



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

A Sociological Analysis of Factors Affecting Job Satisfaction Among Employed Women in District Dir Lower, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Adnan Khan

MPhil Scholar, Department of Rural Sociology, Faculty of Rural Social Sciences
The University of Agriculture, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan
Email: adnankhanyosafzai@gmail.com

Dr. Bushra Hassan Jan

Chairperson, Department of Rural Sociology, Faculty of Rural Social Sciences,
The University of Agriculture, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Abstract

The aim of the current study was to analyze the sociological factors affecting job satisfaction among employed women in district Dir Lower, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The nature of the study was quantitative. The data were collected from two union councils i.e. Lajbook and Hayaseri of District Dir Lower. Furthermore, a total of 6 girls' schools were selected from each union council. A sample of 177 respondents was selected from the target population through a well thought questionnaire. A uni-variate and bi-variate analyzed was conducted by SPSS software. To test the association between dependent and independent variables a Chi-square test was also applied. The study found a significant association ($p < 0.05$) between job satisfaction with social network i.e. role of education in seeking employment, access to employment information and familial support in securing employment. Furthermore, the results also found a significant association ($p < 0.05$) between job satisfaction and the role of education in seeking employment. The study recommends that government should expand access to quality education and vocational training programs for women, especially in rural and underserved areas of KP, provide women in KP with training in digital literacy and access to online job platforms and engage local communities and families in promoting the importance of women's work and the value of their economic contributions.

Keywords: sociological factors; job satisfaction; employed women; schools; Khyber Pakhtunkhwa; Pakistan

Introduction

Job satisfaction is the level of contentment and fulfillment an individual feels towards their job, influenced by factors such as the job role, work-life balance, compensation, work environment, recognition, and job security. It reflects how well a job meets an individual's expectations and needs, leading to either positive outcomes like increased productivity and loyalty or negative effects like disengagement (Qanti et al. 2022).

Women's job satisfaction is influenced by a variety of factors, including work-life balance, career advancement opportunities, and workplace culture. For many women, the ability to manage work alongside family responsibilities is crucial, making flexible work arrangements and supportive policies highly valued.



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

Additionally, opportunities for growth and fair recognition in the workplace are significant contributors to job satisfaction. When women feel that their contributions are acknowledged and that they have a clear path to career progression, their overall satisfaction with their jobs tends to be higher (Andrew, 1995).

Employment refers to the condition of being employed, which means being engaged in a job or occupation in exchange for payment or compensation. It typically involves an agreement between an individual (the employee) and an organization or employer, where the employee provides their skills, labor, and time to perform tasks or duties specified by the employer in return for wages, salary, or other forms of remuneration. Employment can be full-time, part-time, temporary, or permanent, and it can encompass various types of work arrangements, such as freelancing, contract work, or self-employment (Susan 2020).

Women employment" refers to the participation of women in the workforce, encompassing their engagement in various paid employment opportunities and economic activities. It involves women seeking, obtaining, and maintaining positions in the labor market or as self-employed individuals. Women's employment covers a broad spectrum of roles and industries, including formal employment in offices, informal work arrangements, entrepreneurship, agricultural and industrial sectors, and various professions (Rauf, 2022).

The concept of women's employment is intricately connected to broader discussions on gender equality, equal opportunities, and empowerment. It involves efforts to ensure that women have the same access as men to job opportunities, career advancement, fair remuneration, and other aspects of the professional sphere. Addressing challenges such as gender-based discrimination, unequal pay, and societal expectations related to traditional gender roles is essential for fostering an inclusive and equitable work environment for women. Promoting women's employment is a critical component of advancing gender equality and building diverse and thriving economies (Abbas *et al.*, 2021).

In Pakistan, only about 22% of women are part of the workforce, which is one of the lowest rates in this region. This is because women encounter various obstacles like not having safe transportation, cultural norms that discourage them from working, and having a lot of responsibilities at home. However, something not often discussed is how women and men go about finding jobs. We want to explore these differences in job search methods and what they reveal about the challenges women face when trying to find work. By understanding these differences better, we can understand why so few women are part of the workforce in Pakistan (Xu *et al.*, 2021).

