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**IMPACTS OF POVERTY ON GOOD GOVERNANCE IN PAKISTAN**

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**ABSTRACT**

*Poverty is a multi-dimensional concept, not just lack of food consumption but also of the lack of opportunities to spend a moderate life including education, and healthy life. Poverty and inequality in Pakistan created many obstacles that hamper the way of good governance. If the economic policies and growth are not pro-poor then poverty would rise in any society including Pakistan, even in the presence of good governance. The rising poverty rates in Pakistan badly affected and declined the value system in society very rapidly which ultimately paved way for manipulation and exploitation. Poverty and hunger lead to crimes, social disorder and intoxication in Pakistan, while good economic condition protects human beings from such evils. In Pakistan, education is the primary source of human capital earning and accumulation that plays a very important role, but unfortunately, the literacy rate is also very low. Education increases the production and proficiency of human resources and thus produces skilled and capable manpower, talented enough of leading the economy in the direction of sustainable development and create competence which is just like a magnetic field contributing to good governance. Likewise, economic development leads to mental satisfaction which also strengthens good governance. This paper is an attempt to explore the relationship between poverty and good governance and analyze the impacts of poverty on good governance in Pakistan.*

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**Keywords:** Pakistan, Poverty, Good Governance, Development.

**INTRODUCTION**

This issue of governance has gained significance during the several last decades and became a main element of economic affairs of a country. It positively affects the economy growth of a country (Haq and Zia, 2006). Good governance or its absence is one of the main problems in Pakistan. For a country to perform its duties efficiently, good governance is required at all levels. “Good governance indicates existence of rule of law, protection of basic human rights, presence of

truthful and effective administration, transparency, accountability, reliability and sincerity” (Mills and Serageldin, 1991). Likewise, Michael Johnston says that “Good governance is a capable administration of a state’s reserves and activities in a way that is transparent, visible to everyone, accountable, impartial and responsive to needs of the citizens” (Johnston, 2004). By implication, good governance means rule of law, respect for human rights, transparent political process, an independent judiciary, impartial police, civilian supremacy, free press and a vibrant civil society (Iqbal and Ahmad, 2006). Massive corruption, institutional disputes, constitutional instability, lack of accountability, and bad law and order circumstances are all signs of the country's weak governance. Pakistan has been plagued by political instability and conflict since independence, creating a black hole in the state’s overall development especially economic progress. From the very beginning Pakistan is facing governance issue due to lack of political stability, lack of proper utilization of resources, corruption, dictatorships, law and order problems, lack of accountability, economic crisis, and so on. Still Pakistan's governance situation is similar. Pakistan's massive challenges can be possibly tackled through good governance (Khan and Alam, 2020). Good governance is negatively affecting by poverty because poverty is giving birth to different kinds of crimes, socioeconomic and political evils in the society.

### **Interrelationship Between Poverty and Governance**

Poverty is a main barrier to achieve good governance. Over the last two decades, the topic of governance has grown in prominence and has become a critical component of economic growth programmes. Good governance influences economic growth in a beneficial way. It helps a country achieve high and sustained economic growth by fostering a climate that encourages saving and investment, risk-taking, offering incentives to producers, generating market certainty, expanding market size by reducing trade barriers, and improving competitiveness. When economic development disproportionately benefits the poor, this is known as pro-poor growth. Measuring whether the poor's per capita income and spending growth rate exceeds the average income and expenditure growth rate is one way to capture pro-poor growth (Klasen, 2003). A county's good

institutions are guaranteed by solid governance indices. They emphasize the need of excellent governance in ensuring high-quality economic conditions and long-term growth. This contributes to a robust economy's legitimacy, which attracts more private and foreign investment (Mammoonand Rabbani, 2017).

Effective governance guarantees that all sectors participate equally. It also ensures social fairness and a civilized community (Prasad, 2008). Torres and Anderson (2004) stated that a fragile state is one with inadequate governance. They provide a comprehensive analysis of the fragile nations. Poverty, human rights violations, conflict difficulties, insecure state policies, and regional security risks are all associated with fragile nations. The social milieu of the country may also be used to observe fragile situations. If growth do not favour the poor, then poverty can rise even with good governance. On the other hand, the countries with a poor record of governance have been able to achieve high growth. Poverty causes the prices increase and allows the elite to exploit and control easily. The link between Governance and Poverty can be summarized as otherwise high levels of poverty growth will not be eradicated but good governance will ensure that growth benefits are shared equally.

