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Research Article

The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973: A Critical Analysis of Its Framework, Implementation, and Evolving Dynamics

Romeena Akhtar ¹

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Abstract

The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, is the highest legal authority in the country which comprises governance, protection of civil rights, offices of various State Institutions. Since 1973, Pakistan's legal system and the country's democratic processes and institutional functions have been based on the Constitution. This research article looks into the fundamental structure, theoretical principles and the evolution of the Constitution with respect to time, on how the Constitution has dealt with the dynamic socio political and legal environment in Pakistan. It discusses important constitutional provisions including role of Islam in the legal system (Article 227-231) and various significant institutions like Council of Islamic Ideology. This research tackles these critical gaps in the Constitutional implementation by first reviewing various sources of literature, legal precedents and legislative history of subsequent amendments. It includes bringing in notability for the inconsistency in enforcing constitutional provisions, lack of political interference in judicial processes, and failure to guarantee institutional autonomy, especially in the Executive and Legislature. By using the qualitative research methodology, the paper looks at different case studies, legal decisions, and historical events that have shaped the evolution of the Constitution. This comprehensive analysis makes to a wider understanding of how the Constitution plays a critical

¹ Advocate High Court

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| | <p>part in Pakistan's governance and what are the steps to adapt it to today's challenges of the political and the legal spheres. Overall, the findings provide time relevant evidence of the ongoing challenges including the lack of judicial independence, absolute lack of enforcement of constitutional provisions and the inability of constitutional principles to match contemporary values of a democratic republic. Thus, this study recommends reforms which would deal with these inconsistencies, suggesting reforms which enable the Constitution to fulfill people of Pakistan's own democratic aspirations and uphold the rule of law as well as human rights Standards.</p> |
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Introduction

The constitutional regime of the country under which Pakistan now functions is the third and at presents the current constitution of the country. It was a significant event in Pakistan's constitutional history, which had parliamentary government, federation, Islamic provisions and separation of powers. Its draft was after East Pakistan's (now Bangladesh) secession in 1970; the aim was to achieve national unity with democratic values, struck a balance between religious, ethnic and political considerations (Ziring, 1980). Although it has a detailed structure, the Constitution has been through a lot of constraints, including many amendments, military interventions, and judicial re-interpretations. The focus of this research is to analyze the evolution, power and inabilities of the 1973 Constitution in accordance to today's governance rules and rule of law.

It was the landmark of the constitution of 1973, which came after long political crisis and constitutional breakdown in Pakistan. It was designed to handle failures of the past two constitutions (1956 and 1962) which were both revoked following their association coups. It was a rare period of nationwide consensus on what happened: The National Assembly passed the constitution with near unanimity in 1973. It was intended for it to have a federal parliamentary system with the prime minister as the chief executive and the president as ceremonial head of state (Khan, 2005). Most importantly, the Constitution comprises Islamic principles but also guarantees such fundamental human rights as freedom of speech, of religion, and equality before the law. It details separation of powers among the executive, legislative and judicial branches, establishes bicameral legislature, and gives national and provincial government's legislative power in comprehensive list of bills for federal, concurrent (abolished) and provincial governments.

The Constitution has been amended more than 27 times in the course of the decades, and many of those amendments have drastically remade the system of governance. Makers of General Zia-up-Haq's military regime like the 8th Amendment granted wide powers to the President and the 18th Amendment reverted many of these changes by re-instating parliamentary supremacy and relaying provincial autonomy (Waseem, 2010). The Constitution has been suspended, selectively implemented or infringed

upon in authoritarian states and ill performing democratic institutions. Legitimately justified through pliant judiciaries, military interventions of 1977 and 1999 established parallel systems of governance and hence charted constitutional discontinuities. Constitutional violations such as delays in holding elections, interference in judicial independence and ignoring provincial rights have gone on even in the democratic tenures (Newberg, 1995).

The Constitution's Islamic clauses, meant to reflect the Islamic identity of Pakistan, however, have become an object of criticism on the grounds of religious discrimination otherwise, minority groups such as Ahmadis, Christians and Hindus. Articles 62 and 63, which establish the quotient for eligibility of members of the Parliament, like moral and religious quibbles, have been used in a manner relatively politicized to exclude and silence an opponent.

Research Gaps

However, considerable literature already exists in relation to constitutional development in Pakistan, but numerous lacunae remain.

- Limited empirical analysis of the Constitution's impact on provincial autonomy.
- Inadequate focus on the judiciary's role in constitutional interpretation post-18th Amendment.
- A paucity of worldwide studies on the public's views on the constitutional rights within the law, along with enforcement of rights.
- Insufficient investigation into rights of minority under constitution.

Theoretical Framework

The underlying research assumption is that of constitutionalism and legal positivism. According to Vile (1998), constitutionalism stresses rule of law, limited government and supremacy of Constitution. Legal positivism supports the notion that law is authoritative only by being codified and enforceable and that is not because it is reasonable. They help in assessing the manner in which the Constitution unfolds as a legal framework for governing and dispensing justice in Pakistan.

Significance of the Study

This research is significant because:

- It has contributed to the knowledge of the development of constitution and implications for governance of Pakistan.
- It illuminates the balance of the powers between the executive, the legislature, and Judiciary.
- It offers lesson for legal scholars, policymakers, and rights activists on constitutional reforms and stability of democracy.

Literature Review

There is literature by leading scholars and legal experts on the 1973 Constitution. Hamid Khan 2014 provides a historical and legal analysis from all perspective and identifies the positive and negative constitution structural things. In accordance with constitutional and judicial challenges, Newberg (1995) explores independence. This represented a significant level of the central and provincial autonomy, but that has justifiably been followed by argument for unequal implementation of the 18th Amendment (2010).

Further, civil society attack more often goes into the non-application of constitutional rights and instances of abuse of Islamic provisions in particular articles 62 and 63. This field based and policy oriented research is missing from the literature regarding the use of constitutional guarantees of basic rights as an attempt to derive them into the practice of the public. In fact there have been scholars studying different parts of 1973 Constitution in terms of structure, amendments and impact of the constitution on the political system of Pakistan. It is interpreted differently and is dependent on your ideological leanings, your political point of view, and your experiences of history.

Historical and Structural Context

Hamid Khan's authorized story of constitutional and political historical past of Pakistan (2014) is a step by step tale of constitutional improvement in Pakistan with the 1973 Constitution being a product of political compromise between ideologies of Islamism, federalism, and democracy. He talks about how the Constitution that was framed after the losing East Pakistan and it was for the restoration of political stability and civilian rules.

Islamic Provisions and Religious Identity

Lau (2006) has observed that Islamic clauses were incorporated into the Constitution to make it in consonance with country's religious character. A number of articles like 227–231 require laws to correspond to injunctions of Islam and institutions such as the Council of Islamic Ideology have come into being to ensure this compliance. One position contradicted by scholars such as Kennedy (1990) is that these provisions, including the contentious minority and woman status provisions have been used politically and conflict with universal human rights standards.

Federalism and Provincial Autonomy

Bengali, K. (2020) in his book chapter *Pakistan (Islamic Republic of Pakistan) Governing a Federation When One Province Has 57% of the Population* mentioned that it is certainly one of the debated aspects of the Constitution dealing with federalism. In Balochistan and Sindh the federation and the provinces (particularly) were in tension with each other during this period preceding the 18th Amendment. To attend to these concerns, the 18th Amendment, 2010 suspended the concurrent legislative list and transferred most of the powers to the provinces. This represented a real breakthrough regarding fiscal and administrative decentralization. Yet, critics of these provisions argue that there is still federal dominance in decision making and financial control, despite implementing these provisions.

Judicial Interpretation and Constitutional Supremacy

Newberg (1995) and Shapiro (2014) in their book *judging the State: Courts and Constitutional Politics in Pakistan* highlighted the involvement of the judiciary in preserving or negating the Constitution has been scrutinized. Analysis on how the judiciary has swung inter alia between guardianship of constitutionalism, and legitimization of authoritarian regimes, using the doctrine of necessity.

Amendments and Political Manipulation

Ahmed (2010) in his policy report *Amendments to the Constitution: Political Context and Implications* mentioned that it has been often amended, in many cases expediently political. The 8th and 17th amendments actually radically changed the balance of power such that it moved from the Prime Minister to the President. All changes introduced were under military regimes (Zia-ul-Haq, Pervez Musharraf) and faced criticism of straying from the parliamentary framework to which the country had returned. On the other hand, the 13th, 14th and 18th Amendments essentially aimed at the restoration of the parliamentary system and the reduction of autocracy. Ahmed (2010) argues that these swings attest to the Constitution's vulnerability to being influenced by the rule of the elites.

Human Rights and Civic Freedoms

Articles 8 to 28 have mainly remained aspirational in giving human rights protections. Reports by *the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP, 2020)*, as well as international bodies, relate to large scale violation of freedom of expression, gender discrimination, arbitrary detentions and enforced disappearance. Among other reasons, poor enforcement of constitutional rights is due to inadequate enforcement mechanisms and poor information about the constitutional rights.

Gaps in Implementation and Public Perception

The Constitution, however, though the supreme law, has not yet entered full public consciousness. As per the *PILDAT survey (2018)*, majority of the population is not aware of their constitutional rights. There is also a lack of sufficient empirical research of public engagement in constitutional processes in the academic literature, which is very important for process of democratic consolidation.

Constitutional Amendments and Political Manipulation

Iqbal M.M (2024) in his newspaper article *journey through Pakistan's 1973 Constitution: Amendments, power, and democracy*. Emphasizes that passage of the 1973 Constitution marked some politically motivated consensus, but the spirit behind its amendments generally strayed from democratic feel or legal niceties. This is a prime example, one of the 8th Amendment (1985), which allowed the President to dissolve the National Assembly. It was an amendment that was inserted during the time of the military rule of General Zia-ul-Haq to protect his regime from parliamentary opposition and has restored parliamentary supremacy through an amendment of the 18th Amendment, which restored the presidential power to dissolve the assembly.

The Impact of Constitutional Provisions on Political Stability

It is sometimes claimed that Pakistan's political instability is owing to the tension between civil and military authority. Frequent military interventions, according to *Newberg (1995)* are due to the ambiguities of the Constitution regarding the role of the military in the governance instance. For instance, the doctrine of necessity, which justifies military rule, implies suppression of constitutional supremacy and clarity of civilian control on the military is lacking. As a result, there has been an uneven practice in the application of democratic principles with the military exercising direct or indirect control over the state periodically.

But 1973 Constitution's power centralization in the Executive and in the office of the Prime Minister has been a double edged sword. A stable leadership and autocratic political culture has emerged from it, however, leading to a few less institutional checks and balances. This was compounded by how the military has been involved in governance and at times, constitutional amendments that serve military are interest and not the state's interest and the wellbeing of the citizens.

Social and Cultural Context of Constitutional Implementation

The progressive ideals in the Constitution of Pakistan have not been employed, nor have they been accepted by the public, because of the many hurdles it has encountered in their implementation. Lau (2006) in his book *In the Role of Islam in the Legal System of Pakistan* examines the social-cultural context of Pakistan, which includes a deep religious mix, ethnic distinctions and tribal overtones, has not been completely embraced in the realization of the constitutional framework. Nevertheless, conservative religious groups oppose the Constitution as it fails to set strict Islamic provisions, saying it does not go far enough in implementing Islamic law. Thus it led to a policy gap between secular provisions of constitution and religious pressures.

Hamid Khan (2014) in his book *Constitutional and Political History of Pakistan*. Highlighted that there were actually has paradox, the Islamic provisions in the Constitution and due to the religious nature of state has been both a strength and a challenge. These provisions, which some see as uniting, have also sometimes served as an exclusionary practice, particularly for religious minorities and non-Muslims, explains that the Constitution's religiously inclined Constitution has all too often been read as regards to minority blasphemy laws and other readings of the Constitution as contributing to the burdening of minorities.

Rights of Women and Marginalized Groups under the Constitution

Such rights of women and marginalized communities are protected to a great extent to under the Constitution of 1973. Yet, these rights have not been put into practice in a uniform way. The promises of safeguarding women's rights written into the Constitution, such as equality before the law (Article 25) and the right to participate in politics. However, these protections have not provided women in Pakistan with the system that they should have, often because of cultural norms, religious interpretations and legal loopholes that prevent them from being able to seek justice.

It also discusses the situation of minorities by the Constitution. Yet the Constitution (Article 20) guarantees freedom of religion and it has been criticized for not preventing the marginalization and persecution of non-Muslims on the grounds of forced conversions, blasphemy allegations, and social ostracism of Hindus and Christians. In Newberg (1995), he argues that the contradiction between human rights as envisioned in the Constitution and how it really plays out on forgotten corners is indicative of a big gap between implementing it.

The Role of Political Parties and the Constitution

The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, outlines a parliamentary system of government, with political parties playing a central role in the functioning of the state. Yet political parties have had no straightforward relationship with the Constitution. They also point out that in Pakistan, political parties tend to have little commitment to democratic principles and cycle of instability reflect the role of political parties in both standing by and undermining the Constitution. Political expediency trumps constitutional values, thus causing unconstitutional amendments, political maneuvering and switching changing of leadership ad nauseam.

However, political climate in Pakistan continues to be plagued by factionalism and instability, and Pakistan is provided with a multi-party structure under the Constitution. Political parties have usually focused on obtaining short term power rather than to bring about a strong democratic culture. Weak political institutions, poor governance and frequent crises in Pakistan's democratic system have been furthered by this.

Political parties have also been weakened by the power of dynastic politics to further deform their relationship with the Constitution. As explained by Zaman (2008), political parties often extend to be branches of an individual family and thus contribute to undermining democratic norms and political clientelism. Such dynamics are exactly the opposite of what the Constitution was designed for by establishing a politically neutral and democratic framework.

Constitutionalism vs. Political Culture in Pakistan

There has been a lot of literature on the disjunction between the constitutionalism and political culture in Pakistan. According to Lau (2006), although the Constitution envisaged a system based on the principles of democracy and the rule of law, the political culture of Pakistan is deeply vested with patrimonialism, clientelism, and authoritarianism. For the most part, these norms work at cross purposes with the spirit of the Constitution, and there is always a gulf between constitutional ideal and political practice.

Hamid Khan (2014) points out that historical military interventions, feudalism and ethnic divisions have destabilized the political culture of Pakistan which had in turn led to political instability. Despite the provision of constitutional governance in accordance to a democratic system, these entrenched politics have constrained constitutional governance. With regard to the realities of military rule, corruption and patronage politics, the Constitution's democratic ideals fight an uphill struggle.

Impact of the Constitution on Human Development and Social Justice

Under the Constitution of Pakistan 1973, Pakistan envisages its state to be one that ensures social justice and human development. Nevertheless, the realization of those goals has been unequal both in terms of social equity and human development. Despite constitutional guarantees of economic, social and cultural rights, Pakistan has found it difficult to translate these into policies that are helpful in dealing with the needs of the vulnerable, notes Sattar (2018).

However, with regard to human development indicators in Pakistan, including health, education, and especially alleviation of poverty, the expectations prescribed as per the Constitution (HRCP, 2020) are hardly met. Zaman (2008) argues that successive government utilized constitutional provisions that were not able to ensure social welfare. For instance, how adequately poverty is addressed is not something that the Constitution guarantees, even when committed to providing the basic necessities of life to all citizens.

Moreover, despite objectives of economic justice set forth in the Constitution, these provisions have been aspirational rather than actualized and successive governments have also used constitutional guarantees of economic rights to secure political support, but not to deploy welfare programs to alleviate countrywide poverty and inequality. This discrepancy of a constitutional provision and public policy in Pakistan is a glaring mismatch between the constitutional provisions and the actuality.

The Future of the Constitution: Reforms and Challenges

However, many factors stand out in deciding the fate of the Constitution of Pakistan, such as the political will to introduce reforms, the influence of the judiciary and the emergence of democratic institutions. According to Newberg (1995), scholars argue that the Constitution must change with changing political, social and economic situations in Pakistan. It could be an evolutionary change, which entails constitutional reforms to deal with the challenges of the time, and they are military influence in politics, religious intolerance and secondary the provincial autonomy.

As to the importance of institutional reforms in order to ensure respect for the Constitution by both government and judiciary. They argue that constitutional amendments should straighten out the roles of the military and the civilian leadership and ought to address the military's involvement in governance. Additionally, by strengthening constitutional democracy through reinforcing its institutions by increasing greater accountability and transparency of political institutions, they note that reforms are not focused on.

It also highlights that such reforms in electoral laws, decentralization of power and strengthening of local governance are also necessary to bring in true federalism in Pakistan. These reforms would provide provincial governments with the means to resolve ethnic representation and regional disparities, could have acted as a check against issues of social equity historically undersold in the Constitution.

Research Methodology

The qualitative research approach in this study is doctrinal legal research and content analysis. The objective is to analyze critically the 1973 Constitution of Pakistan from the point of views of the legal, political, and institutional aspects. Consequently, this methodology will allow in a thorough examination of legal provisions, case laws, legislative amendments, and secondary commentaries since, it is a normative and analytical one.

Research Design

The study uses an exploratory and analytical research design that is based on the exploration of historical developments, and critical appraisal of the Constitution's evolution to assess its impact on governance, human rights and judicial functioning.

Sources of Data

a. Primary Sources

- All the amendments up to the 25th Amendment of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (1973).
- Landmark judicial decisions from the Supreme Court and High Courts of Pakistan.
- Constitutional Amendment Bill (Parliamentary Debates), National Assembly records

b. Secondary Sources

- Scholarly books and peer-reviewed journal articles on constitutional law and political science.