Social networks, both online and offline play a significant role in creating and enhancing women's employment opportunities. Here are several ways in which social networks can positively impact women's access to job opportunities and career advancement (Naseer, 2015). Social networks both online and offline, offer valuable opportunities for women to build professional connections. Networking events, industry conferences, and online platforms like LinkedIn create spaces for women to engage with professionals, mentors, and peers. These connections can lead to the exchange of information about job opportunities, industry insights, and career advice. Establishing a robust professional network is



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

crucial for women to expand their circles, gain exposure to diverse opportunities, and navigate their career paths effectively (Jafarey, 2007).

Education equips women with the knowledge and skills they need to enter the workforce, earn an income, and achieve financial independence. Education expands their employment opportunities, increases their earning potential, and closes the gender wage gap. When women are economically empowered, they can increase household income, make smart financial decisions, and have a positive impact on their families and communities (Ajuzie *et al.*, 2012). Education is a influential compound for authorizing women and encouraging gender equality. By providing equal access to quality education, developing leadership skills improving health, challenging gender norms and promoting economic empowerment societies can create a more equitable and inclusive world. Investing in women's education is investing in the future, unlocking the potential for social, economic, and political progress (Teresiah, 2021)

Access to information is instrumental in promoting women's employment by providing them with the knowledge, resources, and opportunities necessary to enter and succeed in the workforce. Access to information enables women to stay informed about job openings, educational and training programs, and career advancement opportunities. It also empowers them to make informed decisions about their careers, negotiate for fair wages and benefits, and advocate for their rights in the workplace (Timilsina *et al.* 2024).

Access to information allows women to stay updated on industry trends, technological advancements, and market demands, thereby enhancing their competitiveness in the job market. By bridging information gaps and promoting transparency, access to information facilitates women's economic empowerment, fosters gender equality, and contributes to overall societal development. (Timilsina *et al.*, 2024).

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, having access to information is essential to exercising fundamental socioeconomic and political rights. More than 90 nations assert that their citizens have a statutory right to information, but in many of these nations, half of the population is unable to fully exercise this right and all of its potential advantages. Statistics show that women do not access information at the same rate as men, even in the rare cases when requests for information are broken down by gender (Ajuzie *et al.*, 2012).

Familial support plays a crucial role in securing employment, particularly during the job search and application process. Family members can offer emotional encouragement, helping to boost confidence and motivation during what can often be a challenging and stressful time. This support can be particularly beneficial for individuals entering the workforce for the first time or those facing difficulties in finding a job. Additionally, family members may provide practical assistance, such as helping to review resumes, preparing for interviews, or leveraging their networks to identify job opportunities. This kind of practical support can significantly enhance an individual chance of securing employment, especially in competitive job markets (Huang *et al.*, 2021).

Initial job search, familial support can also extend to financial assistance, which can be critical for individuals who may need resources to invest in further education, certifications, or even basic needs while they search for a job. For instance, a family might provide temporary financial support, allowing a job seeker to focus on finding the right opportunity without the immediate pressure



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

of financial constraints. Furthermore, family members can offer valuable advice based on their own career experiences, guiding job seekers through the complexities of employment decisions and career planning. Overall, familial support serves as a foundational element that can significantly influence an individual's ability to secure and maintain employment. (Leung *et al.*, 2019)

According to Montuori *et al.*, (2022) Job satisfaction is the degree of enjoyment or contentment an individual has at work, and it can be influenced by a variety of factors, such as the type of work being done, the workplace, the company culture, and the interactions the employee has with their coworkers.) Job satisfaction is the degree of contentment an employee has with their work, which goes beyond their regular responsibilities to include their level of satisfaction with managers and team members, organizational policies, and the impact their work has on their personal lives. The positive emotional reaction you have while performing your duties or while you are in the office is known as job satisfaction, and it is an intangible metric. Leading companies are currently attempting to quantify this emotion.

Methodology

Universe of the Study

Universe for the present study was two union councils Lajbook and Hayaseri of District LowerDir. Furthermore, a total of 6 girls' schools were selected from each union council for this study.

