business practices without acceptable demand or stress from external sources such as consumers, government laws, and so on [15]. According to Furthermore, the commitment and trust between partner, knowledge sharing, resource sharing, supply chain partner tracking and auditing, collaborative initiatives and planning all contribute to the adoption of sustainability [16]. Organizations in emerging nations face economic challenges, resulting in issues such as excessively long shifts, unpaid labour, a lack of job security, frequent layoffs, and salary discrimination based on gender in manufacturing industries [17]. Child labour, slavery, a lack of clean water, and inadequate sanitation and workplace conditions are all typical problems in developing countries, It is important for developing-country organizations to ensure social sustainability activities in order to improve the condition of weak and vulnerable individuals and group [16].

### 2.1. Textile Industry of Pakistan

Pakistan's textile industry is booming to become a pillar of the country, contributing around 8.5 percent to overall GDP while employing 38 percent of manufacturing workers and 45 percent of all workers, which is a significant proportion given the country's labour-rich economy. It is Asia's eighth largest textile exporter, with textiles accounting for 57 percent of the country's overall export revenue [9]. Workers in textile and garment manufacturers face major social difficulties, according to the report, which emphasizes the importance of ensuring optimal working conditions, protecting human rights, and paying equitable wages. [18]. Spite of the fact that the textile industry has numerous key hazards, the majority of the literature concentrates on environmental protection, with the social aspects of textile manufacturing and consumption receiving less attention [19], because the textile industry employs nearly 15 million of Pakistan's 49 million unskilled employees, it's critical to increase awareness about their working conditions.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1. Research Design

For this study, a quantitative technique was used and structured (closed-ended) questionnaire was conducted from workers of textile mills. The questionnaire survey was developed through adapting measuring scales and was comprised with dichotomous scales with two options (Yes or No). The purpose of this study was to investigate the level of awareness of social sustainability in textile sector (case of Kotri).

#### 3.2. Sample Size

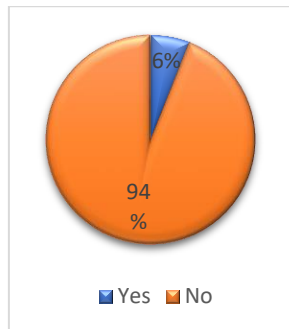
The textile industry in Sindh, Pakistan, is the study's target population. Textile mills in the Kotri cite region were used to take a sample from the population. Four Textile mills from Kotri were selected by using non-probability & purposive sampling technique for data collection and for gathering data. The sample form containing a questionnaire, was distributed to the organization's employees also the purpose of the study as well as the specifics of the question were communicated to the employees, and they were then free to respond on their own. A total of 300 surveys were distributed to the textile industry, with 75 questionnaires distributed to each firm and 250 responses received. The first portion of questionnaire was about workers' demographic information which was gathered and summarized as shown in table 1, as well as the second portion of the questionnaire consisted of ten questions, which are included in the paper's appendix.

**Table 1: Demographic information of employees**

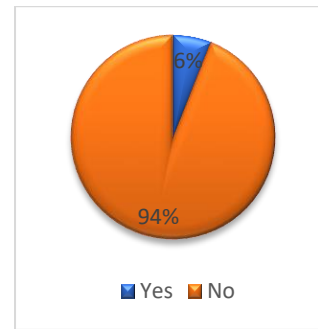
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	250	100.0
Female	0	0
Total	250	100.0
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
18-25 years old	24	10.0
26-35 years old	61	24.0
36-45 years old	100	40.0
46-55 years old	58	23.0
Above 56	7	3.0
Total	250	100.0
<b>Employee Education Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
High school	61	24.0
Intermediate	42	17.0
Bachelors	75	30.0
Masters	30	12.0
Higher than Masters	2	1.0
None	40	16.0
Total	250	100.0
<b>Employee Position</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Low level	135	54.0
Middle level	77	31.0
Upper level	33	13.0
Manager	5	2.0
Total	250	100.0
<b>Employee Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Below 5 years	30	12.0
5-15 years	65	26.0
16-25 years	94	37.0
26-35 years	54	22.0
36-45 years	7	3.0
Total	250	100.0

