

Liquid Crisis: Exploring The Impacts of Water Insecurity in South Asia

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Abstract

Water insecurity has emerged as one of the most critical challenges facing South Asia, a region characterized by high population density, rapid urbanization, and transboundary river systems. This paper explores the complex drivers of water insecurity including climate change, overexploitation of groundwater, pollution, and poor governance and examines their far-reaching implications for agriculture, public health, socioeconomic development, and regional stability. Special attention is given to the geopolitical tensions surrounding shared rivers such as the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra, which exacerbate inter-state relations and hinder effective water management. The paper also analyzes the gendered dimensions of water access and the growing risks of internal displacement and social unrest. Drawing on regional case studies, the study advocates for Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), improved transboundary cooperation, and sustainable policy interventions to ensure water security for current and future generations in South Asia.

Keywords: climate change, poor governance, south asia, transboundary rivers, water insecurity