Sample Size and Sampling Design

Sample sizes of 177 respondents were selected out of total 238 according to formula devised by (Sekaran 2003). Moreover, simple random sampling procedure was used for collecting the data from the respondents to arrive the right conclusions.

Number of respondents and sample distribution

S.No	Union Council Lajbook	Population	Sample Size
01	GGHS Lajbook	31	25
02	GGHS RehanPur	26	20
03	GGPS Rahim Abad Lajbook	12	10
04	GGPS Gero Bala	13	10
05	GGMS Dermal Payyan	20	14
06	GGMS Derma Bala	19	13
07	GGPS Landai dara	13	10
08	GGPS Shaker Tangi	15	10
09	GGMS Hayaseri	19	13
10	GGMS Sangoli	18	13



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

11	GGHS Kadh	27	20
12	GGHS Nari Tangi	25	19
Total		238	177

Source: Field data

Data Collection

For this study a well thought questionnaire was used for the collection of data from the target population. Before the collection of data from the respondents, the reliability the tool was checked which was stood 0.82.

Conceptual Framework

Table 2: Conceptual framework of the study

Independent variables	Dependent variable
Social Network	Job Satisfaction
Role of Education in seeking employment	
Access to Employment information	
Familial Support in securing employment	

Analysis of Data

To analyze the collected data, A statistical tool for data analysis in social sciences research known as SPSS-V25 was utilized. The uni- variate and bi-variate approaches were applied.

Uni-variate Analysis

For calculating descriptive statistics a uni variate technique was used i.e. background, independent and dependent variables along with frequency distribution of respondents. Following equation was used for data class's percentage.

Data class's percentage = $f/N * 100$ Where,
 f = Data class's frequency
 N = total observations.

Bi-variate Analysis

Bi-variate analysis was applied to estimate the association between dependent and independent variables. Chi square test was used to test the strength and direction of association of variables at bi- variate level. Following statistical technique was adopted to find the value of chi- square test (Taj, 1978).

Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

The socio-demographic characteristic of the respondents includes age, marital status, designation, monthly family income, family type and family size. These characteristics directly and indirectly affect the phenomena of the job satisfaction among employed women.



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

Age of the respondent

Table 4.1 showed the age of the respondents in years. Out of 177 (100%) of the respondents, 63 (35.6%) of them were between 22 to 31 years. 70 (39.5%) of the respondents age range were between 32 to 41 years. 25 (14.1%) of the respondents age range were between 42 to 51 years. 19 (10.7%) of the respondents age range were 52 to 60 years.

Percentage and frequency distribution of the sampled respondents on the basis of their age

Age in years	Frequency	Percent
22 to 31	63	35.6
32 to 41	70	39.5
42 to 51	25	14.1
52 to 60	19	10.7
Total	177	100.0

Source: Field data

Marital status of the respondents

Table 4.2 showed the marital status of the respondents. Out of 177 (100%) of the respondents, 145 (81.9%) of the respondents were married and 32 (18.1%) were single.

Percentage and frequency distribution of the sampled respondents on the basis of their marital status

Marital status	Frequency	Percent
Married	145	81.9
Single	32	18.1
Total	177	100.0

Source: Field data

Designation of the respondents

Table 4.3 illustrates the designation of the respondents. Out of 177 (100%) of the respondents, 75 (42.3%) of them were Primary School Teachers. 25 (14.1%) of the respondents were Senior Primary school Teachers. 28 (15.8%) of the respondents were Certified Teachers. 22 (12.4%) were SST- Secondary School Teachers. 15 (8.4%) were PET-Physical Education Teachers and 12 (6.7%) were PET-Physical Education Teachers.

Percentage and frequency distribution of the sampled respondents on the basis of their designation

Designation	Frequency	Percent
PST- Primary School Teacher	75	42.3
SPST-Senior Primary school Teacher	25	14.1
CT-Certified Teacher	28	15.8
SST- Secondary School Teacher	22	12.4
PET-Physical Education Teacher	15	8.4
T.T-Theology Teacher	12	6.7



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

Total	177	100
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Source: Field data

Monthly income of the respondents

Table 4.4 showed the monthly income of respondents. Out of 177 (100%), 77 (43.5%) of the respondents monthly income were between 30000 to 45000. 54 (30.5%) of the respondents monthly income were between 45,001 to 60,000. 20 (11.3%) of the respondents monthly income were between 60,001 to 75,000. 26 (14.7%) of the respondents monthly income were between 75, 001 and above.