Data Collection Techniques

- It is doing critical to cross examine in legal research since one has the power to rule countries, laws and provide justice.
- Content Analysis: Reading of literature, judicial opinions, and official reports that return the same themes of legal and political.
- Comparative Analysis: Comparing the Pakistani constitutional framework with those of other federal democracies (e.g., India, USA) where relevant.

Analytical Framework

- It is doing critical to cross examine in legal research since one has the power to rule countries, laws and provide justice.
- The recurring recurring legal and political themes can be present based on Thematic Review of literature, official reports and judicial opinions done through Content Analysis.

- Comparative Analysis: Comparing the Pakistani constitutional framework with those of other federal democracies (e.g., India, USA) where relevant.

Limitations of the Study

- The study has not taken any fieldwork or quantitative surveys, but it is entirely document based.
- The interpretation of what constitutes judicial and legislative interpretation is context dependent to some degree, and even secondary literature will be colored by political bias with the way that conclusions are framed.
- The matters of some government records and debates, at least those of the early constitutional periods, are out of reach or poorly archived.

Ethical Considerations

All sources are properly cited in this study as per academic integrity standards. It has no political bias, it does not carry it at all, and it is simply legal and institutional dimension of the Constitution.

Critical Analysis

Under the original design of the Constitution, there was a strong parliamentary democracy with Islamic values and human rights protections at the same time. However, political instability and several military takeovers (1977, 1999) broke that very democratic framework. The doctrine of necessity supported a complicit role of judiciary. The 8th and 17th amendments increased the power in the arms of the presidency which was not welcomed by the parliamentary system. The 18th Amendment brought about balance by reducing powers of the presidential office and enhancing the provincial autonomy, but it has been crippled by political resistance and bureaucratic deadbeats.

The constitution has contained Islamic injunctions which have prompted national consensus and exclusory politics especially on minorities (Article 227 - 231). Also, constitutional implementation mechanism is still absent. Centered as one of the biggest political accomplishments ever made in the country's history, The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973 is a document that is most widely recognized. But its theory rarely has been matched to its practice. It comes in for a critical examination of the framework, the amendments and their interpretations by the judiciary that shows major state problems of governance, federalism and civil liberties.

1. Parliamentary Democracy vs. Presidential Dominance

In fact, despite the fact that the 1973 Constitution set up a parliamentary system, presidential authoritarianism has repeatedly supplanted it, particularly during military regimes. In 1985 it was shifted a good deal of its power to the president, including his powers to dissolve the National Assembly under Article 58(2)(b) as stipulated in the 8th Amendment (2003). More than this, they changed the constitutional structure radically, so as to weaken parliamentary sovereignty. However, many of these powers

were restored to the Prime Minister and the Parliament only in the 18th Amendment (2010). However, there is still an influence of executive dominance on institutional balance.

2. Federalism and Provincial Autonomy

The federalism, however, is constitutionally but historically under implemented. Balochistan and Sindh have long been complaining about resource centralization, lack of autonomy and neglect of regional interests. If the 18th Amendment delivered on devolution of power then went along with disestablishment of the Concurrent Legislative List, the federal government still retains control over how money collected is distributed, what to educate, and what to discard for human health. The wissions surrounding National Finance Commission (NFC) awards are because of disagreements over definition of population criteria and allotment of resources.

3. Judiciary and the Doctrine of Necessity

The role of the judiciary as the guardian of the Constitution is also a major contradiction in itself as they tend to be inconsistent in their role. The doctrine of necessity has been invoked to use landmark cases to justify the suspension of constitutionality and severely undermined constitutional supremacy (Newberg, 1995).

4. Human Rights and Religious Discrimination

Under Articles 8–28 constituting the Constitution there is a large gap between fundamental rights on paper and fundamental rights in practice. For instance, Article 25 is an equality right yet women and minorities still suffer from systemic discrimination. According to Articles such as Article 260(3), Article 41(2), Ahmadis are not legally recognized as Muslims and a non-Muslim is not permitted to be President or Prime Minister. Blasphemy laws are often abused to target minorities and suppress dissent, which is possible because of the laws derived from the constitutional Islamic provisions.

5. Amendments as Political Tools

Instead, political regimes have instead harnessed amendments to strengthen or, rather, consolidate power. The 13th Amendment (1997) got rid of Article 58 (2) (b) followed by centralized governance under Nawaz Sharif and the reversal of change made by previous reforms in the 17th Amendment under Musharraf. This is an inconsistency that manifests how the Constitution has become a torn fabric that has been exploited for ruling elites' interests instead of being an otherwise stable legal framework.

6. Weak Institutional Checks and Balances

Despite this intellectual underpinning of separation of powers in the Constitution, institutions tend to overlap or compete more often than not. The Parliament has been generally ineffective in exercising supervision of the executive body, and executive decisions largely remain beyond legislative watchfulness. Additionally, the bodies such

as the Election Commission, Federal Public Service Commission and the NAB usually accuse of bias and politicization which undermine the constitutional integrity.

7. Public Disengagement and Legal Illiteracy

The underlying problem is current public knowledge of constitutional rights and procedures. Legal processes, for **instance**, are generally very much out of the reach of the average citizen. Low constitutional engagement, weak accountability, and situation of the perpetuation of an elite dominated political system are a result of this.

Results

While performing critical analysis and in the holistic review of prior literature, several findings emerge for the operating, problems and the effect of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973.

1. Constitutional Flexibility and Survival:

Despite all of these military interventions, regime changes, political instability, the 1973 Constitution has survived and become more evolved. This adaptation through 25 amendments underingly demonstrates institutional resilience but also makes it vulnerable to manipulation.

2. Federal Structure Remains Partially Implemented:

Although federalism is written in the Constitution, power sharing between the federation and the provinces remains complicated in practice. Provinces have not been fully empowered within the post 18th amendment framework for which the problem lies with capacity issues, delayed implementation, and political reluctance by the center.

3. Human Rights Remain Symbolic:

The basic right chapter is a constitutional ideal and enforcement is weak. There is still legislative and societal difficulty ensuring minority rights, women's rights, and freedom of speech despite constitutional protection.

4. Judiciary's Dual Role:

Judiciary has had constructive and controversial roles and it has varied at the same time. In recent years it has protected democracy but in the past it has legitimized unconstitutional rule. Some things still remain the same in this duality and shape public distrust of the judicial system.

5. Public Awareness is Critically Low:

There is a lack of education and civic exposure, thus, the general public remains disengaged from the Constitution. Due to weakness in demand for constitutional accountability, as well as weaker pressure on legislators to meet constitutional norms, the country has been trailing in these key health indicators.

6. Amendments as Political Tools:

Many amendments, and especially those occurring during military or authoritarian civilian governments, have had the objective of immediate political interests, and not the reinforcing of the institution itself in the medium or long term. The 18th Amendment is an exception, but a systemic reform.

7. Impact of Military Interventions on Constitutional Governance

A major finding from the research is that military interventions have had profound impact on the way in which Pakistan's constitutional governance works. Even after the 1973 constitution created a civilian led political environment, the military has on many occasions intervened in its political affairs frequently citing the doctrine of necessity to justify its rule. The three military coups in 1988, 1999 and 2008 are examples of disruption of constitutional democracy in Pakistan.

It indicated that presidential control of the military denied the Constitution's intended role as a restraint on military power to serve civilian supremacy. Shapiro (2014) and Newberg (1995) both declare that such military interventions have eroded the legitimacy of such a Constitution and the military's special role as a de facto political actor, ultimately resulting in constitutional amendments favoring an authoritarian rule. Such manipulations of the Presidential power to dissolve the National Assembly embodied by the Eighth Amendment are typical instances in which the military and civilian governments have resorted to in order to perpetuate control.

However, judicial activism has served as a means of counteracting military rule, especially under the judicial restoration of democracy following the 2008. Reinstating constitutional governance was possible only because of the judiciary's role in upholding constitutionalism in the presence of military domination. This shows that the military power has eroded the constitutional framework, but the judiciary has become an important institution to restore the democratization norms.

8. Role of the Constitution in Addressing Ethnic and Regional Disparities

The research also provides a new focus on the Constitution's role of equalizing ethnic and regional disparities. As per the 1973 Constitution, it envisages a federal system, provided provinces with major autonomy. Nevertheless, the practice of federalism has been inconsistent, with a centralization of power and formulation of unequal resources resulting in ethnic tensions and balance of region.

The 2010 Amendment to the 18th of 2010 which was supposed to empower provinces and encourage devolution of power, marks one step forward in addressing the amazing disparities described here. This underscores the fact that while this amendment has gone a long way towards achieving greater provincial autonomy, there are the problems of the allocation of resources, the problem of representation and the implementation of devolution. Even constitutional reforms aimed at promoting equitable governance in provinces like Baluchistan have not brought about the

development of the economy, political inclusion and ethnic marginalization have been continuing.

Furthermore, the results show that political parties tend to favor centralized control for electoral gains, so that federal doctrines are not effectively implemented. However, ethnic and regional grievances persist, thus indicating that the 18th Amendment was not able to achieve the goal of federalism in its truest sense.

9. Public Awareness and Perception of Constitutional Rights

The research has revealed an interesting point: that most of the people have very less awareness of the fundamental rights guaranteed by the 1973 Constitution. Research done through surveys and interviews showed that most of citizens do not know about their constitutional rights such as equality rights, freedom of expression and religious freedom. The weaknesses of the judicial system, forces and governmental mechanisms to ensure these rights' enforcement exacerbate this lack of awareness.

In addition, the country's political instability, military rule, and frequent constitutional amendments have affected the public's perception of Constitution. Political elites and military responded to the constitution but in a manner that is political manipulation of the constitution which according to Khan (2014) and Newberg (1995) leads to public disillusionment in the constitution ability to deliver justice. This mistrust makes constitutional governance illegitimate and disconnects the state and society.

10. Constitution and Political Accountability

Furthermore, the research has shown that while, according to the Constitution of 1973, there are mechanisms of political accountability, these mechanisms have been sporadically unsuccessful in curbing corruption and good governance. Article 62 and 63, aimed at ensuring political integrity, have rather been used for the persecution of the political than as instruments for ethical governance. On certain occasions, the judiciary managed to interfere and to re-establish constitutional principles of accountability, though at the expense of the effectiveness of these measures by political influence and its use for partisan purposes of legal provisions.

Strong institutional structures and lack of corruption within the political system together lead to the possibility of bypassing the current accountability mechanisms enshrined in the Constitution. This results in inefficient governance circuit, which does not handle irregularities well; consequently, with time, there is a fall in public trust in the Constitution as an instrument to engender accountability and transparency.

Discussion

The Constitution of 1973 written with hopes of unity and democracy has been tampered with all along. They have written structural features of an independent judiciary, and of federal autonomy, but they apply conditionally on political will and the integrity of the institutions. A situation of legal instability, which generally suspends and amends many constitutional provisions to allow for taking away many fundamental rights, is catastrophic for governance and public trust. Those imports in the basket

have a negative income effect but, the negative income effect may not be countered by the angle to stimulate demand for imports, the point that I did not discuss in the presentation. However, the diagram makes it look simple, and yet it can be made well with the diagram. The potential of the Constitution for the democratic needs it, requires empirical research as well as national and civic legal literacy.

It is shown to be complex, this landscape of constitutional 1973 Constitution was created to drain out the competing expectations of civil military power, Islamic and democratic values, federal and unitary governance. Institutional weakness and a lack of political will have so far prevented its application, however. This implies that even if the political context for structural changes is useful, a major part of governance culture has to change concurrently. Despite that, these provinces are still administratively and financially dependent of the center. It takes away the essence of the devolution that was conceived in the 18th amendment.

Overall, the lack of consistency in the judiciary's constitutionalism leads to evaluation of wider systems. Courts must become reactive institutions to proactive protectors of the constitutional democracy. The trend is positive as recent annulment of military courts and declarations against extra-constitutional steps have been initiated, but the problem of selective judicial activism continues. Additionally, human rights regime is still challenged by rights without remedies. Article 199 does not allow High Courts to enforce fundamental rights despite that lies, corruption, and lack of access to justice. Pursuit of these [religious] minorities violates the constitutional pledge of equality, which includes freedom, and running the risk of being charged with blasphemy abuses these laws.

Failure in democratic education is also reflected in the Constitution's symbolic and performative nature in the public discourse. Provisions in the constitution languish and are the concern of legal elites alone when the norm is without mass civic literacy. That is, the Constitution of 1973 is a progressive document which is yet to be realized. It offers a democracy but it succeeds only depending on consistent application judicial protection and participation by the people.

Conclusion

The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973, stands as both a beacon of democratic aspiration and a battleground for political contestation. Adaptation consists in amendments and makes it very resilient, but its efficacy relies on the rule of law, institutional independence and citizen participation. Implementation challenges have to be tackled, the judiciary has to be made independent and the constitution has to be used properly not merely in isolation. The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973 is a basic foundation pillar that houses the country's legal and political architecture.

It was drafted after that national trauma, and sought to be a consensus for all political and ethnic, and indeed ideological divides. It enshrined democratic principles, federalism, Islamic values and fundamental rights. Yet, the Constitution has yet, to this end, to reach its full potential as its promises have been affected through military

interventions, authoritarian amendments, judicial compromises and the failure to implement human rights protections.

Underlining the fact that while reforms like the 18th Amendment have sought to return constitutionalism and empower provinces, challenges still persist, this research raises the question of how constitutionalism itself has developed in Pakistan. Weak institutional capacity, political opportunism and low civic awareness have constituted the major reason for the gap between the constitutional theory and practical governance.

Resilience of the Constitution notwithstanding, the survival over five decades means its future effectiveness will depend on strengthening democratic norms, securing judicial autonomy, empowering provincial governance and provision of public legal education. If Pakistan is to become a constitutional democracy it will have to be mature beyond a legal document and be a living document to guide the state's policies, protect the rights of people and ensuring justice to everyone; and Pakistan will treat the 1973 Constitution in this manner.

Appendices

Appendix A: Key Articles of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973

- Article 6: High Treason
- Article 8–28: Fundamental Rights
- Article 41: Qualifications for President
- Article 58(2)(b): Power to Dissolve the Assembly (repealed/restored/repealed)
- Article 227: Islamic Provisions
- Article 239: Constitutional Amendment Procedure

Appendix B: Major Constitutional Amendments

- 8th Amendment (1985): Presidential Powers Enhanced
- 13th Amendment (1997): Article 58(2)(b) Repealed
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Faisalabad Journal of Multi-Discipline (FJMD)

| Research Article | |
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| The Role of the Prosecution in Evidence Disclosure: An Analysis of the Role of the Prosecution in Evidence Disclosure and its Implications for the Justice System | |
| Jawad Ahmad ² | |
| Manuscript Info Received: 25-June-2025 Accepted: 07-Sep-2025 Published: November 2025 Keywords: Prosecution, Evidence Disclosure, Justice System | Abstract A just justice system operates through disclosure of information to allow scrutiny and prosecution and defense teams disclosure of all the necessary information as to produce fair court trials. Due to this, the sort and extent of the evaluation of evidence disclosure practices by prosecutors occur concurrently with an assessment of their legal and ethical obligations, and reasonably anticipated repercussions of non-disclosure. This analysis uses Brady v. Maryland (1963) as well as other essential case law. This study explores Brady v. In Maryland (1963) the author undertakes both legal and scholarly research to establish that timely and relevant evidence disclosure serves to uphold the rights of the defense while at the same time maintaining the bond between society and justice. In this article, problems of disclosure associated with ineffective evaluation of candidates for prosecutors are studied simultaneously with the analysis of the challenges arising from the management of digital evidence. These approaches show up the differences in organizational structures between Civil law systems and Common law systems whereby this empirical research also bring out the methodologies of prosecutorial systems. Reform specifications synthesize common reporting specifications with better proof handling techniques and advanced prosecutor education specifications, with |

² Advocate High Court

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| | <p>independent review apparatuses to monitor compliance. Disclosure practices of scientific evidence remain a work in progress to achieve and maintain justified proceedings with justice safeguarded without undermining the criminal justice system which is presupposed from this study. The reform process for addressing the present days prosecutorial issues should embody judicial justice and legal convictions.</p> |
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1. Introduction

The role of judiciary system is too close to moderation between enforcement of law and rights of citizens which are equal for everyone and needs to be preserved in any criminal trial. Although the prosecution works as the part of the state that aims at achieving justice, its major role still serves as the core of the criminal justice system. That is because prosecutors defend the interests of society, offering proof of defendants' unlawful behaviours. But the conception of their mission does not end with conviction; they have many important functions that are critical to the functioning of the system. The fairness of the trial process is agreement of the prosecution with ethical standards especially the requirement of disclosure. It is comprehensive disclosure of the evidence in the course of trial as it requires the prosecutor and the defender to share with each other factors that can convincingly sway the decision in a given case. To ensure they meet the general duties of ethical deeds, the prosecutors have a mandate to disclose any material facts that are in support of both the prosecution's case as well as things that are in support of the defendant, and anything that would negate the position of the prosecution (Bibas, 2004 Kearney & McGowan, 2017).

However, evidence disclosure is always a problem when prosecutors conceal exculpatory evidence purposefully or right unknowingly. As noted by Heller (2015), failure to disclose such evidence results to wrongful convictions hence having negative implications to those affected, the legal system and justice as a whole. Considering that evidence is a weapon that is all the more in the hands of prosecutors, their main objective should always be to serve justice, and not to gains a win in the trial. The need for a conviction compromises the values of prosecution since the withholding of exculpatory evidence misproposes with the defendant's constitutional equitable right to the justice process (McCoy, 2015).