### 3.3. Data Collection and Analysis

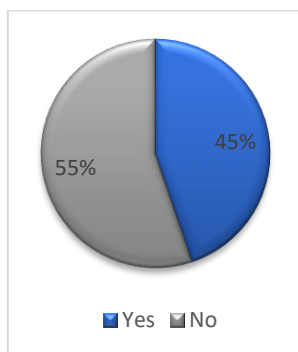
The source of data collection was primary and the key tool used for data collection is the quantitative survey questionnaires from the workers of textile sector. The questionnaire was comprised of 10 questions using dichotomous scales relate to the awareness of social sustainability. Managers of textile industries were informed about the importance of the questionnaire. The significance of social sustainability was addressed, and respondents were encouraged to respond to the survey. Due to the cognitive skills and educational backgrounds of the workers, the survey questions were simplified and kept basic so that participants could actually understand the questionnaire. The survey data was analysed using Microsoft Excel. The data was manually entered into Excel, and each question was examined separately. Separate pie-charts were constructed after determining the percentage of each question.



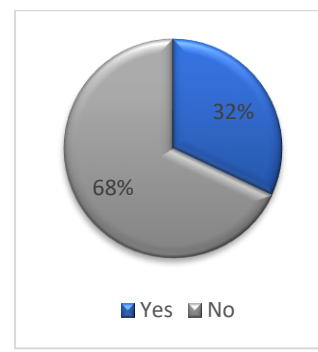
**Fig. 1: Responses of respondents about awareness of social sustainability indicators**



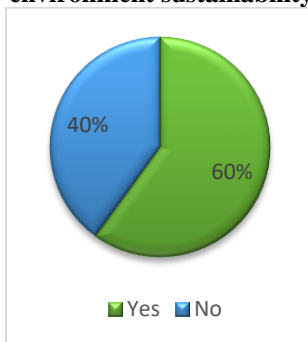
**Fig. 2: Responses of respondents about awareness of social sustainability concept**



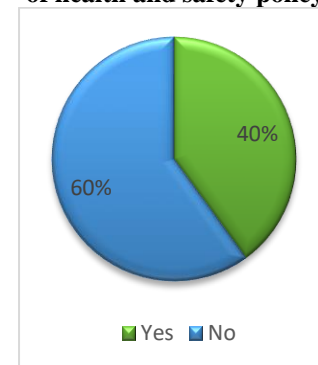
**Fig. 3: Responses of respondents about awareness of environment sustainability**



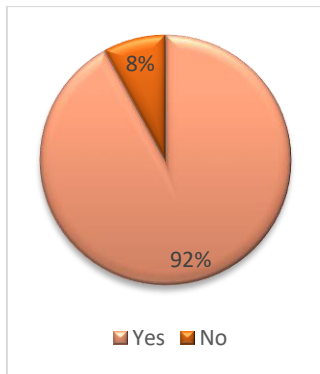
**Fig. 4: Responses of respondents about awareness of health and safety policy**



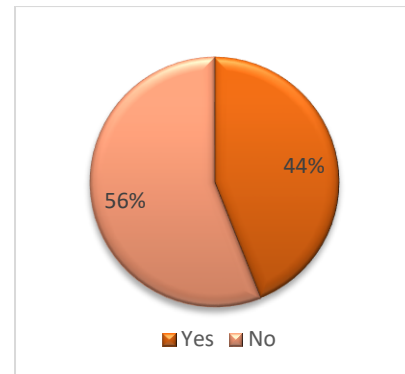
**Fig. 5: Responses of respondents about awareness of social issues**



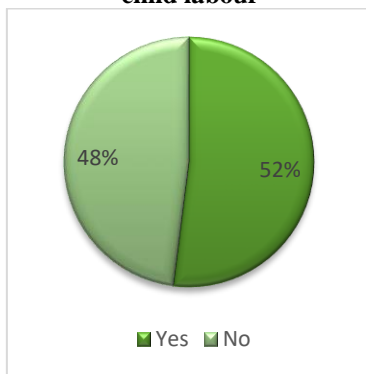
**Fig. 6: Responses of respondents about safety of workers**



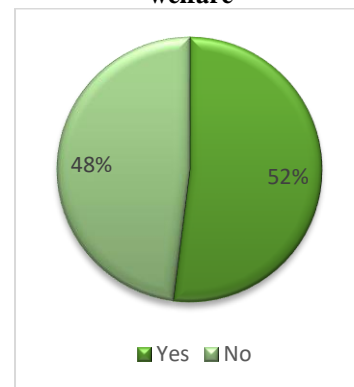
**Fig. 7: Response of respondents about prohibition of child labour**



