

### **Impact of Nudges and Enforcement to Combat Single Use Plastic Bag Usage**

Dr. Muhammad Khan and his team participated in high level policy seminar on Environmental Conflict and Social Dialogue in Pakistan jointly organized by COMSATS University Islamabad, Lahore Campus and SDPI on November 06, 2024. The session was chaired by Higher Education Commission (HEC) Chairman Dr Mukhtar Ahmed. The officials from academia and international organizations were also present. Dr. Rafi Amir-ud-Din presented findings from the ongoing project *Carrot, Stick or Nudges: Testing the Effectiveness of Plastic Bag Compliance Behaviour in Islamabad, Pakistan*. He highlighted the limited success of traditional bans due to weak enforcement, low awareness, and cultural factors. The study tested a combined approach of regulatory enforcement and nudge-based strategies, including informational and religious nudges, to reduce single-use plastic bag (SUPB) consumption. Enforcement alone reduced usage by 4.48 percentage points, while adding nudges raised this to 4.77 points. Nudges independently reduced usage, with combined informational and religious nudges achieving a 2.65-point reduction. Impacts varied by business type, with grocery stores increasing usage, while cloth stores and restaurants showed significant decreases. The study recommends combining enforcement with nudges, engaging community and religious leaders, and promoting awareness to effectively curb SUPB use and mitigate environmental harm.