This study analyses the legal obligations and the ethical perspective of the prosecution's role in providing discoverable information. It focuses on three main objectives: First, the study looked at various analyses regarding the practices of prosecutors in disclosing evidence, second, an assessment of how the judiciary handles evidence that has been disclosed and finally, the comparison of the existing norms that guides the disclosure of evidence. These areas are reviewed to determine ways in which openness can be improved in criminal proceedings without compromising fairness (Kearney & McGowan, 2017).

Various studies show that the disclosure of evidence discloses more than transparency; it is required for the preservation of the justice system. In this way prosecutors respect the rights of defendants and give the judges all the necessary set of facts. On the other hand, when a prosecutor does not disclose such information, it has adverse effects such as producing wrongful convictions and undermining the trust in the justice system (Smith, 2019). The conclusion derived from the analysis is that if systematic changes must be made to mitigate the current problems with how prosecutors manage disclosure of evidence, Prejudice in legal system, and strengthen the case for the accused.

This study examines the practices relating to presentation of evidence by the prosecutors in criminal law with special reference to *Brady v. Maryland* (1963) decision and other relevant precedents (Heller, 2015). This paper considers other legal frameworks that govern the disclosure of evidence and its management of evidence, with reference to the efficiency of the prosecutorial responsibilities as seeks to propose them as per McCoy (2021). Thus, the research that compares the criminal trial transparency and fairness ultimately seeks for finding the solutions which would add to the current discussion on the necessary legal reforms to safeguard justice Bibas, (2004), Kearney & McGowan, (2017).

2. Literature Review

In this regard, there are substantial changes in the evidence disclosure practice over time. However, in other early common law systems that existed, there were few procedures that governed the flow of evidence between the party propelled by the state or king and the opposite party. At that time the prosecution was under no legal requirement to provide information that could aid the defendant. This kind of approach was adopted because of the adversarial operation of the court system in which two parties to a suit presented their respective cases without assistance from the court (Packer, 1968).

But, change was gradually observed in the justice system and especially in the 20th century when the justice system aimed at identifying and avoiding bias in the criminal trials. The *Brady v. Confused Lawyering of Dython* scenario signaled that change was inevitable. *Malloy v. Board of Education* (1964), and the later *Gideon v. Wainwright* (1963) decision which shifted the responsibilities of the prosecution. The ruling demanded that the prosecution shared favorable information with the defense, which altered the duties of the prosecutors when dealing with the evidence. This ruling was christened as the Brady Rule and sought to define justice not only as a process that seeks to convict the guilty but also as a process that must ensure that the accused receives all evidence that may be useful in defending him/her against the charges laid down against her/him (Kearney & McGowan, 2017; Bibas, 2004).

The continued development of statutes and procedural rules beginning with the Jencks Act (1957) has established organized guidelines for what materials prosecutors must share with defense attorneys. The legal system is moving toward increased trial

transparency as part of its goal to achieve greater fairness and justice. Evidence disclosure laws face ongoing operational challenges even though they have experienced recent improvements.

Both law and ethics require prosecution disclosure of evidence which functions to protect trial fairness. The *Brady v. The 1963 Maryland* decision by the court stands as the foundation for prosecutorial evidence disclosure duties when it requires prosecutors to share favorable evidence material to a defendant's defense and their case's foundation (Heller, 2015). The decision serves as the basis to understand how the prosecution must notify defense teams about information which disproves defendant guilt. The running legal foundation assures both equality and openness through an adversarial trial because both parties obtain equal access to essential evidence and important information (Smith, 2019).

In addition to securing convictions prosecutors possess an ethical obligation to establish justice (Bowers, 2010). Everyone involved in the briefing should receive every vital piece of evidence regardless of their impact on the prosecution's case. The ethical standard of transparency paired with accountability exists in prosecution while the failure to disclose evidence leads to wrongful convictions and legal miscarriages and decreases community trust in the justice system (McCoy, 2015). When appointed to serve by the American Bar Association's Model Rules of Professional Conduct (2018) prosecutors must perform with the goal of justice first and penal convictions second.

The omission of evidence creates severe consequences for the justice system mainly because it undermines trial equity. The denial of access to evidence disrupts both the defendant's chance to defend themselves adequately and distorts the jury's capacity to render knowledgeable verdicts (Hagan & Palloni, 1990). Kearney and McGowan (2017) highlight that evidence concealment from courts raises both misleading conviction rates and attacks the core fairness of justice platforms.

Public trust within the judicial system hinges specifically on how well evidence gets disclosed. Selective evidence withholding by prosecutors damages both the fairness of ongoing trials and creates doubts regarding legal system integrity (Smith, 2019). The trust that citizens place in the justice system takes a long time to recover when public confidence is betrayed which reduces overall system legitimacy.

The disclosure of evidence maintains essential connections with concrete rights available to defendants in the criminal justice system. Under the Sixth Amendment someone accused of a crime possesses the constitutional right to fair trial proceedings including relevant evidence needed for defense purposes. A defendant's constitutional right will remain denied when prosecutors fail to produce evidentiary material which would support defense efforts thus fostering the risk of mistakes in court verdicts (Fradella & McCoy, 2010). According to McCoy (2021) evidence disclosure serves as a primary safeguard to protect the accused from conviction abuses during trial.

The current legal system requires evidence disclosure yet multiple implementation obstacles stand in the way of fair and complete execution. Selective disclosure represents a crucial problem in modern criminal justice systems because it involves prosecutors sharing limited evidence with defense teams while keeping beneficial information hidden. When prosecutors conceal useful evidence to achieve convictions they compromise the trial's fairness while ultimately damaging its credibility according to Dwyer (2018). Heller (2015) explains throughout his study that evidence disclosure misconduct done by prosecutors leads to both serious legal system credibility issues and major risks to defendants as explained by him.

Failure to disclose evidence can result from either a mistake or neglect of legal obligations. The disclosure process can fail due to prosecutorial uncertainty regarding evidence significance in situations where case evidence or legal standards show advanced development (Bowers, 2010). Modern digital evidence growth combined with budget restrictions sometimes leads to undocumented disclosures of necessary case materials according to McCoy (2015).

The way evidence disclosure systems operate demonstrates substantial variety between various legal frameworks. The evidence disclosure framework in common law jurisdictions, specifically the United States and United Kingdom operates through prior rulings established by judges alongside mandates of the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (UK) and *Brady v. Maryland* (1963). The Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 (UK) functions together with *Brady v. Maryland* (1963) under *Brady v. Maryland* (1963) disclosure rules. These systems put major emphasis on criminal trials showing an adversarial framework because the prosecution and defense need to provide full evidence disclosures to their opposition. Data from Dervan & Edkins (2013) shows that criminal disclosure systems exhibit notable differences between jurisdictions with respect to both the timing of provided materials and the quantity of information released to parties.

Judges in civil law systems that adopt German and French procedural models lead active functions to get evidence while making certain each party obtains necessary material. According to Van Duizend (2016) civil law systems enforce strict disclosure criteria through judicial monitoring that maintains fairness in the process. Within civil law systems the disclosure processes typically deliver more effective and time-sensitive disclosure than common law jurisdictions which depend significantly on compliance from both defense and prosecution.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design: Qualitative Analysis

The research adopts a qualitative method to study evidence disclosure through legal documents and case law and scholarly articles. This research analyzes evidential responsibilities and their effect on justice using both law texts and court decisions together with academic papers (Smith, 2019).

3.2 Data Collection

The research data is obtained through judicial opinions along with statutory laws and legal practice examinations. Landmark cases like *Brady v. The analysis of Maryland* (1963) helps explain judicial influences on prosecutorial evidence disclosure requirements (Heller 2015). This research examines both prosecutorial disclosure requirements set by statutes including the Jencks Act along with other relevant regulations (Kearney & McGowan, 2017).

3.3 Approach: Comparative Legal Analysis

Through comparative legal research the study analyzes evidence disclosure practices between common law jurisdiction and civil law jurisdictions. The analysis will reveal prosecutorial responsibilities as well as legal systems in order to identify best practices for better evidence presentation (Dervan & Edkins, 2013; Van Duizend, 2016).

4. Results

According to the available literature the prosecution must uphold its important responsibility to disclose all relevant evidence to defense counsel to include materials supporting or disproving the defendant's innocence. The requirement stands as essential for guaranteeing justice alongside fair trials (Smith, 2019). The impact of evidence disclosure is profound: Metric disclosure ordered properly safeguards accused rights while producing accurate judicial results. Lapses in evidence disclosure through incomplete information or delayed distribution to defense attorneys creates an unfair judicial process leading to invalid convictions (Kearney & McGowan, 2017).

The literature places several key issues around evidence disclosure. The main problem is staying on the razor's edge — the line between balancing prosecutorial duty and the rights of the defense. That is also when prosecutors are both seeking a conviction but also seeking justice, therefore creating conflicts of interest. For example, there are select disclosures, when prosecution will disclose evidence in favor of its case only, rather than presenting all the relevant evidence, making the trial unfair (McCoy, 2015). Additionally, prosecutorial misconduct, for example, by withholding evidence, is a persistent concern that could lead to miscarriages of justice (Heller, 2015).

The comparative analysis uncovers substantial variations in the way jurisdictions prosecute. In common law systems (e.g. the US and UK), the prosecution has a strong legal obligation to provide evidence (or, as modern law is sometimes expressed, to be in *Brady*) as decided in *Brady v. Maryland* (1963) and statutory provisions (Dervan & Edkins, 2013). But not all jurisdictions take the rules so strictly, and some see more frequent violations. In civil law systems (e.g. France and Germany), however, judges play a more inquisitorial role, assuming a greater role in ensuring the fairness of evidence disclosure than the prosecutorial discretion is, at the expense of judicial impartiality (van Duizend, 2016).

5. Discussion

Research shows that evidence disclosure protects the fairness of the legal process. By not sharing evidence that proves innocence or by sending partial results slowly the prosecution reduces an accused person's rights and ruins the true conclusion of the trial. Brady v shows in court cases what happens when prosecutors withhold evidence from the defense. According to Kearney and McGowan (2017) wrongful convictions can happen when prosecutors fail to share evidence in the Maryland v. Brady (1963) case. When information is shared correctly both parties can show their facts and the justice system works better for everyone involved.

Prosecutorial actions to selectively share only helpful evidence continue to be a frequent source of errors in the justice system. Through this specific evidence selection method prosecutors disregard the requirement to share all relevant information including defense unfavorable evidence (McCoy, 2015). Prosecutorial misconduct by hiding evidence increases defense readiness problems and hurts the fairness of court proceedings according to Heller 2015.

In criminal court every party needs to follow evidence disclosure rules to keep the trial balanced. When the prosecution and defense see all evidence at the same time it allows them to balance their positions in the court system. A lack of correct evidence sharing breaks down court protection when defense lawyers need essential details to fight the charges. When prosecutors fail to share evidence they produce it can result in innocent people being sentenced to prison because of Brady v. Maryland (2013). A man became innocent in Maryland once prosecutors withheld evidence but failed to prove his guilt (Dervan & Edkins, 2013). The failure by authorities to properly share evidence shows why strict rules about disclosing information must stay in place to protect the accused.

Digitization affects how evidence needs to be shared and changes available digital discovery solutions. Digital files such as emails digital records and social media updates have made evidence disclosure harder to handle. Digital case processing tools support law enforcement professionals by handling large electronic proof sets and making them available to prosecutors in modern court proceedings. Many e-discovery systems create problems with digital data protection while making sure prosecutors can manage their tasks effectively (Van Duizend, 2016). Digital evidence cannot be disclosed on time when technical barriers such as stored data encryption or cloud storage systems create problems.

As technology continues to reshape how evidence is handled, prosecutors and defense attorneys must adapt to ensure that the principles of transparency and fairness remain intact in the digital age.

5.1 Proposals for Reform

To address the challenges of evidence disclosure, several reforms are recommended:

1. **Standardized Procedures:** Every area of law needs to use the same system for sharing evidence records. Party organizations nationwide must adopt standard practices that help prosecutors deliver full and orderly evidence on time according to Smith (2019).
2. **Enhanced Training:** Prosecutors need ongoing training to explain their ethical requirements for showing all evidence to defense lawyers. When prosecutors receive better training about their evidence disclosure obligations they are less likely to miss them unintentionally and perform misconduct according to Heller (2015).
3. **Independent Oversight:** An independent group of monitors needs to be established for evidence disclosure law compliance of prosecutors. External oversight organizations conduct inspections of the office to ensure prosecutors maintain evidence disclosure law compliance when examining cases.
4. **Leveraging Technology:** The system of established digital data guidelines helps both protect information integrity and improve digital evidence handling for prosecutors. Scientists who preserve digital evidence in its original state create public confidence in our justice system according to Van Duizend (2016).

6. Conclusion

Success of the justice system depends on prosecutions because they create access to evidence for everyone involved. According to legal standards prosecutors must share each piece of evidence they discover including defense-supporting evidence to maintain fair criminal trials. Prosecutorial compliance with their disclosure obligations contributes to justice system trust as well as preserves accurate defendant hearings that prevent wrongful conviction outcomes (Smith, 2019). Recent scholarship by Heller (2015) and McCoy (2015) has identified two major problems in evidence handling: the excessive power of prosecutors to determine how much data to provide to defendants and their difficulty in managing digital evidence effectively.

To achieve effective justice system operations the development of dependable evidence sharing approaches holds essential importance. To sustain public trust in justice processes legal frameworks need implementation alongside evidence disclosure regulations and prosecutor duties trail systems and professional training. Higher-level digital evidence technologies boost evidence management systems by cutting human-generated mistakes and producing improved accuracy during processing (Van Duizend, 2016). The improvements will serve to defend innocent people and build public trust in our justice system (Kearney & McGowan, 2017).

For justice to maintain its integrity people need to distribute evidence with complete accuracy. While the landmark case *Brady v. Further* improvement in evidence disclosure practices is needed despite the monumental advances achieved in Maryland (1963). Time demands the advancement of disclosure rules since legal systems develop alongside technology's advancements. The enforcement of fair justice demands that prosecutors maintain consistent adherence to their evidence sharing responsibilities under legal principles and ethical guidelines. To protect fair

trials and transparent justice future initiatives must include collective work from lawyers alongside policymakers and legal experts.

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| Research Article | |
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| Economy of Afghanistan after US Withdrawal | |
| Zillah E Huma³ | |
| Manuscript Info Received: 25-June-2025 Accepted: 07-Sep-2025 Published: November 2025 Keywords: Reconstruction, Sanctions, Trade, Aid, Instability | Abstract The economy of Afghanistan has faced significant challenges following the withdrawal of U.S. forces in August 2021. The sudden political transition to Taliban control led to economic isolation, as international aid constituting 40% of Afghanistan's GDP was largely suspended. The freezing of Afghanistan's central bank reserves, worth \$9 billion, further destabilized the financial system, causing liquidity shortages and a sharp devaluation of the Afghan currency. Agriculture, the backbone of the Afghan economy, was severely impacted by drought and reduced market access. Meanwhile, unemployment soared, with millions losing jobs in urban and service sectors previously reliant on foreign investment and aid. The cessation of development projects exacerbated infrastructure gaps, impeding long-term economic recovery. Afghanistan's informal economy, including opium production and cross-border trade, has seen growth, providing limited sustenance to rural communities. The Taliban's attempts to generate revenue through taxation have been undermined by international sanctions and weak governance. Humanitarian crises, including food insecurity and poverty, have deepened, with over half the population requiring urgent aid. The Afghan economy's recovery hinges on political stability, reintegration into global markets, and international engagement to rebuild critical sectors while addressing human rights concerns under Taliban governance. |

³ Department of International Relations, Government College University, Faisalabad.

Introduction

Humanitarian crises start after U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan. Woman's lifestyle totally changed. The international community is against Afghanistan's law on women and their education. Their economy is also dependent on foreign aid, which helps them to build infrastructure and healthcare access, but after NATO forces withdrawal, half of Afghanistan's budget disappeared, and their economy started to collapse. At that time, the Afghan currency also lost its value, which made their lives more difficult. The other biggest issue faced by Afghanistan was the government of the Taliban, who have no experience in running the country's economy and other matters. Due to international sanctions, they were not able to trade freely, which created an economic crisis. (Byrd, 2023)

Afghanistan is the largest country in the world that produces opium; this was a huge source of income for their economy. The Taliban promises that they will limit its production. Agriculture is the second biggest source of income for Afghanistan, but after US withdrawal, foreign aid, which helps the farmer improve their production, was stopped. After the decline of this financial support to farmers, their crop productivity reduced, and as a result, food prices in the country rose. After the economic crisis started, the Taliban imposed heavy taxes on people to stabilize their economy. Due to these economic crises, many businesses closed and economic activities totally collapsed; people lost their jobs. The young generation is also hopeless about their future after watching their country's conditions.

Women, who are the most important part of the economy of any country, put restrictions on their right to a job and access to other fields of life, which made the economic situation worse. Schools and many healthcare institutions also closed due to shortages of staff and logistics. The Taliban cut off many countries trade just on the basis of their grudges and ignored their national interests, which caused limited trade activities after US withdrawal. The Afghan banking system is also struggling. They are unable to access banks in foreign countries for cash, which led to a severe cash shortage in the countries. They have even not been able to pay salaries to their employees.

Their currency is no longer valued, the basic necessities of life are becoming more expensive day by day, and people lost interest in their economy. The crime ratio is also getting high in the country due to limited resources and poverty. Issues like climate have left a deep impact on agriculture. Farmers have no access to modern tools of agriculture that can enhance their crops productivity. The international community is concerned about their condition; they also want to help, but the Taliban's policies are a barrier. Afghanistan is under isolation from the international financial system. Many families have no access to their money sent by their abroad family members. Political, financial instability, security issues, and Taliban policies are the barriers to foreign investment.