Percentage and frequency distribution of the sampled respondents on the basis of their monthly income

Monthly income in PKR	Frequency	Percent
30,000 to 45,000	77	43.5
45,001 to 60,000	54	30.5
60,001 to 75,000	20	11.3
75,001 and above	26	14.7
Total	177	100.0

Source: Field data

Type of the family of the respondents

Table 4.5 illustrates the type of family of the respondents. Among 177 (100%) of the respondents, 52 (29.3%) of the respondents were belong to nuclear family while 125 (70.6%) of the respondents were belong to joint family system.

Percentage and frequency distribution of the sampled respondents on the basis of their family type

Family type	Frequency	Percent
Nuclear	52	29.3
Joint family	125	70.6
Total	177	100.0

Source: Field data

Association between Social Network and Job Satisfaction

Social networks play a crucial role in shaping the job satisfaction of women. Strong professional networks within the workplace can provide women with emotional support, career advice, and a sense of belonging, all of which contribute to higher job satisfaction. Women who have close relationships with colleagues and mentors often feel more valued, confident, and empowered in their roles, which leads to greater job engagement and contentment. Women with access to supportive social networks are better able to navigate workplace challenges, such as balancing work and family responsibilities or overcoming gender-related barriers.

Table 4.6 showed the association between social network and job satisfaction. The result illustrates that women's social network is more family centric and home-bound at a highly significant ($P=0.000$) with job satisfaction. Similarly, a strong association ($P=0.000$) was also found between Awareness campaigns have been disseminated to promote women's economic empowerment in your



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

area and job satisfaction. The finding that women's social networks are more family-centric and home-bound, and their significant association with job satisfaction, is supported by other research such as research by Hussain *et al.*, (2015) found that awareness campaigns focusing on women's economic empowerment, such as those offering information about entrepreneurship, job training, and rights, significantly improved women's confidence and job satisfaction. These initiatives helped women better navigate work environments and pursue opportunities for career advancement, ultimately contributing to increased satisfaction. A study by Ibarra (1993) examined how professional social networks impact women's career success and job satisfaction. It showed that women with strong professional networks (mentors, colleagues) in the workplace experienced greater job satisfaction due to increased access to resources, opportunities for advancement, and a sense of belonging.

The result further show that there is a strong association ($P=0.000$) between role of social networks in disseminating information about job openings/promotions and job satisfaction. Likewise, a strong association ($P=0.000$) was also found between Social network can enhance your accessibility to digital social relationship and job satisfaction. Research by Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007) emphasized that online social networks and digital relationships are crucial for job satisfaction. They found that having access to digital social networks enhances employees' ability to connect with peers, mentors, and potential employers, which leads to greater job satisfaction due to increased career opportunities, professional visibility, and social support. A study by Ng & Sorensen (2008) also supports the idea that social networks play a key role in enhancing job satisfaction. They found that employees who are part of both strong in-person and digital social networks reported higher satisfaction with their job due to a greater flow of information, recognition, and support.

Furthermore, the result also illustrates that there is a strong association ($P=0.000$) between social networks, both online and offline, offer valuable opportunities for women to build professional connection and job satisfaction. Likewise, a strong association ($P=0.000$) was also found between rural women lacking professional social relationship skills for seeking jobs and job satisfaction. The findings that both online and offline social networks offer valuable opportunities for women to build professional connections and improve job satisfaction align with several research studies such as according to Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe (2007), women who actively engage in both online and offline social networks are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction. These networks offer access to valuable job-related information, professional relationships, and career-enhancing opportunities, which improve employees' engagement and sense of security in their roles. A study by Kabeer (2005) explored the challenges faced by rural women, particularly in accessing professional networks and job-related opportunities. It found that a lack of professional social relationship skills often hinders rural women's ability to secure stable employment. This gap in social network access can lead to lower job satisfaction, as these women may struggle to find mentorship or opportunities for career advancement. These studies support the idea that social networks—whether digital or in-person—are critical for women's professional success and job satisfaction. For rural women, developing professional networking skills is a key to improving job outcomes and overall satisfaction.