**Fig. 8: Response of respondents about employee welfare**



**Fig. 9: Responses of respondents about equal wages**

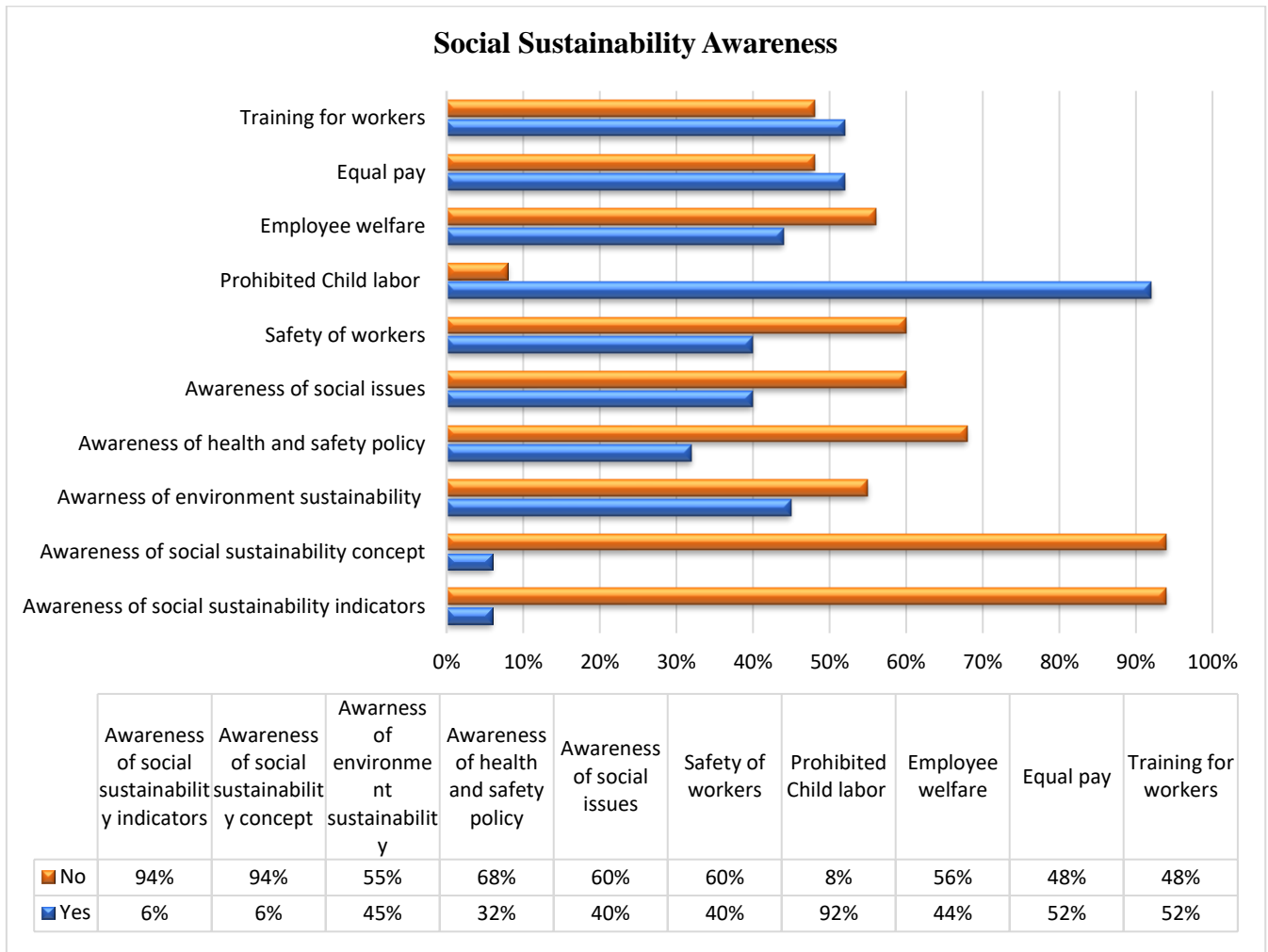


**Fig. 10: Responses of respondents about training for workers**

#### 4. Result and Discussion

The survey result revealed a lack of awareness of the idea of social sustainability and its importance in the textile industry. Figure 11 show the bar graph of survey questionnaire answers. The first question was asked about the awareness of social sustainability indicators 94% respondent answer no only 6% respondent say yes they are aware about social sustainability indicators. The second question addressed awareness of the concept of social sustainability but similar answer were received 94% say no and 6% respondents say yes. The third question was about environmental sustainability awareness yes the employees are aware about environmental sustainability 45% respondent says yes and 55% say no. Question fourth was about the awareness of health and safety policy 68% respondents says that they are not aware about such policy only 32% says yes. The fifth question inquired about the organization's awareness of social issues yes they were about social issues like (fair treatment, no child labor, no forced labour and non- discrimination) 60% respondents were aware and 40% respondents answer no. The sixth question was about ensuring worker safety throughout operations 40% answer were yes that organization provide a safe environment during operations and 60% respondents answer were no. Question seventh addressed prohibition of child labor in the organization 92% respondents say yes child labor is prohibited in their organization only 8% say no child labor is not prohibited in their organization. The eighth question is organization concern for employee welfare 44% respondents says yes organization concern for workers welfare and 56% answer no. The ninth question was about equality in terms of payment 52% respondents say yes and 48% respondents say no organization is not fair in terms of payment. Question tenth was about organization organized training for staff on occupational safety and health 52% respondents say yes and 48% respondents say no. The findings of the study showed that, there is lack of awareness of social sustainability, and due to inadequacy of knowledge about social sustainability concept organisations neglected the social concerns, in spite of the increasing awareness of the social sustainability and significant attention paid to it by a number of academics and researchers, the subject in the context of developing countries still requires more research [20]. It very essential for developing nations industries to spread the awareness of social sustainability into their business so they can incorporate the social sustainability practices into their organization operation and serve their workers and community people in a better way. Long-term growth requires a focus on social sustainability, and resolving social challenges within the company lays the groundwork for long-term success, and for this involvement of executive or higher management is important. According to [21] top management involvement is important to the effectiveness of social sustainability practice and initiatives