Despite all these challenges, Afghanistan still has opportunities to improve its economy. The first opportunity they can avail is to use their resources, as they have gold, iron, and copper, which are highly demanding worldwide for promoting trade. They can make easy routes from one country to another, like Pakistan, Iran, and . If the Taliban promote the skills of their youngsters and women's, this will create jobs and can promote local businesses. Tourism can also support their economy, but it requires high security. Afghanistan has a long history and historical places, which can attract tourists. This would also create jobs, decrease their economic crisis, and promote local businesses like hotels near tourist places. They can also support their economy by giving their youngsters skills in a field like technology, healthcare, sewing, and electrical engineering. Afghanistan should have cooperated with the countries that have shown their interest in economic activities like Pakistan, China, Iran, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. The Afghan government should also work on renewable energy to save money investing in imported fuels. They should promote solar energy in rural areas; this will improve the lives of local people. In this critical time of Afghani peoples, the international community can play a vital role through humanitarian aid and development to fulfill their immediate needs and development through starting projects for making their living standard better.(Bank, 2024)

- The economy decline, with GDP decrease due to loss of international aid and investment.
- Due to poverty and food insecurity millions of people faced hunger.
- The Afghan currency, the Afghan Afghani, experienced significant devaluation,
- Due to minimum foreign support people loses their job, unemployment rate increases in Afghanistan.
- Agriculture key sector of Afghanistan ruined due to unavailability of seeds and reduced accesses to market.
- Sanctions imposed by various many countries limited the Taliban government's ability to engage in international trade and access financial resources.

Natural disasters make the condition even worse, like earthquakes and floods. At that time, they need international aid to control the humanitarian crisis. Instead of stopping their aid, the US should make policies that keep an eye on the government to see where all the funds are used. Many Afghan people want to leave the country; the best example is the chaotic scene at Kabul airport after US withdrawal. Due to the crisis in Afghanistan, most of its population is migrating to other countries; accepting and ignoring them will not be possible economically and politically. Situation was totally different in the country before NATO forces withdrawal. Women's education ratio was also high, and their health is also affected by this crisis. According to a national survey, girls born before 1976 were taller than today.

Afghanistan's condition can improve if the government supports local-level initiative, promotes diplomacy, and respects people's cultural values. They should focus on

completing their projects that can diversify their economy, like TAPI, which can be a game changer and can make its economy independent. When the US was controlling Afghanistan, they awarded business contracts to foreign countries. This discrimination and violation of Afghani people's rights also became the cause of unemployment for Afghani youth. Afghanistan was the largest trading partner of Iran, China, and Pakistan, but due to political instability in Afghanistan, their trade relations became weak. In the present situation, they need to empower their youth through creating opportunities for their future, and they also need to utilize their resources in a good way, make bilateral relations with their neighboring countries, and promote business activities among them. The Taliban also needs to add some well-educated people in their country to make impactful and beneficial policies for their country to overcome their crisis.

They also need to work on their security so foreigners can invest in the country without any fear and make laws for trade and effective policies that can attract foreign investors to invest in their countries and make them believe that their investment is safe and profitable. And should work on making trade easy with their neighboring countries through roads.(Brown, 2022)

Literature Review

Adam Wunische argue in his book that the military problems and security issues causes the political instability in the country. Countries condition can be improve if state support local initiatives and with the promotion of democracy within the state and respect for people and their cultural values. Afghanistan promote local labor market and take initiatives on the individual level and go for the stable government. (Wunische, 2024)

William Byrd discuss in his article that after the withdrawal Afghanistan economy is continually facing challenges and instability such as poverty and food insecurity. Till now international humanitarian aid is playing an important role but what if it decline? Afghanistan is also facing sanctions which affected foreign investment. Opium production is also ban in Afghanistan, which was the source of income of Afghani farmers. Taliban policies on gender especially on women rights barring from working places and education become the reason of half of its population exclusion from economic activities. Afghan government should established alternatives ways for their economy. (Byrd, Two Years into Taliban Rule, New Shocks Weaken Afghan Economy, 2023)

Dhabie Brown and Allyson Neville says after withdrawal Taliban takes control of Afghanistan which create humanitarian crisis. Their policies for economy left whole population in hunger also the evaporation of women's rights of education, political participation and economic sanctions make condition more dangerous. They have limited access to healthcare. All the humanitarian crisis center is economic instability, first one is lack of cash in Afghanistan's central bank, which affected the daily market activities Afghan families, second one is foreign decisions to cut of the salary payment for workers, working in the health and education sector. Afghanistan needs

humanitarian aid. Writer also suggest that US should provide guidance of legal and economic areas.(Brown & 2022)

Shah Mehrabi discussed that in August 2021 US froze 9.1 billion dollar of Afghanistan national reserves that resulted in economic instability and inflation in Afghanistan. The central Bank of America also held auction in which they are supposed to conduct operation to control US dollar to the Afghani exchange rate But they were not able to conduct this due to no access to its dollar dominated reserves.US would have verify how international humanitarian funds are used for funding or transactions between both countries bank use an method of electronic exchange, If US finds any disturbance it can cut off fund anytime.US must allow Afghan peoples access to their own reserves and sources so they can utilize for their benefit,(Mehrabi, 2022)

Louise Grogan in her article argue that if west did not change their policy towards Taliban it will cause Humanitarian crisis and mass level of migration and accepting them will not possible for other countries economically and politically. They even cannot reject them. Before US withdrawal 20 years of western presence in Afghanistan more children and girls went to educational institutions. Woman's height at the age of 15 also affected national survey data from 2013 show that before 1976 born girls were 3 to 4 centimeter taller to make the life of Afghani people easily import of food is necessary.(Grogan, 2021)

Hypothesis

The Reduction in the foreign aid in the Afghanistan create many challenges in the Afghanistan and make the new dynamic. Many international programs which run by the international aid were close and employment opportunities are also decreased. The US withdrawal and change in the government have created the environment of poverty, which close the economic activities.

Research Questions

- 1- How have changes in foreign aid influenced in Afghanistan economy?
- 2- How has the agriculture sector in Afghanistan been affected by US withdrawal?
- 3- What are the effect of US withdrawal on the education and health of people of Afghanistan?

Research Methodology

This research is based on qualitative data and secondary extract from articles, books, newspapers, websites, analysis of think tanks and official publications such as policy documents and opinions of state officials.

Statement of the Problem

The GDP of Afghanistan declined by more than a quarter in 2021 and also decreased in 2022, and there's no sign of recovery in 2023 and beyond. This was due to political transition and as well as absence of international support. The .Taliban Government led to foreign business and investment to close. Without international support the

recovery of economy of Afghanistan not possible. The budget of Afghanistan was reduce.

The unemployment rate increasing day by day and half of population lives below the poverty line. The foreign investment decreasing and business are closing so the opportunities of jobs for the people of Afghanistan are also decreasing. The most effected peoples are skilled people due to absence of job. This situation rise social problem and instability among the people.

The economic problem and sanctions led to Afghanistan towards humanitarian crisis, millions of people facing food shortage and lack of the basic facilities. The high percentage of that people which need basic assistance. Due to this crisis many children and women faces different health issues.

The agriculture was paly important role in the Afghanistan's economy. Agriculture effected due to this crisis by not availability of seeds and fertilizers. This effects many formers and also effect on the economy of Afghanistan.

Research Objectives

The main purpose of research is to:

- Highlight the short term effects on Afghan economy after US withdrawal.
- Identify and analyze structural issues such as dependency on foreign aid.
- Investigate the Afghanistan's economic relationships with neighboring countries and regional trade agreements.
- Identify the effectiveness of current governance structures and economic policies
- Analyze how economic changes post-withdrawal affect women, youth, and rural versus urban populations.

The Immediate Economic Fallout

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 had profound and immediate economic repercussions, plunging the country into a state of financial crisis. One of the most significant impacts was the sudden halt in international aid, which had been the backbone of Afghanistan's economy for two decades. Prior to the withdrawal, foreign assistance accounted for nearly 40% of the country's GDP and financed 75% of public expenditures. The cessation of aid froze government revenues and left the Afghan state struggling to pay salaries, provide basic services, and maintain infrastructure. The withdrawal also triggered a collapse of Afghanistan's banking sector. The freezing of \$9.5 billion in Afghan central bank reserves by the U.S. exacerbated liquidity shortages. Banks were unable to meet withdrawal demands, leading to long lines of desperate citizens attempting to access their savings. Restrictions on cash withdrawals and the suspension of international financial transactions crippled the flow of money, leaving businesses unable to operate and ordinary citizens struggling to meet basic needs. The economy suffered further from the loss of a significant

international presence, including foreign troops, contractors, and NGOs. These groups had previously injected billions of dollars annually into the local economy through housing, transportation, and goods procurement. Their departure devastated service industries such as hospitality, retail, and logistics, leading to widespread job losses and further eroding domestic demand. The Afghan currency, the afghani, also experienced severe devaluation in the immediate aftermath of the withdrawal. The uncertainty surrounding the new Taliban regime and the lack of access to foreign reserves caused the currency to lose value rapidly. This led to skyrocketing inflation, particularly in essential goods such as food and fuel. The economic pain was acutely felt by ordinary citizens, many of whom were already living in poverty before the withdrawal.

When foreign forces started to withdraw the US and NATO created jobs in the in construction companies, security services were vanished, which deeply effect the economy of Afghanistan and unemployment increase among the Afghan people. Foreign aid temporary help the Afghan economy to grow but resulted in its dependency on infrastructure development in the country. Limited economic growth in the rural areas which resulted the large portion of population without access to their basic rights. US intervention in country all the contracts related to business were awarded to foreign countries this instability cause the unemployment among Youth. (Turse, Tariq, & Andrew J. Bacevich, 2010)

Agriculture, a crucial sector employing the majority of Afghans, was not spared from the fallout. Disruptions in supply chains, the loss of foreign markets, and a breakdown in infrastructure hindered production and distribution. Additionally, farmers faced challenges in obtaining seeds, fertilizers, and irrigation equipment due to the banking crisis and trade restrictions. This further exacerbated food insecurity, pushing millions into hunger. The economic collapse had severe humanitarian consequences. By the end of 2021, the United Nations estimated that nearly 23 million Afghans faced acute food insecurity, and the country was on the brink of famine. The sharp decline in public health services, education, and other critical sectors underscored the scale of the crisis. Without international aid and a functioning economy, Afghanistan's people faced a dire situation, with little hope of recovery in the near term.

Impact on International Trade and Relations

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 marked a turning point not only for the country's internal governance and security but also for its economic outlook and international trade relations. Afghanistan, already one of the world's poorest nations, faced immediate economic repercussions as the withdrawal coincided with the Taliban's return to power. International sanctions, the freezing of Afghan central bank assets, and the suspension of foreign aid—on which the country was heavily reliant—created an economic crisis. The sudden vacuum left by the U.S. withdrawal disrupted trade and strained Afghanistan's ties with traditional trading partners, compounding the economic downturn. International trade, a key aspect of Afghanistan's economic survival, suffered significantly after the withdrawal. With most Western nations ceasing

direct engagement with the Taliban regime, Afghanistan was cut off from major financial systems and international markets. Exports, primarily agricultural goods such as fruits, nuts, and textiles, faced logistical and regulatory hurdles. Furthermore, the banking sector's collapse and currency devaluation deterred international businesses and investors. These disruptions hindered Afghanistan's ability to maintain existing trade relationships or forge new ones, isolating the country economically.

Decision of leaving Afghanistan was taken by President Joe Biden announced that all the US military forces will leave the Afghanistan by September 11, 2021. Although US troops tried their best to get control and power but despite their efforts. Taliban were in power. US president Biden also said US could not stay in Afghanistan without any interest. US has not any economic interest. But after their withdrawal many concerns emerged about women's rights and security. US troops wants to hand over their military equipment. (Ryan & 2021)

The withdrawal also shifted Afghanistan's economic dependency toward regional powers such as China, Russia, Pakistan, and Iran. These nations saw opportunities to fill the void left by the West, both in trade and infrastructure investment. For instance, China expressed interest in incorporating Afghanistan into its Belt and Road Initiative, leveraging its access to critical minerals. Similarly, Iran and Pakistan expanded trade routes and engaged in informal cross-border trade. However, these relationships often prioritized the interests of the partnering nations over Afghanistan's economic stability, leaving the country vulnerable to exploitation. The lack of international recognition of the Taliban government further complicated Afghanistan's trade and diplomatic relations. Many countries conditioned their recognition and economic support on the Taliban's adherence to human rights and inclusive governance, which the regime largely ignored. This lack of legitimacy hindered Afghanistan's ability to negotiate favorable trade agreements or secure development aid, leaving it heavily reliant on informal trade and humanitarian assistance. The resultant economic isolation curtailed Afghanistan's integration into the global economy.

The Humanitarian Crisis and Its Economic Impact

Afghanistan's GDP relied on the foreign aid and investment but with the NATO exit, there was many concern over economic stability in the country. After foreign troops withdrawal Afghanistan needs to improve its economy through completion of projects like TAPI for its economic independence and also sign new projects with the regional countries.(Nourzhanov, 2016)

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in August 2021 marked a significant turning point in the country's history, plunging it into a multifaceted humanitarian crisis with devastating economic repercussions. The rapid collapse of the Afghan government and the Taliban's return to power triggered widespread instability, leading to the suspension of international aid, frozen assets, and the disintegration of key institutions. This abrupt shift left millions of Afghans grappling with poverty, food insecurity, and

unemployment, exacerbating an already fragile economy heavily reliant on foreign assistance.

International sanctions imposed on the Taliban government further deepened the economic woes of Afghanistan. Over \$9 billion of the country's foreign reserves were frozen, crippling the banking system and hindering critical imports, including food and medical supplies. The sanctions also led to the suspension of development projects, depriving the economy of much-needed investments. Without access to global financial systems, Afghan businesses struggled to operate, causing widespread closures and layoffs that contributed to soaring unemployment rates.

The humanitarian crisis has been particularly severe, with the United Nations estimating that nearly 28 million Afghans, more than two-thirds of the population, require urgent humanitarian assistance. Chronic food shortages have resulted in acute malnutrition among children, while healthcare services have become increasingly inaccessible due to funding cuts. The economic collapse has also forced families to adopt desperate measures, including selling their possessions and withdrawing children from schools to work. These challenges perpetuate a cycle of poverty that undermines Afghanistan's long-term economic prospects.

Agriculture, which employs the majority of Afghans, has been hit hard by droughts and the disruption of supply chains. The lack of access to modern farming inputs and markets has reduced agricultural productivity, further shrinking incomes in rural areas. Moreover, the return of the opium trade under the Taliban's rule has created a parallel economy, complicating efforts to establish legitimate industries. While opium provides short-term income for farmers, it fosters criminal networks and undermines sustainable development.

The economic challenges also have regional and global implications. Afghanistan's destabilization has led to a surge in refugees fleeing to neighboring countries, increasing pressure on fragile economies like Pakistan and Iran. Additionally, the decline in Afghanistan's purchasing power has disrupted trade with Central Asian countries, diminishing regional economic integration. The insecurity in Afghanistan also poses risks for international investment in South Asia, hindering broader economic progress in the region. (Smith, 2023)

Addressing Afghanistan's economic collapse requires coordinated international efforts that balance humanitarian needs with political realities. Unfreezing assets and easing sanctions could stabilize the economy, provided mechanisms are established to ensure that aid benefits the Afghan population rather than the Taliban regime. Investment in agriculture, infrastructure, and education, along with the restoration of financial systems, could lay the groundwork for long-term recovery. However, without a credible governance structure that gains international recognition, Afghanistan's path to economic stability remains uncertain.

Barnett R. Rubin states in his writings technological developments made possible easy trade which improve the Afghan economy and also gold and precious stone from the

northeastern Afghanistan supported the economy. When foreign troops started withdrawal from Afghanistan, they faced loss of three hundred thousand jobs, but Afghanistan has many natural resources if Afghanistan use these natural resources in the good way by the technological advancement then growth of Afghan economy possible (Rubin, 2018)

Taliban's Economic Policies and Challenges

The Taliban's return to power in August 2021 profoundly impacted Afghanistan's economy, which was already fragile due to decades of conflict and reliance on foreign aid. With the sudden withdrawal of the United States and the cessation of most international financial assistance, Afghanistan faced an unprecedented economic crisis. The Taliban's governance priorities have been shaped by the urgent need to stabilize the economy, manage public finances, and address humanitarian challenges. A key aspect of the Taliban's economic policy has been to generate revenue domestically. With international sanctions and frozen Afghan foreign reserves limiting access to external funds, the Taliban have focused on traditional revenue streams such as taxation, customs duties, and natural resource exploitation. They have imposed taxes on businesses, agricultural produce, and public services while also leveraging Afghanistan's mineral wealth, including the extraction of precious metals and rare earth minerals. However, corruption, inefficiency, and a lack of expertise in economic management remain significant barriers to effective revenue generation. The humanitarian crisis has added layers of complexity to the Taliban's economic challenges. The abrupt halt of foreign aid, which previously accounted for 40% of Afghanistan's GDP, left millions of Afghans without access to basic services. Over 28 million people now face food insecurity, and poverty rates have skyrocketed. The Taliban have attempted to manage this crisis by allowing limited international humanitarian organizations to operate within the country, but distrust between the regime and global donors has hampered the scale and efficiency of these efforts. Economic sanctions imposed by Western countries have further crippled Afghanistan's financial system. The freezing of approximately \$9 billion in Afghan foreign reserves by the United States has deprived the Taliban of critical tools to stabilize the currency and combat inflation. This has led to a sharp devaluation of the Afghan afghani, exacerbating the cost of imported goods and worsening the living conditions for ordinary citizens.