Table 4.6 Association between Social Network and Job Satisfaction

S. No	Statement	Job Satisfaction			Chi-square & P-Value
		Agree	Disagree	Total	
1	Women’s social network is more family centric and home-bound.				
	Agree	48	8	56	$\chi^2= 18.104$ P=0.000
	Disagree	113	0	113	
	Uncertain	8	0	8	
2	Awareness campaigns have been disseminated to promote women’s economic empowerment in your area.				
	Agree	45	0	45	$\chi^2= 48.661$ P=0.000
	Disagree	106	0	106	
	Uncertain	18	8	26	
3	Role of social networks in disseminating information about job Openings/Promotions.				
	Agree	157	8	165	$\chi^2= 52.877^a$ P=0.000
	Disagree	8	0	8	
	Uncertain	4	0	4	
4	Social network can enhance your accessibility to digital social relationship.				
	Agree	165	8	173	$\chi^2= 63.727^a$ P=0.001
	Disagree	4	0	4	
	Uncertain	0	0	0	
5	Social networks, both online and offline, offer valuable opportunities for women to build professional connection.				
	Agree	162	8	170	$\chi^2= 28.361^a$ P=0.000
	Disagree	3	0	3	
	Uncertain	4	0	4	
6	Rural women lacking professional social relationship skills for seeking jobs.				
	Agree	155	8	163	$\chi^2= 113.275^a$ P=0.001
	Disagree	10	0	10	
	Uncertain	4	0	4	

Source: Field data

Association between role of education in seeking employment and job satisfaction

Education plays a significant role in both seeking employment and job satisfaction. Higher levels of education are often associated with better access to job opportunities, as employers tend to prioritize candidates with relevant qualifications and skills. Education equips individuals with the knowledge and competencies needed to meet the demands of various roles, leading to a higher likelihood of securing employment. In terms of job satisfaction, education contributes by allowing individuals to pursue careers that align with their interests and expertise. People who are well-educated are more likely to find jobs that match their qualifications, which increase their sense of competence and fulfillment.

Table 4.7 showed the association between role of education in seeking employment and job satisfaction. The result illustrates that Education plays a



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

pivotal role in enhancing skill women's employment opportunities at a highly significant ($P=0.000$) with job satisfaction. Similarly, a strong association ($P=0.000$) was also found between Education equips women with the necessary skill and knowledge for the work force and job satisfaction. Education provides women with the skills and knowledge required to excel in the workforce, which significantly impacts their ability to secure and succeed in jobs that align with their qualifications, leading to greater job satisfaction. Research by Judge *et al.*, (2001) found that individuals who are well-educated tend to experience higher job satisfaction because they are more likely to hold jobs that are aligned with their qualifications, offering more meaningful and fulfilling work. Specifically for women, access to education has been shown to improve job quality and satisfaction, as education equips them with the necessary skills for higher-paying and more rewarding roles. O'Neill and O'Reilly (2012) found that education not only provides women with the skills they need for the workforce, but it also helps them to navigate workplace dynamics and access leadership roles. Education helps women develop self-efficacy and confidence, which can directly contribute to higher job satisfaction and career success.

The result further showed that there is a strong association ($P=0.000$) between Access to quality education positively influences women's participation in the labor market and job satisfaction. Likewise, a strong association ($P=0.000$) was also found between Investing in girl's education contributes to reducing gender disparities in employment and job satisfaction. The findings emphasize the crucial role that access to quality education plays in enhancing women's participation in the labor market and their job satisfaction, as well as the importance of investing in girls' education to reduce gender disparities in employment. Several studies support these associations such as; Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (2018) found that for women, education has a direct impact on employment outcomes, especially in developing countries where higher education levels were associated with increased workforce participation and improved job satisfaction. Another study by Duflo (2012) highlights that investing in girls' education has a transformative impact on reducing gender disparities in employment and job satisfaction. Educated women are more likely to work in diverse sectors and leadership roles, thereby narrowing the gender gap in employment opportunities. This leads to better job satisfaction, as women are empowered to seek careers that align with their interests and qualifications.