throughout the business processes also top management support ensures that the proper procedures and resources are in place to ensure social sustainability strategies are implementing into the organization. Academics and businesses must acknowledge the importance of social sustainability because safer and healthier communities can produce a pleasant environment.



**Fig. 11: The Bar Graph of Survey Questionnaire**

## 5. Conclusion

This study's conclusions are based on an investigative attempt to learn more about the true causes of lack of awareness. Previous research indicates that there is a dearth of study on social sustainability in developing countries. Pakistan is a developing country, which means that social sustainability is not valued as highly as it is in developed ones. Manufacturing is a country's most important industry, and its operations have a large negative ecological and social impact worldwide, particularly in emerging nations like Pakistan. Developing countries, must need the ability of the organisation, policies, regulatory obligations, skilled workforce mobility, knowledge, and competence to incorporate social sustainability practices for improved sustainability performance. Strong employee participation across the organisation, as well as a forward-thinking management style, are required to improve social sustainability effectiveness. Businesses that incorporate social sustainability plans or activities into their operations gain strength and skill, which helps them cope with complicated situations. This means that businesses must make a real effort to adopt social sustainability into all areas of their operations. To address the long-term sustainability of society and industries there is a need for more individuals to be aware of the importance of social sustainability.

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**Appendix**  
**Questionnaires**

- 1) Are you aware of social sustainability enablers (indicators)?  
 Yes  No
- 2) Are you aware of the concept of social sustainability?  
 Yes  No
- 3) Are you aware of the environmental sustainability?  
 Yes  No
- 4) Are you aware of the policy on social issues?  
 Yes  No
- 5) Are you aware of the company's health and safety policies?  
 Yes  No
- 6) Does your organization provide safe and healthy work surroundings for workers?  
 Yes  No
- 7) Does Child labour is prohibited in your organization?  
 Yes  No
- 8) Does your organization take interest in employee welfare?  
 Yes  No
- 9) Does your organization treat employee with equality in term of payment for work done?  
 Yes  No
- 10) Does your organization give appropriate training for its employees?  
 Yes  No