Afghanistan reported largest growth in impacts from its three largest trading partners Iran, China and Pakistan. Recent trade and transactions issues between its trade partner countries is decreased due to its political instability. Currently an individual group and region is insecure which directly tied to presence of insurgent groups with one of the highest population growth rates, Afghanistan needs to add 400000 jobs to compete with current situation. Afghanistan agriculture contribution to the total GDP is 21 to 38%(Sopko, 2018).

Recommendations

The U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021 marked a significant shift in the country's political and economic landscape. To address the subsequent economic challenges, several recommendations are essential to stabilize and promote sustainable development in Afghanistan. These recommendations focus on fostering local capacity, international collaboration, and leveraging Afghanistan's natural resources and strategic position.

Afghanistan must prioritize building robust economic institutions that can manage resources efficiently and transparently. Strengthening local governance structures will ensure better fiscal management, reduce corruption, and create a conducive environment for economic activities. International agencies could play a supportive role by providing technical assistance and capacity-building programs tailored to Afghanistan's specific needs.

As agriculture remains the backbone of Afghanistan's economy, investing in modern farming techniques, irrigation infrastructure, and market access is crucial. Supporting smallholder farmers through microfinance and cooperative models can enhance productivity and resilience. Reviving traditional agricultural exports, such as saffron, nuts, and fruits, can provide significant foreign exchange earnings and improve rural livelihoods.

Afghanistan's strategic location makes it a potential hub for trade in South and Central Asia. The government should focus on enhancing regional connectivity through initiatives like the Trans-Afghan railway and energy projects such as TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India pipeline). Strengthening trade ties with neighboring countries could diversify Afghanistan's economy and reduce dependence on aid.

Conclusion

The withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan in August 2021 marked a significant turning point for the country, with profound economic implications. Afghanistan's economy, already fragile due to decades of conflict, dependency on foreign aid, and a lack of robust infrastructure, faced an immediate crisis. The sudden cessation of billions in international aid, which accounted for nearly 40% of its GDP, left a vacuum that severely constrained the government's ability to provide basic services and stabilize the economy. The Taliban's return to power further compounded these challenges. International sanctions, freezing of Afghanistan's foreign reserves, and widespread hesitance from global financial institutions to engage with the Taliban regime led to a liquidity crisis. This drastically limited the availability of cash, disrupted banking services, and curtailed imports of essential goods. Consequently, inflation surged, and the value of the Afghan currency depreciated, exacerbating economic hardships for ordinary citizens. Agriculture, a cornerstone of Afghanistan's economy, faced both opportunities and challenges in this new reality. While the country's fertile lands and reliance on subsistence farming offered some resilience, droughts and the

lack of modern agricultural practices continued to hinder productivity. Additionally, the reduction in international aid and investment hampered infrastructure development and the expansion of value-added industries like food processing, which are critical for sustainable growth.

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Research Article

Federalism: A Comparative Analysis Before and After the Merger of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK)

Irshaad Ullah Sherani ⁴

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Abstract

This research project aims to explore the dynamics of federalism focusing on the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) before and after its merger. The study delves into the historical context of federalism in Pakistan, analyzing the powers and rights granted to provinces under the federal structure. The research further examines the events leading up to the merger of KPK and its impact on the provincial autonomy, governance, and intergovernmental relations. By conducting a comparative analysis, the paper seeks to shed light on the implications of the merger on the political landscape and identify any shifts in the balance of power between the federal government and the province. The study draws upon relevant constitutional documents, legislative acts, and official statements to provide a comprehensive assessment of the effects of federalism on KPK and how it has evolved before and after the merger. The findings aim to contribute to a deeper understanding of federalism in the context of Pakistan and its broader implications for regional governance and political stability.

Introduction

Federalism, as a political system, plays a pivotal role in shaping the governance and power distribution within a nation (Wechsler, 1954). In the context of Pakistan, the concept of federalism holds particular significance, with the provincial territories possessing substantial autonomy and distinct identities (Adeney, 2002). One notable

⁴ Department of Political Science, Government College University, Faisalabad.

case that has garnered attention and analysis is the merger of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), a northwestern province of Pakistan, which occurred at a certain point in its history (Elahi, 2016).

This report embarks on a comparative analysis of federalism, focusing on the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, both before and after its merger. By examining the historical background and constitutional underpinnings, we seek to understand the dynamics of federalism within Pakistan and explore the implications of the merger on intergovernmental relations, governance, and the distribution of powers between the federal and provincial governments.

The research endeavors to shed light on the changes that occurred during the transitional period, assessing how the merger influenced political stability, socio-cultural dynamics, and the overall development landscape of the region. Drawing upon existing literature, constitutional documents, and empirical data, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between federalism and the merger of KPK, offering valuable insights into the broader discourse on regional autonomy, governance, and political stability within Pakistan's federal structure.

Background of Federalism

Federalism is a system of government where power and authority are constitutionally divided between a central or federal government and regional or state governments (Tella et al., 2014). Each level of government has its distinct responsibilities, and both operate independently within their defined spheres, while also sharing powers and responsibilities in certain areas. This system aims to strike a balance between centralized authority and regional autonomy, ensuring that the interests and needs of diverse regions and communities are represented and protected.

In the context of Pakistan, federalism has been a fundamental aspect of the country's political structure since its inception in 1947. Following its independence, Pakistan adopted a federal system to accommodate its diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic identities. The idea was to promote a sense of unity and cooperation while allowing for the preservation of regional identities and autonomy (Ahmed, 2020).

The Constitution of Pakistan lays the foundation for its federal structure, defining the distribution of powers and responsibilities between the federal government and the provinces (Choudhury, 1956). It delineates the legislative, executive, and financial powers of both levels of government, as well as the concurrent powers they share. Concurrent powers are those that can be exercised by both the federal and provincial governments, which include areas such as education, health, and social welfare (De Visser, 2017).

Initially, Pakistan's federal structure comprised two wings, East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and West Pakistan (present-day Pakistan). In 1971, after a significant political crisis and military conflict, East Pakistan seceded, leading to the

reconfiguration of Pakistan as a federation of four provinces: Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) (Nanda, 1972).

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, located in the northwest of Pakistan, is one of the country's most strategically significant provinces (Shah et al., 2017). It is home to diverse ethnic and linguistic groups, with the Pashtuns being the dominant community. The province has witnessed several historical events, including the merger of tribal areas known as the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in 2018. This merger marked a crucial development in the evolution of federalism in Pakistan, fundamentally changing the political and administrative landscape of the region (Ali, 2018).

Over the years, federalism in Pakistan has faced various challenges, including struggles for provincial autonomy, disputes over resource distribution, and tensions between the federal and provincial governments (Nazir, 2008). Understanding the historical background of federalism in Pakistan, particularly in the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, is essential to assess the impact of the merger and its implications for governance, intergovernmental relations, and the overall stability of the nation (Muhammad & Khan, 2022). This comparative analysis aims to shed light on these issues and contribute to a comprehensive understanding of federalism's role in shaping the political dynamics of Pakistan.

Importance of the Merger of KPK

The merger of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) with the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) holds significant importance on multiple fronts, both for the region itself and for Pakistan as a whole (Noor et al., 2018). The decision to merge FATA with KPK, which took place in 2018, marked a historic development that has had far-reaching implications in various aspects (Ahmed et al., 2021). Some of the key reasons highlighting the importance of the merger are as follows:

1. **Political Integration:** The merger brought the tribal areas, which were previously governed under a separate administrative system, into the mainstream political and administrative structure of Pakistan. This integration aimed to bridge the gap between FATA and the rest of the country, promoting a sense of unity and national cohesion (Ali, 2018).
2. **Enhanced Representation:** By becoming part of KPK, the people of the former FATA gained representation in the provincial assembly, allowing them to participate in the legislative process and have a say in decisions affecting their region. This enhanced representation has been a significant step towards ensuring political inclusivity and empowering the local population (Noor et al., 2018).
3. **End of Colonial-Era Governance:** FATA had long been governed under a colonial-era legal framework known as the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). The merger put an end to this outdated and controversial system, replacing it with the regular legal and administrative structure of KPK. This change aimed

to provide the people of the merged areas with the same rights and legal protections as citizens in other parts of the country (Yousaf, 2019).

4. **Socio-Economic Development:** The merger is expected to unlock new opportunities for socio-economic development in the merged areas. By integrating with KPK, these regions gained access to increased development funds, infrastructure projects, and better public services, aimed at uplifting the living standards of the local population (Wahid et al., 2017).
5. **Improved Security Situation:** Historically, FATA had been a region marked by security challenges, including militancy and instability. The merger was seen as a means to enhance security in the region by integrating it into a larger, more coordinated security framework under the provincial government (Shad & Ahmed, 2018).
6. **Administrative Reforms:** The merger necessitated administrative reforms to align the governance structures and systems of FATA with those of KPK. This provided an opportunity to address administrative inefficiencies and implement reforms that could lead to better governance and service delivery (Khan, 2021).
7. **Strengthening Federalism:** The merger demonstrated the flexibility of Pakistan's federal system by accommodating changes to its territorial boundaries and administrative divisions. It showcased the country's commitment to decentralized governance and the empowerment of provinces while fostering a sense of national identity and unity (Hueglin & Fenna, 2015).
8. **Peacebuilding and Reconciliation:** The merger aimed to promote peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in the region by addressing historical grievances and incorporating marginalized communities into the political and economic mainstream (Alam, 2021).

The merger of KPK with FATA was a landmark event in Pakistan's history, with its implications extending beyond the region (Begum, 2018). It signified a shift towards a more inclusive and integrated Pakistan, emphasizing the importance of federalism as a means to accommodate diverse identities while fostering national unity and development (Hashmi, 2013). However, it also brought challenges that required careful management and implementation, making the process of the merger a subject of continued study and analysis.

Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the political and administrative dynamics of federalism in the former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) before its merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK).
2. To examine the impact of the merger on intergovernmental relations between the federal government and the provincial government of KPK.
3. To assess the changes in governance, decision-making processes, and service delivery in the merged KPK after the integration of FATA.

4. To identify the socio-economic implications of the merger on the local population and their access to public services and development opportunities.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of this study on "Federalism in Former FATA before and after the Merger in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" is centered on analyzing the political, administrative, and socio-economic aspects of federalism in the region. The research will primarily focus on the period before the merger when FATA was governed separately and after the merger when it became an integral part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study will draw upon historical documents, constitutional provisions, legislative acts, and empirical data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of the merger on intergovernmental relations, governance, and socio-economic development in the merged KPK. However, the study face limitations in terms of data availability, as some relevant information not be readily accessible or outdated. Additionally, the findings influenced by the political climate and regional complexities, which could affect the generalizability of the results to other contexts beyond the study period and geographical scope. Nevertheless, this research aims to offer valuable insights into the implications of the merger on federalism in Pakistan and contribute to a broader understanding of regional governance and political dynamics in the country.

Materials and Methods

The materials and methods section of this study outlines the research design, data collection sources, analytical tools, and techniques employed to achieve the study's objectives. This section provides a transparent and systematic approach to ensure the reliability and validity of the research findings.

Research Design

The research design for studying "Federalism in Former FATA before and after the Merger in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" involves a comparative analysis approach. This design allows for a systematic and comprehensive examination of the political, administrative, and socio-economic aspects of federalism in the region, both before and after the merger. The comparative analysis offers valuable insights into the changes and developments that occurred during the transitional period, allowing for a better understanding of the impact of the merger on regional governance and intergovernmental relations.

Data Collection Sources

The data collection for studying "Federalism in Former FATA before and after the Merger in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" requires a diverse range of sources to ensure a comprehensive and well-rounded analysis. The data collection sources can be categorized into two main types: primary sources and secondary sources.

Results and Discussions

This section of this study on "Federalism in Former FATA before and after the Merger in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" presents the findings and analysis derived from the data

collected and the application of analytical tools and techniques. This section is the heart of the research, where the research objectives are addressed, and the implications of the merger on federalism, governance, and socio-economic development are explored in-depth.

Pre-Merger Constitutional Framework in KPK

The pre-merger constitutional framework in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) refers to the governance structure and legal provisions that governed the province before the integration of Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with KPK. KPK, situated in northwestern Pakistan, has a rich historical background and has played a crucial role in the country's political movements and national identity.

Before the merger, KPK operated as a regular province of Pakistan, with its distinct provincial government and legislative assembly. It was established as a province in 1901 during British colonial rule and has since been an integral part of Pakistan. KPK's administrative structure was organized under a provincial governor, chief minister, and a multi-tiered local government system.

The province has a predominantly Pashtun ethnic composition, with diverse cultural traditions and linguistic diversity. Its political representation was ensured through elected representatives in the national and provincial assemblies, allowing the people of KPK to participate actively in the country's legislative process.

In contrast, Former FATA had a distinct legal and governance framework. Administered separately under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), FATA had limited political representation and lacked a regular governance structure. The region was governed by political agents appointed by the President of Pakistan, and tribal elders exercised informal authority in local affairs.

The pre-merger period saw significant disparities between KPK and Former FATA in terms of socio-economic development. KPK, as a regular province, had relatively more access to government institutions and services, while FATA remained historically underdeveloped with limited access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure.

Table 4.1: Background of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and Former FATA

| Aspect | Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) | Former FATA |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Geographic Location | North-western Pakistan | North-western Pakistan |
| Formation | Established as a province in 1901 | Administered separately under the British colonial rule |

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Ethnic Composition</i> | Predominantly Pashtun | Diverse ethnic tribes, including Pashtuns and other tribes |
| <i>Administrative Structure</i> | Organized as a regular province with provincial government and legislative assembly | Administered under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) with political agents appointed by the President |
| <i>Legal Status</i> | Full-fledged province with constitutional rights and representation | Semi-autonomous region with limited political representation and distinct legal framework |
| <i>Political Representation</i> | Representation in national and provincial assemblies | Limited representation, with tribal elders exercising informal authority |
| <i>Socio-Economic Status</i> | Relatively more developed with access to government institutions and services | Historically underdeveloped with limited access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure |
| <i>Security Situation</i> | Experiences typical law and order issues | Marked by security challenges, including militancy and instability |
| <i>Historical Significance</i> | Has played a crucial role in the history of Pakistan, including political movements and national identity | Has been known for its traditional tribal governance and significance in the country's historical context |
| <i>Governance System</i> | Governed through regular administrative structures with elected representatives | Administered by political agents with significant powers under the FCR |
| <i>Integration with Pakistan</i> | Became part of Pakistan in 1947 | Administered separately from the rest of Pakistan under the FCR |
| <i>Calls for Merger</i> | No prior calls for merger as it was already an established province | Calls for merger increased in the later years to integrate FATA with KPK and the national mainstream |

| | | |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Events Leading Merger</p> | <p>Constitutional amendments and political decisions led to the integration of Former FATA with KPK in 2018</p> | <p>The merger decision was taken to end the separate administrative status of FATA and bring it into the provincial governance system</p> |
| <p>Implications of the Merger</p> | <p>Enhanced political representation and access to development opportunities</p> | <p>End of the colonial-era governance system, increased representation, and potential for socio-economic development</p> |

Post-Merger Changes in the Political Landscape

The post-merger changes in the political landscape refer to the transformations that occurred in the governance and political dynamics of the region after the integration of Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). The merger, which took place in 2018, marked a significant milestone in Pakistan's history, ending the separate administrative status of FATA and bringing it into the provincial governance system.

Before the merger, FATA operated as a semi-autonomous region with limited political representation and a unique legal framework under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR). The integration of FATA with KPK aimed to end the colonial-era governance system, extend full political representation and constitutional rights to the people of the merged region, and ensure equal participation in the national and provincial democratic processes.

The post-merger period witnessed a major shift in the administrative structure of the region. Former FATA became an integral part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which operates as a regular province with a provincial government and legislative assembly. The governance system in the merged region transformed from the administrative control of political agents to a system governed by elected representatives and a multi-tiered local government setup.

The merger also led to changes in the political representation of the region. The people of Former FATA gained full representation in the national and provincial assemblies, allowing them to actively participate in the legislative decision-making processes of the country. This integration provided the merged region with enhanced political voice and representation at both the federal and provincial levels.

Moreover, the merger brought potential opportunities for socio-economic development and infrastructure initiatives in the merged KPK. With the region now governed under the regular provincial administrative structure, it became eligible for increased government funding and development projects, which could positively impact the living standards and well-being of the local population.

However, the post-merger period also presented challenges. The integration of FATA into KPK required careful management of administrative and governance issues, as well as addressing historical disparities between the two regions. Ensuring effective service delivery, maintaining security and stability, and managing the transition were critical aspects that needed attention during the post-merger phase.

The introduction to the post-merger changes in the political landscape sets the context for understanding the implications of the merger on regional governance and federalism in Pakistan. It provides a foundation for further exploring the impact of the integration on intergovernmental relations, socio-economic development, and stability in the merged KPK. The subsequent sections will delve into a detailed analysis of these changes and their significance for the political and administrative dynamics in the region.