Furthermore, the result also illustrates that there is a strong association ($P=0.000$) between Education serves as a catalyst for breaking traditional gender roles and norms in employment and job satisfaction. Likewise, a strong association ($P=0.000$) was also found between Higher levels of education lead to great employment prospects for women and job satisfaction. The results highlight the critical role that education plays in challenging traditional gender roles and norms in employment, as well as enhancing employment prospects and job satisfaction for women. Several studies support the findings of the current study for example Nussbaum (2003) supports this by suggesting that education allows women to gain autonomy and make informed choices, which ultimately helps to break gender stereotypes in the workforce. When women enter non-traditional fields, they experience more equality and better opportunities, which enhances their job satisfaction. Other study of Buchmann *et al.*, (2008) found that higher levels of education directly correlate with better employment



prospects for women. Educated women are more likely to secure jobs with better pay, benefits, and career advancement opportunities, which contribute to their job satisfaction. The study highlighted that education provides women with the skills necessary to access higher-paying and more secure positions, which also offers a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction in their work.

Table 4.7 Association between role of education in seeking employment and job satisfaction

S. No	Statement	Job Satisfaction			Chi-square & P-Value
		Agree	Disagree	Total	
1	Education plays a pivotal role in enhancing skill women's employment Opportunities.				$\chi^2 = 18.104$ P=0.000
	Agree	165	8	173	
	Disagree	4	0	4	
	Uncertain	0	0	0	
2	Education equips women with the necessary skill and knowledge for the work force.				$\chi^2 = 48.661$ P=0.000
	Agree	154	8	162	
	Disagree	8	0	8	
	Uncertain	7	0	7	
3	Access to quality education positively influences women's participation in the labor market				$\chi^2 = 53.414^a$ P=0.000
	Agree	157	8	165	
	Disagree	8	0	8	
	Uncertain	4	0	4	
4	Investing in girl's education contributes to reducing gender disparities in employment				$\chi^2 = 8.866^a$ P=0.012
	Agree	78	8	86	
	Disagree	60	0	60	
	Uncertain	31	0	31	
5	Education serves as a catalyst for breaking traditional gender roles and norms in employment				$\chi^2 = 20.700^a$ P=0.000
	Agree	43	8	51	
	Disagree	57	0	57	
	Uncertain	69	0	69	
6	Higher levels of education lead to great employment prospects for women				$\chi^2 = 56.782^a$ P=0.001
	Agree	143	8	151	
	Disagree	22	0	22	
	Uncertain	4	0	4	

Source: Field data

Conclusion

After a careful scientific investigation the present study concluded that there are various responsible factors which affecting the job satisfaction of the employed women in District Dir Lower. These factors includes; women's social network is more family centric and homebound, the role of social networks in disseminating



Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

information about job openings/promotions, social network can enhance your accessibility to digital social relationship, social networks, both online and offline, offer valuable opportunities for women to build professional connection rural women lacking professional social relationship skills for seeking jobs, education plays a pivotal role in enhancing skill women's employment opportunities, education equips women with the necessary skill and knowledge for the workforce, access to quality education positively influences women's participation in the labor market, investing in girl's education contributes to reducing gender disparities in employment and education serves as a catalyst for breaking traditional gender roles and norms in employment affect the job satisfaction of women.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the current study, the researcher suggest the following recommendations;

1. Government should expand access to quality education and vocational training programs for women, especially in rural and underserved areas of KP. This can be achieved through the establishment of more girls' schools, community-based education programs, and online learning platforms.
2. Launch awareness campaigns focused on educating women about their workplace rights, labor laws, and gender equality. These campaigns should include information on laws against harassment, equal pay, and maternity benefits.
3. Engage local communities and families in promoting the importance of women's work and the value of their economic contributions. Encouraging family support for women's employment can help reduce the stigma around women working outside the home.

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Vol. 3 No. 5 (May) (2025)

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