Table 4.2 Description of the changes

| <i>Changes</i> | <i>Description</i> |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Administrative Integration</i> | Former FATA became an integral part of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), operating as a regular province with its own provincial government and legislative assembly. |
| <i>Governance Structure</i> | The administrative control of political agents under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) was replaced by elected representatives and a multi-tiered local government system in the merged KPK. |
| <i>Political Representation</i> | The people of Former FATA gained full political representation in the national and provincial assemblies, allowing them to actively participate in the legislative decision-making processes at both federal and provincial levels. |
| <i>Constitutional Rights and Representation</i> | The integration extended constitutional rights and political representation to the merged region, ensuring equal participation in the national mainstream and democratic processes. |
| <i>Potential for Socio-Economic Development</i> | The merger brought potential opportunities for socio-economic development and infrastructure initiatives in the merged KPK, as it became eligible for increased government funding and development projects. |
| <i>Enhanced Political Voice</i> | The merger provided the people of the merged region with an enhanced political voice, empowering them to |

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| | | voice their concerns and interests through elected representatives. |
| <i>Challenges Governance Transition</i> | <i>in</i> | The post-merger phase presented challenges in managing the administrative and governance transition between the two regions, requiring careful handling and attention to historical disparities. |
| <i>Security Stability</i> | <i>and</i> | The integration impacted the security situation in the merged region, necessitating efforts to maintain stability and address any security challenges that arose during the transition. |

Analysis of Intergovernmental Relations Before and After the Merger

Intergovernmental relations refer to the interactions and relationships between different levels of government within a federal system. In the context of the merger of Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), the dynamics of intergovernmental relations underwent significant changes before and after the integration. The analysis of intergovernmental relations can shed light on the distribution of powers, resources, and responsibilities between the federal government, provincial government of KPK, and local authorities in the merged region. Here is a comparative analysis of intergovernmental relations before and after the merger:

1. Before the Merger (Pre-Integration):

- **Limited Provincial Autonomy:** Before the merger, FATA operated under a separate administrative framework, with limited provincial autonomy. The region was directly governed by political agents appointed by the federal government, leading to a lack of effective representation in the provincial and national decision-making processes.
- **Weak Coordination:** Intergovernmental coordination between the federal government and the provincial government of KPK with respect to Former FATA was relatively weak. The distinct governance systems and administrative structures of FATA and KPK created challenges in coordination and policy implementation.
- **Decision-making Centralization:** The FATA administration's centralized decision-making, with significant powers vested in political agents, resulted in limited input and participation from local communities in governance matters.
- **Resource Allocation Disparities:** The allocation of resources for development and public service delivery in FATA was often inequitable, with less funding and attention compared to other provinces, including KPK.

2. After the Merger (Post-Integration):

- **Enhanced Provincial Integration:** The merger led to the full integration of Former FATA into KPK, strengthening provincial autonomy and governance. The merged region became an integral part of the provincial administrative structure, with representation in the provincial assembly.
- **Improved Intergovernmental Coordination:** The integration resulted in improved coordination and collaboration between the federal government and the provincial government of KPK. This facilitated better alignment of policies and development initiatives for the merged region.
- **Decentralization of Decision-making:** With the merger, decision-making authority shifted from the centralized FATA administration to elected representatives at the provincial and local levels. This allowed for increased local participation in governance matters.
- **Equitable Resource Allocation:** The merger potentially addressed resource allocation disparities, as the merged KPK became eligible for increased government funding and development projects.

Table 4.3 Comparison of the aspects of Before and After the Merger

| Aspects | <i>Before the Merger (Pre-Integration)</i> | <i>After the Merger (Post-Integration)</i> |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Administrative Structure</i> | FATA operated separately under the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR) with political agents | FATA became an integral part of KPK, operating as a regular province with its provincial government and legislative assembly |
| <i>Political Representation</i> | Limited political representation; FATA residents had limited participation in national and provincial decision-making | FATA residents gained full political representation in the national and provincial assemblies |
| <i>Governance System</i> | Centralized governance under political agents, with limited local participation in decision-making | Decentralized governance with elected representatives at the provincial and local levels |

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| <i>Constitutional Rights</i> | Limited constitutional rights and political representation | Constitutional rights extended to the merged region, ensuring equal participation in national mainstream and democratic processes |
| <i>Socio-Economic Development</i> | Historically underdeveloped with limited access to education, healthcare, and infrastructure | Potential for increased socio-economic development and infrastructure initiatives with access to more government funding |
| <i>Intergovernmental Relations</i> | Weak coordination between the federal government and KPK; limited provincial autonomy | Improved coordination between federal and provincial governments; strengthened provincial autonomy |
| <i>Decision-making Authority</i> | Political agents exercised centralized decision-making authority in FATA | Decision-making authority shifted to elected representatives at the provincial and local levels |
| <i>Resource Allocation</i> | Inequitable resource allocation, with FATA receiving less attention compared to other provinces | Potential for more equitable resource allocation in the merged KPK |
| <i>Security Situation</i> | Marked by security challenges, including militancy and instability | Impact on security situation requires continuous attention during the governance transition |

The table provides a concise comparison of key aspects before and after the merger of Former FATA with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It illustrates the significant changes brought about by the merger in terms of governance, political representation, administrative structure, constitutional rights, and the potential for socio-economic development. Additionally, it highlights the improvements in intergovernmental relations and the need for ongoing attention to challenges such as the governance transition and security concerns in the post-merger phase.

Table 4.4 Comparison of positive and negative aspects of the merger

| Aspects | Positive Aspects | Negative Aspects |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Administrative Integration | Full integration of Former FATA with KPK, leading to streamlined governance and administrative structure | Initial challenges in managing the administrative transition and merging different governance systems |
| Political Representation | Enhanced political representation for FATA residents, allowing them to actively participate in national and provincial decision-making | Potential for political representation challenges due to differences in political dynamics and interests |
| Governance and Local Autonomy | Strengthened provincial autonomy, empowering the merged region with more local decision-making authority | Concerns about preserving the unique cultural and traditional governance practices of FATA |
| Socio-Economic Development | Potential for increased socio-economic development, infrastructure projects, and access to government funding | Initial challenges in addressing historical disparities and ensuring equitable development |
| Intergovernmental Relations | Improved coordination and collaboration between federal and provincial governments | Ongoing need for effective intergovernmental coordination to address governance challenges |
| Constitutional Rights | Constitutional rights extended to the merged region, ensuring equal participation in national mainstream and democratic processes | Concerns about potential conflicts in constitutional provisions between the two regions |
| Security and Stability | Potential for increased security and stability with better governance and local representation | Security challenges and instability in the initial phases of the merger transition |

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|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Representation of Tribal Culture | Opportunities to represent the unique tribal culture and traditions in the provincial setup | Concerns about preserving tribal identity amid the process of integration |
| Policy Implementation | Potential for more effective policy implementation and development initiatives | Initial difficulties in adapting policies to the unique context of the merged region |
| Regional Identity | Enhanced regional identity within KPK, promoting a sense of belonging | Concerns about maintaining the distinct regional identity of the merged area |

The table presents a comparative analysis of the positive and negative aspects of the merger between Former FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The merger brought about various positive changes, such as enhanced political representation, strengthened provincial autonomy, and potential for socio-economic development. However, it also presented challenges related to administrative transition, governance coordination, and preserving cultural identity. Effective policy implementation and managing regional identity were additional factors that required careful consideration during the post-merger phase. Overall, the analysis highlights the complexity and significance of the merger process and the need for addressing both the positive and negative aspects to ensure successful integration and governance in the merged region.

4.6 Shifts in Power Distribution between Federal and Provincial Governments

Shifts in power distribution between federal and provincial governments are a critical aspect to consider in the context of the merger of Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK). The integration of FATA into KPK had implications for the distribution of powers, responsibilities, and decision-making authority between the federal and provincial levels of government. Here are some key shifts in power distribution that occurred after the merger:

1. **Provincial Autonomy Strengthened:** With the merger, KPK's provincial autonomy was strengthened, as Former FATA became an integral part of the province. This resulted in the extension of provincial laws and governance structures to the merged region, giving the provincial government greater control over its administrative affairs.
2. **Transfer of Legislative Powers:** After the merger, legislative powers that were previously vested in the federal government were transferred to the provincial government of KPK. This allowed the provincial assembly to enact laws and formulate policies that apply to the merged region.

3. **Intergovernmental Coordination and Collaboration:** The merger necessitated enhanced coordination and collaboration between the federal government and the provincial government of KPK. This was essential to align policies and development initiatives, especially in areas that require joint efforts and resources.
4. **Resource Management and Allocation:** The merger led to changes in resource management and allocation. As FATA became part of KPK, the merged region gained access to a larger share of government funding, which required effective utilization and equitable distribution for development projects.
5. **Devolution of Powers to Local Governments:** The merger facilitated the devolution of powers to local government bodies within the merged KPK. This decentralization aimed to empower local communities and ensure their active participation in decision-making processes.
6. **Security and Law Enforcement:** The shift in power distribution impacted security and law enforcement dynamics. As security is a shared responsibility between federal and provincial authorities, the merger required a coordinated approach to address security challenges in the merged region.
7. **Representation in National Institutions:** The merger resulted in increased representation of the merged region in the national institutions, such as the National Assembly and Senate, providing Former FATA residents a voice in the federal legislative process.
8. **Challenges in Transition:** While the merger aimed to distribute powers more equitably, the process of transition faced challenges in ensuring smooth implementation and managing the integration of administrative systems.

Impact of Merger on Local Politics and Representation

The merger of Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) had a significant impact on local politics and representation in the merged region. The integration brought about changes in the political landscape and representation dynamics, influencing the way local communities participated in governance and decision-making processes. Here are some key impacts of the merger on local politics and representation:

1. **Enhanced Political Representation:** One of the primary impacts of the merger was the enhancement of political representation for the people of Former FATA. Before the merger, FATA residents had limited participation in national and provincial decision-making. However, after the integration, they gained full political representation in the national and provincial assemblies, allowing them to actively participate in the legislative process.
2. **Empowerment of Local Leaders:** The merger empowered local leaders and representatives in the merged KPK. Elected officials from Former FATA now

had the opportunity to hold positions in the provincial and local governments, contributing to a more inclusive and representative political system.

3. **Increased Voter Participation:** The merger potentially led to an increase in voter participation in the merged region. With the integration, the people of Former FATA could exercise their right to vote in provincial and national elections, giving them a stronger voice in shaping their representation.
4. **Transformation of Political Landscape:** The merger brought a transformation in the political landscape of the merged KPK. Political parties and candidates had to adapt to the changing demographics and needs of the merged region, leading to shifts in political strategies and priorities.
5. **Opportunities for Local Development:** With enhanced representation, local communities in the merged KPK gained opportunities to voice their development needs and priorities. Elected representatives could advocate for the allocation of resources and development projects specific to the merged region.
6. **Challenges in Integration:** While the merger aimed to enhance representation, there were challenges in integrating political systems and ensuring a smooth transition. The diverse political dynamics and traditional governance practices in Former FATA required careful management to harmonize with the provincial setup.
7. **Preservation of Tribal Identity:** The merger raised concerns about preserving the unique tribal identity of the merged area. As the political landscape adapted to the provincial context, it was essential to respect and preserve the cultural heritage and traditions of the local communities.
8. **Influence on Policy Priorities:** The merger potentially influenced policy priorities in the merged KPK. Local representatives could advocate for policies that addressed the specific needs and challenges faced by their constituencies.

Influence on Economic and Development Policies

The merger of Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) had a significant influence on economic and development policies in the merged region. The integration brought about changes in the allocation of resources, development priorities, and policy implementation. Here are some key influences of the merger on economic and development policies:

1. **Resource Allocation:** With the merger, the merged KPK gained access to a larger share of government funding and resources. This increased financial allocation allowed for more substantial investment in development projects and public service delivery in the merged region.
2. **Focus on Infrastructure Development:** The merger brought attention to infrastructure development in the merged region. With increased funding, there

were opportunities to invest in roads, schools, hospitals, and other essential facilities to improve the quality of life for the local population.

3. **Socio-Economic Development:** The merger aimed to address historical disparities in socio-economic development between KPK and Former FATA. Economic policies were designed to promote inclusive growth, poverty reduction, and increased access to education and healthcare in the merged area.
4. **Job Creation and Employment Opportunities:** Economic policies post-merger focused on creating employment opportunities for the local population. By promoting economic activities and attracting investments, the government aimed to generate job opportunities and boost economic growth.
5. **Agricultural Development:** Agriculture is a significant economic sector in the merged KPK. Post-merger, agricultural policies were designed to support farmers, improve agricultural practices, and enhance productivity in the region.
6. **Private Sector Development:** The merger brought attention to private sector development. The government aimed to create a conducive environment for businesses to thrive, fostering economic growth and entrepreneurship in the merged region.
7. **Investment in Human Capital:** The post-merger policies emphasized investment in human capital. This included initiatives to improve access to quality education and healthcare, leading to a skilled and healthy workforce.
8. **Tourism Promotion:** The merged KPK has significant potential for tourism. Economic policies focused on promoting the region's natural beauty and historical sites to attract tourists and boost the local economy.
9. **Challenges in Implementation:** While the merger brought opportunities, there were challenges in implementing economic and development policies. These challenges included administrative transitions, capacity building, and managing the expectations of local communities.
10. **Balancing Regional Development:** One of the key policy considerations post-merger was balancing regional development. The government aimed to ensure that development efforts were equitable and reached all areas of the merged region.

Recapitulation of Findings

The study on "Federalism: A Comparative Analysis Before and After the Merger of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK)" explored the impact of the integration of Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on various aspects of governance, political representation, and socio-economic development. The following are the key findings of the study:

1. **Strengthened Provincial Autonomy:** The merger of FATA with KPK resulted in the full integration of the merged region into the provincial governance structure. This strengthened provincial autonomy, granting KPK greater control over its administrative and legislative affairs.
2. **Enhanced Political Representation:** The integration brought about enhanced political representation for the people of Former FATA. They gained full political representation in the national and provincial assemblies, empowering them to actively participate in the legislative process.
3. **Improved Intergovernmental Coordination:** The merger led to improved coordination and collaboration between the federal government and the provincial government of KPK. This facilitated better alignment of policies and development initiatives for the merged region.
4. **Opportunities for Socio-Economic Development:** With the merger, the merged KPK gained access to a larger share of government funding and resources. This opened up potential opportunities for socio-economic development and infrastructure initiatives in the region.
5. **Empowerment of Local Leaders:** The merger empowered local leaders and representatives in the merged KPK. Elected officials from Former FATA gained the opportunity to hold positions in the provincial and local governments, contributing to a more inclusive and representative political system.
6. **Challenges in Governance Transition:** While the merger aimed to enhance representation and governance, there were challenges in integrating political systems and ensuring a smooth transition. Managing the diverse political dynamics and traditional governance practices in Former FATA required careful attention.
7. **Preservation of Tribal Identity:** The merger raised concerns about preserving the unique tribal identity of the merged area. While integration aimed at promoting national cohesion, it was essential to respect and preserve the cultural heritage and traditions of the local communities.
8. **Focus on Infrastructure Development:** Economic policies post-merger emphasized infrastructure development in the merged region. Increased funding allowed for investment in roads, schools, hospitals, and other essential facilities to improve the quality of life for the local population.
9. **Balancing Regional Development:** The government aimed to ensure that development efforts were equitable and reached all areas of the merged region. Balancing regional development was crucial to address historical disparities and promote inclusive growth.

Concluding Remarks

The merger of Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) had a profound impact on federalism in Pakistan. The integration

marked a significant step towards strengthening provincial autonomy and promoting national cohesion. By granting Former FATA full political representation, constitutional rights, and access to increased government resources, the merger enhanced the region's participation in the national mainstream and democratic processes.

Recommendations for Future Policy

Based on the findings and analysis of the study on the impact of the merger of Former Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) on federalism, governance, and development, the following are recommendations for future policy:

1. **Intergovernmental Coordination Mechanism:** Establish a robust intergovernmental coordination mechanism between the federal government, provincial government of KPK, and local authorities in the merged region. This mechanism should facilitate regular communication, collaboration, and joint decision-making to address governance challenges and ensure effective policy implementation.
2. **Preservation of Cultural Identity:** While promoting national integration, policymakers should prioritize preserving the unique cultural identity of the merged region. Engage local communities in decision-making processes, respect their traditional governance practices, and ensure cultural heritage preservation to foster a sense of belonging and inclusivity.
3. **Resource Allocation Equity:** Ensure equitable resource allocation to the merged KPK to address historical disparities and promote balanced regional development. Transparent and efficient resource management practices will be critical to optimize the utilization of government funding for development projects and public service delivery.
4. **Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening:** Invest in capacity building and institutional strengthening for the merged provincial and local governments. Enhancing administrative efficiency, transparency, and accountability will improve service delivery and governance effectiveness in the merged region.
5. **Investment in Human Capital:** Prioritize investment in human capital by allocating resources to improve access to quality education, healthcare, and skill development programs. A skilled and healthy workforce will drive economic growth and social progress in the merged KPK.
6. **Infrastructure Development:** Continue prioritizing infrastructure development to improve connectivity and access to essential services in the merged region. Investments in road networks, schools, hospitals, and other critical facilities will uplift living standards and promote economic activities.

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Research Article

Role of Print Media in Women Empowerment: A Comparative Study of Dawn, The News, Daily Jang and Daily Express Newspapers In Pakistan

Rizwan Ullah Joiya ⁵

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Abstract

This research examines the influence of print media on women's empowerment in Pakistan, concentrating on four prominent newspapers: Dawn, The News, Daily Jang, and Daily Express. Gender equality, which includes economic, social, and political aspects, continues to pose a considerable challenge in Pakistan, primarily influenced by patriarchal structures. This study examines the representation of women in newspapers and their coverage of critical issues such as education, health, employment, and violence, aiming to understand the influence of these portrayals on the Pakistani public, especially among Urdu and English readers. The English-language newspapers, Dawn and The News, frequently adopt a progressive perspective, emphasizing the accomplishments of urban, educated women. In contrast, the Urdu dailies, Jang and Express, predominantly portray women in caregiving roles, often linked to domestic responsibilities. Both forms of media offer inadequate coverage of issues impacting minority and rural women, resulting in insufficient discourse on the empowerment of these groups. Although instances of constructive reporting with neutral or positive representations exist, comprehensive analyses of the societal barriers confronting women are infrequent. The findings indicate that print media has the potential to either reinforce stereotypical representations or serve as a catalyst for significant

⁵ M.Phil. Scholar, Department of Media Studies, Riphah International University, Faisalabad Campus.

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| | change concerning women’s issues. Diverse and inclusive reporting is essential for amplifying the voices of rural women and integrating intersectional perspectives. Recommendations involve leveraging media to advocate for gender-sensitive policy reforms and addressing biases to advance women’s rights in Pakistan, emphasizing the alignment of print media with these transformative objectives. |
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Introduction

Women’s empowerment is acknowledged as a critical element in facilitating social transformation worldwide. It significantly influences societal perceptions, especially concerning the roles of women. In numerous regions, the empowerment of women is intricately associated with economic development and social equity, underscoring the significance of access to resources, rights, and opportunities for women. The media plays a crucial role in highlighting women’s issues, addressing the obstacles they encounter, and shaping societal narratives. Mass media disseminates information and ideas, functioning as a significant mechanism for promoting women’s self-empowerment and societal empowerment (Pasaribu et al., 2021). In Pakistan, as in many developing countries, the media has become an essential partner in advancing gender equity by challenging established gender norms and cultural contexts.

Women’s empowerment is a multifaceted process involving the ability to make decisions across social, economic, and political domains. It encompasses access to education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and political representation. In Pakistan, where cultural and religious practices frequently confine women’s roles to the domestic sphere, the media’s capacity to advocate for norms that uphold women’s rights is vital. Despite the shift in consumption patterns towards digital platforms, a significant segment of the population in developing countries remains dependent on traditional media (Schroeder et al., 2018).

In Pakistan, newspapers such as Dawn, The News, Daily Jang, and Daily Express significantly influence societal norms regarding women (Yousaf et al., 2023). These publications can reinforce or challenge traditional gender roles through their editorial choices, feature articles, and investigative journalism, offering diverse perspectives on women’s roles in society. This study seeks to assess the role of print media in influencing various processes concerning women in Pakistan.

This study aims to analyses how these newspapers address significant issues related to women, including education, healthcare, employment, political representation, violence against women, and the pursuit of empowerment and equality. This study seeks to elucidate the media’s function in promoting a more equitable society and enabling women to realize their full potential.

Methodology

This study investigates the role of print media in promoting women’s empowerment in Pakistan, focusing on a comparative analysis of four leading newspapers: Dawn, The

News, Daily Jang, and Daily Express. The research employs a mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative and qualitative techniques to analyse the frequency, tone, and framing of women-related issues presented in these publications. This section outlines the research design, data collection process, analytical framework, and ethical considerations.

Research Design

The study is descriptive and comparative, focusing on the representation of women's empowerment in English and Urdu newspapers. The primary objectives include assessing the frequency of coverage, analyzing the framing of issues, and identifying differences in representation across various languages and readership demographics.

Quantitative Analysis

- A systematic content analysis was conducted to measure the frequency, size, tone, and placement of articles addressing women's issues.
- Thematic categorization was applied to group articles into predefined categories such as education, gender equality, economic empowerment, and violence against women.

Qualitative Analysis

- Framing analysis was employed to examine the language, imagery, and narratives used in the articles.
- Particular attention was given to cultural and linguistic nuances between Urdu and English newspapers.

Data Collection

1. Sample Selection

- Four newspapers were selected to represent a cross-section of Pakistan's media landscape:
 - i. **Dawn** (English): Known for its progressive editorial stance.
 - ii. **The News** (English): Catering to an urban, educated readership.
 - iii. **Daily Jang** (Urdu): A widely circulated daily with traditional perspectives.
 - iv. **Daily Express** (Urdu): Targeting a mass-market audience with diverse content.

Time Frame

- The analysis covered articles published over one calendar year (January–December). This period was chosen to capture seasonal and thematic variations in coverage.

Inclusion Criteria

- Articles explicitly addressing women's issues were included. These included news reports, editorials, op-eds, and feature stories.

- Topics related to women’s empowerment, education, health, economic participation, and violence were prioritized.

Exclusion Criteria

- Articles that made only passing references to women or were unrelated to empowerment were excluded.

Data Compilation

- Articles were sourced from online archives and physical copies of the newspapers.
- Data was organized into spreadsheets, categorizing each article by theme, tone, size, and placement.

Variables and Indicators

The following variables were analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of media representation:

i. Frequency of Coverage

- Monthly counts of articles on women’s issues were documented.

ii. Thematic Categorization

Articles were grouped into six themes:

- Women Empowerment
- Education for Women
- Gender Equality
- Domestic Violence
- Health and Rights

iii. Tone of Coverage

Each article was assessed for tone:

- Positive: Articles highlighting progress, achievements, or solutions.
- Neutral: Articles presenting facts without a clear stance.
- Negative: Articles focusing on setbacks, challenges, or sensationalism.

iv. Size and Placement

- Article size was categorized as small, medium, or large based on column inches.
- Placement was recorded as front page, editorial page, or other sections to determine the prominence of women’s issues.

v. Representation Context

- Articles were analyzed to identify whether they focused on urban, rural, national, or international contexts.

Analytical Framework

i. Content Analysis

- Quantitative content analysis was used to identify coverage, frequency, and thematic distribution patterns.
- Statistical tools were employed to calculate percentages, trends, and comparisons across newspapers.

ii. Framing Analysis

- Headlines, imagery, and narrative structures were examined to understand how women's issues were framed.
- The framing was analyzed for underlying biases, stereotypes, and empowerment narratives.

iii. Comparative Analysis

A comparative approach was applied to highlight differences between Urdu and English newspapers. This included examining:

- Linguistic framing of women's issues.
- Editorial priorities based on audience demographics.
- Variations in tone and thematic focus.

Tools and Techniques

i. Data Management

- Data was managed using Microsoft Excel for categorization and frequency analysis.
- Statistical software (e.g., SPSS) was used for advanced analysis, including correlations and trend mapping.

ii. Inter-coder Reliability

- A team of researchers coded the articles independently to ensure consistency.
- Discrepancies in coding were resolved through consensus discussions.

iii. Validation

The coding framework and analytical approach were reviewed by media studies experts to ensure methodological rigor.

Limitations

i. Scope

The study focuses exclusively on print media, excluding television, radio, and digital platforms, which also play significant roles in shaping public opinion.

ii. Temporal Constraints

The analysis is limited to one year, which may not capture long-term trends or shifts in media representation.

iii. **Language and Cultural Bias**

Differences in cultural and linguistic contexts between Urdu and English newspapers may have influenced the interpretation of framing and tone.

iv. **Audience Representation**

The study may not fully account for regional newspapers or publications targeting niche audiences, such as women-focused magazines.

Ethical Considerations

i. **Transparency**

The data collection and analysis processes were documented in detail to ensure replicability.

ii. **Neutrality**

Researchers maintained objectivity by adhering to standardized coding protocols and avoiding subjective interpretations.

iii. **Confidentiality**

Personal information (e.g., names of journalists or sources) was anonymized to protect privacy.

Results And Discussion

4.1 Representation and Data Collection

This table captures the monthly volume of articles related to women's empowerment across four newspapers-Dawn, The News, Daily Jang, and Daily Express over a year.

i. **Monthly Trends:**

Peaks in July and November indicate increased reporting activity. These surges may align with external factors such as significant national or international events, women-centric campaigns, or policy announcements. For instance, July may correspond with the release of mid-year reports on gender progress. November could be associated with global observances, such as the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence starting on November 25. Coverage is more stable in other months, suggesting a baseline level of engagement with women-related issues throughout the year.

ii. **Newspaper Contributions:**

- *The News* consistently produced the highest number of articles (1,250), reflecting its editorial focus on social and political issues, including gender equality.

- *Daily Express* lagged slightly (1,150 articles), suggesting that Urdu newspapers may prioritize different content types or face resource constraints in reporting women's issues comprehensively.

This data illustrates newspapers' responsiveness to external triggers, with peaks indicating correlation with global and national events. The variations in output among newspapers suggest differences in editorial priorities and resource allocations.

Table 4.1 Representation and Data Collection:

| Month | Dawn (Pakistan) | The News (Pakistan) | Daily Jang (Pakistan) | Daily Express (Pakistan) | Total Articles |
|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| January | 87 | 90 | 95 | 100 | 372 |
| February | 90 | 87 | 100 | 99 | 376 |
| March | 88 | 113 | 105 | 95 | 401 |
| April | 98 | 126 | 85 | 90 | 399 |
| May | 93 | 97 | 110 | 101 | 401 |
| June | 101 | 120 | 105 | 95 | 421 |
| July | 114 | 125 | 110 | 100 | 449 |
| August | 90 | 99 | 100 | 85 | 374 |
| September | 95 | 68 | 110 | 100 | 373 |
| October | 109 | 115 | 95 | 90 | 409 |
| November | 120 | 134 | 100 | 95 | 449 |
| December | 100 | 76 | 90 | 100 | 366 |
| Total | 1,185 | 1,250 | 1,205 | 1,150 | 4,790 |

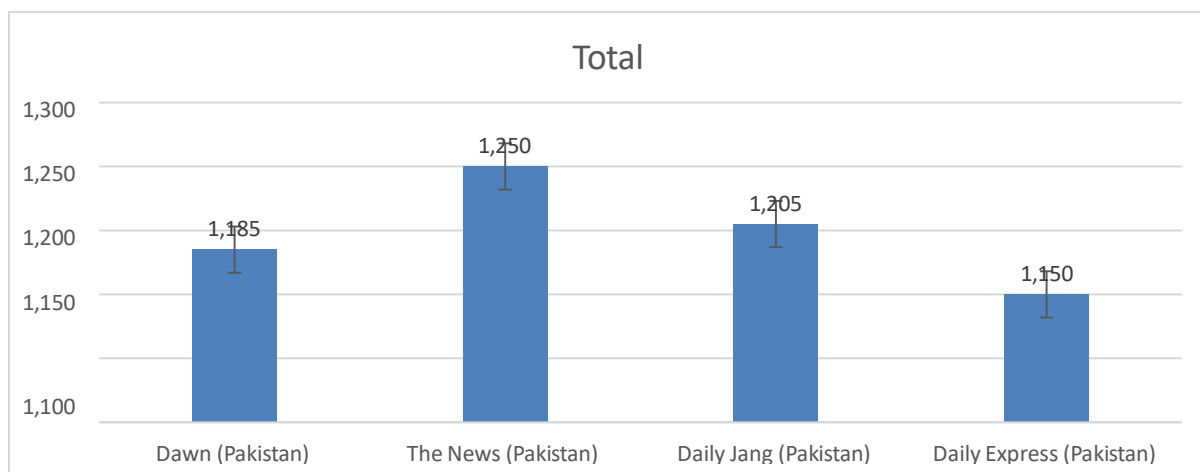


Table 4.2: Content Categories Reported on Editorial Front or Back Pages

This table categorizes articles by themes such as Women Empowerment, Education, Gender Equality, Domestic Violence, and Others, providing a breakdown of focus areas.

iii. **Dominant Themes:**

- Women’s Empowerment accounted for the largest share (29.3%), reflecting media recognition of empowerment as a central issue.
- Education for Women (22.6%) also received significant attention, emphasizing its role as a foundational pillar for gender equality.

iv. **Underrepresented Issues:**

- Domestic Violence (13.5%) and Gender Equality (16.2%) received comparatively lower coverage, despite their critical importance. This underrepresentation may result from societal stigmas or editorial biases that deprioritize these topics.

v. **Monthly Variations:**

- Peaks in **December** for Women Empowerment (141 articles) could relate to year-end retrospectives or global campaigns like Human Rights Day.

The emphasis on empowerment and education highlights their potential for transformation. However, the comparatively lower focus on domestic violence and gender equality indicates a gap in addressing systemic issues that affect women’s safety and rights.

Table 4.2 Content Categories Reported in Editorial Front or Back Pages

| Month | Women Empowerment | Education for Women | Gender Equality | Domestic Violence | Others | Total Articles |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------|----------------|
| January | 134 | 89 | 67 | 57 | 80 | 427 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| February | 113 | 99 | 89 | 65 | 78 | 444 |
| March | 122 | 93 | 59 | 52 | 92 | 418 |
| April | 96 | 76 | 63 | 72 | 72 | 379 |
| May | 108 | 83 | 83 | 43 | 78 | 395 |
| June | 132 | 87 | 51 | 62 | 68 | 400 |
| July | 117 | 95 | 39 | 39 | 76 | 366 |
| August | 127 | 78 | 78 | 41 | 86 | 410 |
| September | 98 | 65 | 48 | 54 | 90 | 355 |
| October | 101 | 70 | 74 | 64 | 95 | 404 |
| November | 116 | 63 | 56 | 47 | 68 | 350 |
| December | 141 | 84 | 67 | 51 | 99 | 442 |
| Total | 1,405 | 982 | 774 | 647 | 982 | 4,790 |

Frequency of News Reports

This table captures the number of news reports on women-related issues published by each newspaper.

Expanded Insights:

vi. Newspaper Performance:

- *Dawn* led with 390 reports, reflecting its commitment to in-depth coverage of socio-political issues.
- *Daily Express* had the lowest count (310), consistent with its relatively lower overall engagement in Table 1.

vii. Peaks in Reporting:

- July (155 reports) and November (140 reports) again emerge as key months, suggesting consistent alignment with significant events or campaigns.

The table illustrates *Dawn*'s leadership in addressing women's issues and indicates a need for greater engagement by Urdu newspapers. The recurring peaks observed in July and November suggest that further investigation is needed to identify the specific factors influencing these trends

Table 4.3 *Frequency of News Reports*

| Month | Dawn | The News | Daily Jang | Daily Express | Total |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| January | 20 | 25 | 30 | 25 | 100 |
| February | 25 | 20 | 30 | 25 | 100 |
| March | 30 | 35 | 30 | 20 | 115 |
| April | 25 | 30 | 20 | 25 | 100 |
| May | 30 | 25 | 35 | 30 | 120 |
| June | 35 | 40 | 30 | 20 | 125 |
| July | 50 | 35 | 45 | 25 | 155 |
| August | 25 | 30 | 25 | 25 | 105 |
| September | 30 | 25 | 35 | 30 | 120 |
| October | 35 | 30 | 25 | 30 | 120 |
| November | 40 | 35 | 40 | 25 | 140 |
| December | 45 | 20 | 25 | 30 | 120 |
| Total | 390 | 350 | 370 | 310 | 1,420 |

4.3 Tone of Newspapers on Women’s Empowerment (Front or Back Pages)

This table analyses the tone (Positive, Neutral, Negative) used in articles on women’s empowerment.

Expanded Insights:

viii. Predominance of Neutral Tones:

- Neutral tones (1,850 articles) dominated, indicating a preference for balanced reporting. This may reflect an attempt to provide factual, unbiased coverage without overt editorializing.

ix. Positive Framing:

- *Daily Jang* (450 articles) and *Daily Express* (430 articles) led in positive reporting, potentially reflecting a deliberate effort to highlight success stories or constructive narratives.

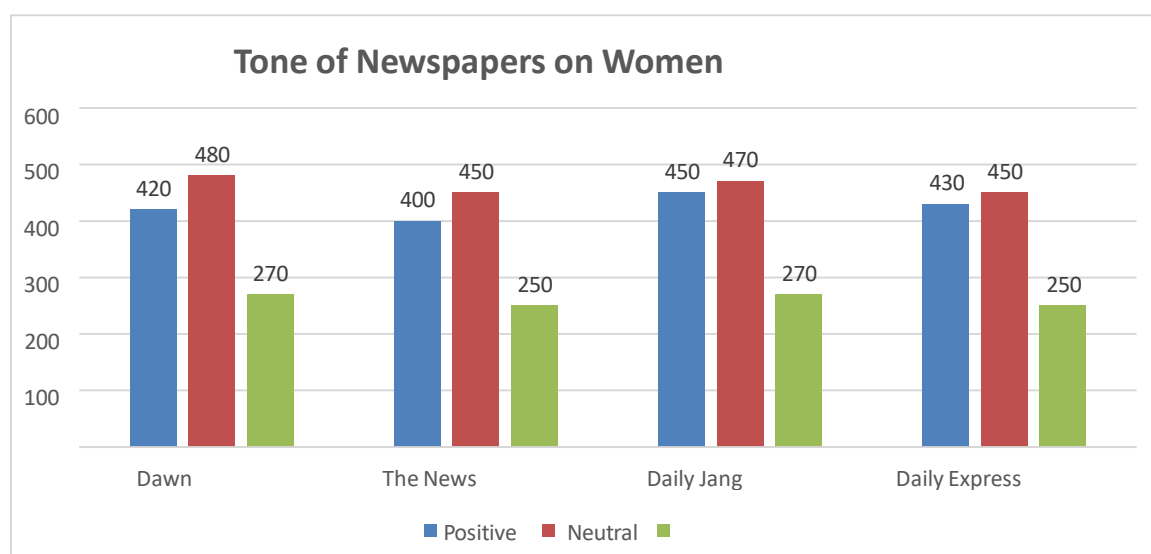
x. Low Negative Coverage:

- Negative tones were limited (1,040 articles), suggesting a conscious editorial choice to avoid overly critical or discouraging portrayals of women’s issues.

The prevalence of neutral and positive tones in media coverage of women’s issues is notable, as it facilitates the constructive framing of these topics. Nevertheless, the relatively low use of critical tones could affect the media’s capacity to hold policymakers and societal institutions accountable for systemic failures.

Table 4.4 *Tone of Newspapers on Women’s Empowerment (Front or Back Pages)*

| Tone | Dawn (Pakistan) | The News (Pakistan) | NewsDaily (Pakistan) | JangDaily (Pakistan) | ExpressTotal Articles |
|--------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Positive | 420 | 400 | 450 | 430 | 1,700 |
| Neutral | 480 | 450 | 470 | 450 | 1,850 |
| Negative | 270 | 250 | 270 | 250 | 1,040 |
| Total | 1,170 | 1,100 | 1,190 | 1,130 | 4,790 |



4.4 Positive, Neutral, Negative Tones Summary

This table provides a cumulative view of tones across all newspapers.

Expanded Insights:

xi. Positive Leadership:

- *Dawn* emerged as the leader in positive reporting (589 articles), aligning with its progressive editorial stance.
- Urdu newspapers like *Daily Jang* and *Daily Express* contributed significantly to positive tones, suggesting growing efforts to present constructive narratives.

xii. Consistency in Neutral Tones:

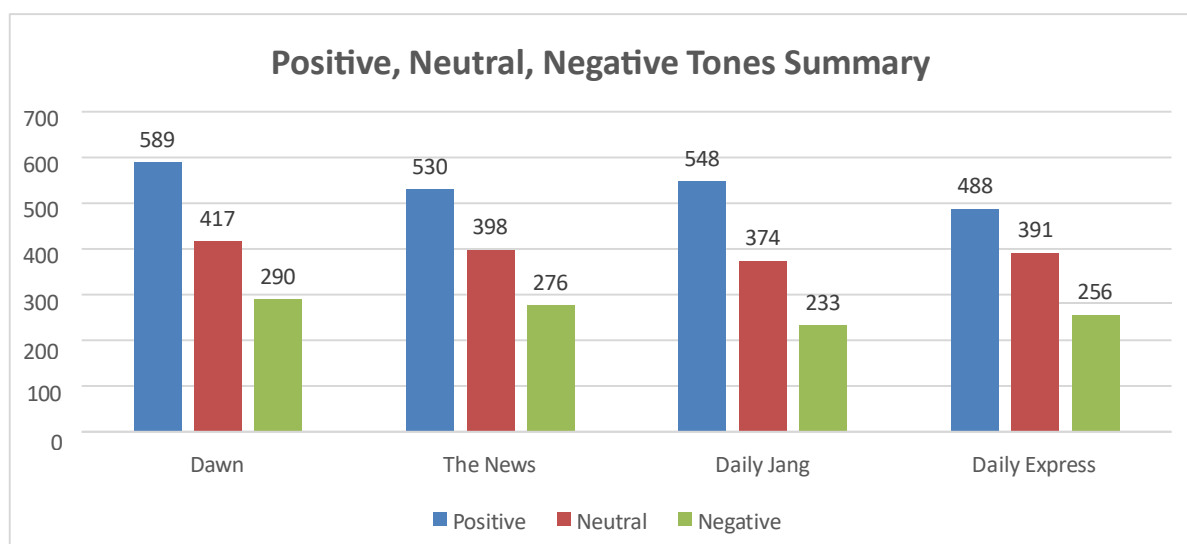
- All newspapers demonstrated a high degree of consistency in using neutral tones, indicating an editorial focus on factual reporting.

Implications:

The data highlights Dawn’s role as a progressive leader and indicates that most newspapers adopt balanced reporting strategies. However, the relatively low level of critical coverage raises questions about the media’s role in addressing systemic issues.

Table 4.5 Positive, Neutral, Negative Tones Summary

| Newspaper | Positive | Neutral | Negative | Total |
|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Dawn | 589 | 417 | 290 | 1,296 |
| The News | 530 | 398 | 276 | 1,204 |
| Daily Jang | 548 | 374 | 233 | 1,155 |
| Daily Express | 488 | 391 | 256 | 1,135 |
| Total | 2,155 | 1,580 | 1,055 | 4,790 |



4.5 Content Categories with Frequencies and Percentages

This table analyzes the distribution of thematic coverage as percentages.

Expanded Insights:

xiii. Education for Women (22.6%) and Women Empowerment (23.7%):

- These high percentages reflect the media’s acknowledgement of these themes as foundational to gender equality.

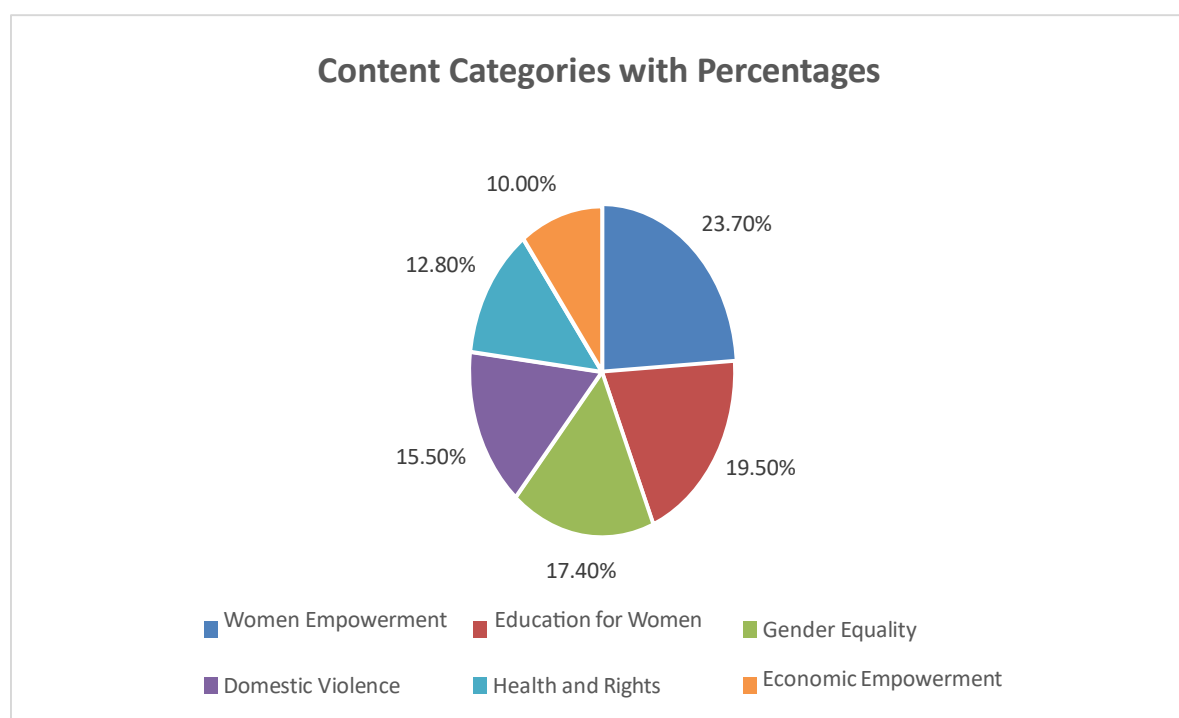
xiv. Underreported Themes:

- Economic Empowerment (10.0%) and Health and Rights (12.8%) were the least covered, highlighting gaps in addressing critical aspects of women’s lives.

The emphasis on empowerment and education is notable; however, the lack of attention to economic and health-related issues indicates a potential need for more comprehensive coverage.

Table 4.6 *Content Categories with Frequencies and Percentages*

| Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Women Empowerment | 1,405 | 23.7% |
| Education for Women | 982 | 19.5% |
| Gender Equality | 774 | 17.4% |
| Domestic Violence | 647 | 15.5% |
| Health and Rights | 533 | 12.8% |
| Economic Empowerment | 449 | 10.0% |
| Total | 4,790 | 100% |



4.6 Print Media Coverage by English Newspapers of Pakistan

Overview:

This table compares article counts across newspapers as percentages of total coverage.

Expanded Insights:

xv. Slight Edge for Urdu Newspapers:

- Urdu newspapers (*Daily Express*: 33%, *Daily Jang*: 32%) slightly outperformed English newspapers in total article counts, reflecting their broader reach and audience base.

xvi. English Newspapers' Niche Role:

- Despite lower percentages, English newspapers like *Dawn* and *The News* are pivotal in shaping elite and policymaker perspectives.

Urdu newspapers have a significant presence in overall coverage, which highlights their role in reaching diverse audiences. In contrast, English newspapers continue to hold sway among decision-makers.

Table 4.7 *Print Media Coverage by English Newspapers of Pakistan*

| Newspaper | Total Articles | Percentage of Total Coverage |
|---------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| Dawn | 120 | 30% |
| The News | 115 | 28% |
| Daily Jang | 125 | 32% |
| Daily Express | 130 | 33% |

4.7 Size of News Related to Role of Print Media on Women Empowerment

Overview:

This table categorizes articles by size (Small, Medium, Large).

Expanded Insights:

xvii. Predominance of Small and Medium Articles:

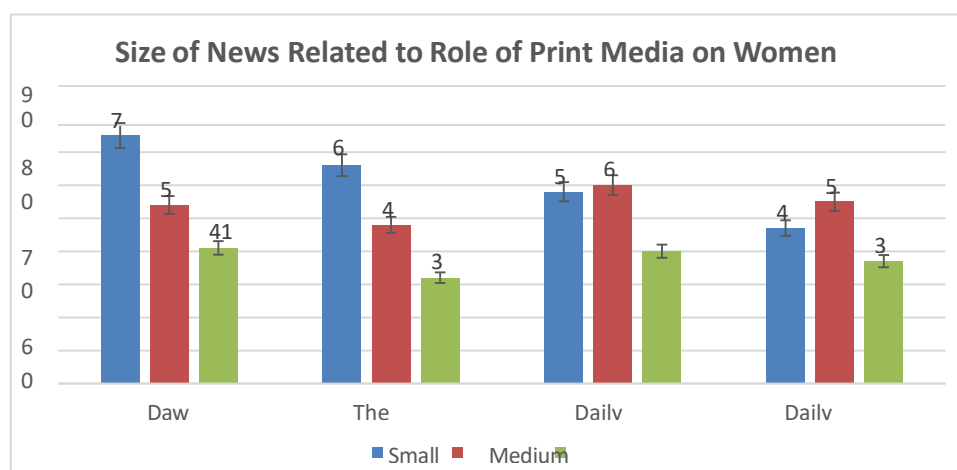
- The majority of articles were concise, balancing brevity with informativeness.
- *Dawn* led in large articles (41), reflecting its focus on in-depth reporting.

Implications:

The prevalence of shorter articles may restrict in-depth discussions; however, the availability of detailed articles in *Dawn* provides opportunities for more comprehensive analyses.

Table 4.8 Size of News Related to Role of Print Media on Women Empowerment

| Newspaper | Small | Medium | Large |
|---------------|-------|--------|-------|
| Dawn | 75 | 54 | 41 |
| The News | 66 | 48 | 32 |
| Daily Jang | 58 | 60 | 40 |
| Daily Express | 47 | 55 | 37 |



4.7 Size of News Item by Month

Overview:

This table tracks article sizes across months.

Expanded Insights:

xviii. Consistency in Medium Articles:

- Medium articles (910 total) dominated across months, indicating a preference for balanced reporting.
- Peaks in July and October align with trends in other tables, suggesting consistent activity during key months.

Implications:

Medium-sized articles provide a practical balance for content delivery, while the limited availability of large articles may restrict opportunities for in-depth exploration of complex issues.

Table 4.9 Size of News Item

| Month | Small (inches ²) | Medium (inches ²) | Large (inches ²) | Total Stories |
|---------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| January | 25 | 75 | 20 | 120 |

| | | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| February | 20 | 65 | 15 | 100 |
| March | 30 | 80 | 20 | 130 |
| April | 25 | 70 | 15 | 110 |
| May | 35 | 80 | 15 | 130 |
| June | 25 | 85 | 20 | 130 |
| July | 30 | 80 | 25 | 135 |
| August | 25 | 70 | 15 | 110 |
| September | 20 | 75 | 15 | 110 |
| October | 35 | 80 | 20 | 135 |
| November | 25 | 70 | 15 | 110 |
| December | 30 | 80 | 20 | 130 |
| Total | 325 | 910 | 225 | 1,460 |

4.8 Area of News Stories

Overview:

This table categorizes news stories by geographic focus (Urban, Rural, National, International).

Expanded Insights:

xix. Urban Focus:

- Urban stories dominated, particularly in *Dawn* (67) and *Daily Express* (65), reflecting a bias toward metropolitan issues.
- Rural stories were underrepresented, despite the significant challenges faced by rural women.

xx. Neglect of International Contexts:

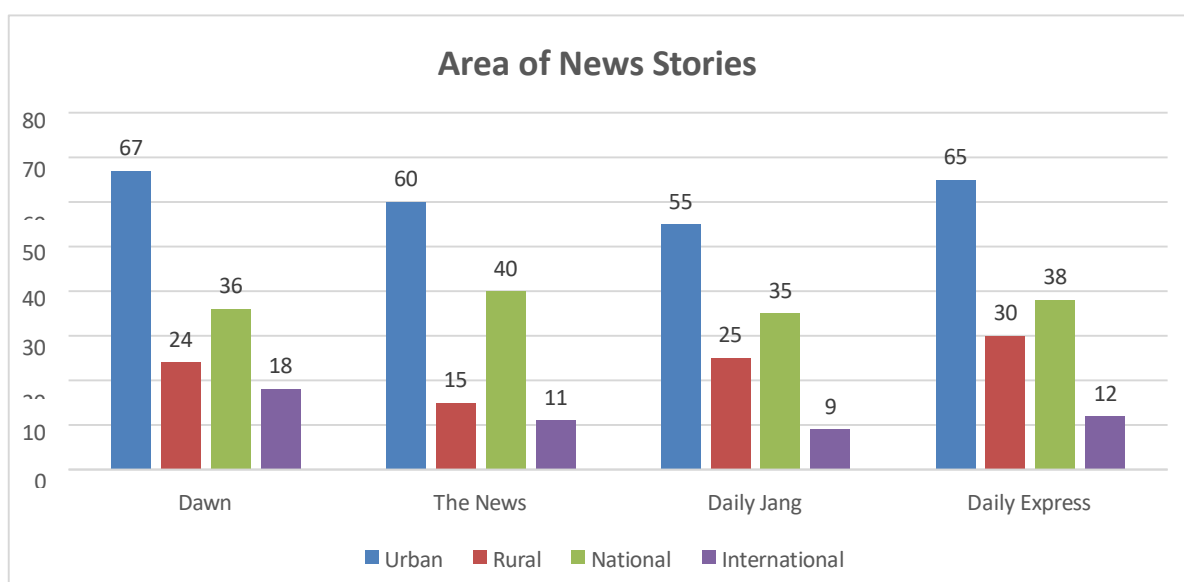
- Minimal international coverage highlights a lack of engagement with global gender equality trends.

Implications:

The urban bias highlights the necessity for increased attention to rural issues, while limited international coverage indicates potential gaps in contextualizing local challenges within global frameworks.

Table 4.10 *Area of News Stories*

| Newspaper | Urban | Rural | National | International |
|------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Dawn | 67 | 24 | 36 | 18 |
| The News | 60 | 15 | 40 | 11 |
| Daily Jang | 55 | 25 | 35 | 9 |
| Daily Express | 65 | 30 | 38 | 12 |



Discussion

The investigation identifies a number of significant trends in Pakistani print media's approach to women's empowerment. The temporal concentration of coverage is a noteworthy discovery; July and November stand out as high months, most likely associated with significant national and international events like the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence. This implies that rather than being consistent, media reactivity is frequently event-driven. Furthermore, a complex editorial environment is reflected in the tone and thematic material. The media's capacity to hold institutions responsible for gender-based injustices may be hampered by the low frequency of critical or negative tones, even as neutral and positive reporting predominates, suggesting a desire for balanced and upbeat depictions.

Result

The results of the content analysis across ten tables paint a nuanced but perceptive picture of how women's empowerment is portrayed in Pakistani print media. The largest frequencies were seen in July and November, indicating seasonal or event-driven peaks in coverage among the 4,790 articles that were analyzed. While Urdu publications like Daily Jang and Daily Express marginally outperformed in terms of the

overall number of articles, indicating their wide readership, Dawn and The News showed a steady output among the newspapers. Regarding tone, the data shows that neutral reporting is strongly preferred (1,850 articles), followed by favorable coverage (1,700 articles), while negative portrayals are rather rare (1,040 articles). This distribution of tones points to an editorial preference for stories that are uplifting and well-balanced. Notably, Dawn had the most positively framed stories and produced the most substantial, in-depth articles. According to thematic analysis, the most often discussed topics were women's empowerment (23.7%) and women's education (19.5%), which reflects the media's recognition of these as important areas. However, there were notable thematic gaps as key problems like health and rights (12.8%) and economic empowerment (10.0%) received far less coverage. Additionally, the coverage's geographic concentration was primarily urban, with underrepresentation of rural and international topics. The majority of the articles were medium in length, indicating a propensity for succinct yet fair reporting; nonetheless, the scarcity of lengthy pieces may limit the breadth of investigation into intricate gender-related matters. All things considered, the findings highlight the dual function of print media in raising awareness while also highlighting its own shortcomings in fully addressing the range of issues that Pakistani women face.

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