### **Impacts of Poverty on Good Governance in Pakistan**

Pakistan's overall administration has deteriorated during the last decade. Pakistan's governance performance has remained consistent over the previous three decades, although it has been in the range of 40 to 50 points, which is not particularly impressive. Many things are effacing governance in Pakistan including poverty. According to statistics, 21.9% people in Pakistan are living below the poverty line at present. The increasing inflation which was recorded 8.9% in 2021 (Mashraq News, 2021) is also pushing more people below the poverty line. The severely poor are unable to access services and take advantage of opportunities to elevate themselves out of poverty due to widespread economic and gender inequities. Pakistan also suffers a slew of natural and man-made calamities, exacerbating the country's vulnerability. Now a question may also arise that why there is widespread poverty in Pakistan. There are many reasons including bad governance and income variation across the country (Akram et.al., 2011).

Poverty is a negative externality as well as a sign of ineffective governance, which is a primary source of poverty growth as well as poverty of growth (Bhatti, 2001). Poverty is a multi-dimensional concept and is not just a lack of food but also a vital life force that includes low life expectancy, lack of education, and participation in the lives of the community. Both, social indicators and dietary indications show extreme poverty in Pakistan. Without effective governance, Pakistan would be unable to integrate into the world economy and lift its impoverished people out of poverty. Even so, these circumstances will lead to anarchy and instability.

The fear of personal safety and oppression created by poverty lead to vested interest creates lawlessness and many other evils in the society of Pakistan. It is also creating many types of crimes and bad practices in the society which all lead to bad governance and are the main hurdles in the way to establishing good governance. As a result of increased poverty, the value system is rapidly deteriorating, making it easier for the elite to exploit and manipulate. In other words, growth has the potential to lessen or perhaps abolish poverty. Only by eliminating the negative effects of social structure and value system can governance improve. High development rates and the elimination of poverty may also make it necessary for people to demand involvement, responsibility, transparency, and equality throughout time. However, as long as poverty exists, improvements in governance are unlikely (Hassan, 2002). The deteriorating poverty has also led to an attitude of disaffection, cynicism, rejection, and boredom and apathy in the country. This attitude has had a significant influence on state institution governance and performance. All these things are negatively affecting governance in Pakistan.

Poverty in the country is also triggering child-labour, increase rate of illiteracy, extremism, radicalism, fundamentalism, terrorism, frustration, social degradation and never-ending conflicts which are critical hurdles in way of good governance. There is deep-rooted connection between poverty and street crimes. Poor people account for the bulk of our street crime including homicide, robbery, burglary, etc. It has also negative impacts on nation building process. Poverty is also fuelling terrorism and militancy by creating a state of misery and frustration that pushes people to join terrorist and other militant organizations. It is vital to emphasize that most terrorists originate

from lower socioeconomic groups with significant unemployment rates. Terrorist groups frequently pay far more than any other profession, if any other job exists at all.

Women and children are more vulnerable due to Poverty in the society. Females are obliged to perpetuate the cycle of poverty by living in poverty with their children. The education and many other basic rights of children and women are violating due to poverty. Home provides a firm basis for children's future success by providing a secure environment in which they can study and perform as well as they can in school. But in Pakistan a large number of families are unable to send their children to school due to financial problems. Poverty in Pakistan puts the impoverished at a higher likelihood of having family difficulties, such as divorce and domestic violence. As a result, poor families are much more prone than wealthy ones to encounter numerous family related problems. To make the problem worse, poorer families have less resources available to them than wealthy ones when these problems emerge. Additionally, poor persons are more likely to have a number of health problems, including mental disease, early adult death, and infant deaths. Inadequate medical treatment is also more common among the poor. The poor-families children are more prone to malnutrition. They suffer from physiological, behavioural, and mental problems due to this reason. They are even less likely to succeed academically and obtain stable employment due to these problems. Poverty lead to illiteracy which will endure for many generations.

Bad governance is also one of the main causes of poverty. On the other hand, good governance cannot be launched in the existence of poverty also. They are interlinked with each other. Socio-economic development of a country is too much necessary for the good governance which is not possible in the presence of poverty. Public assistance and support possess excessive significance in good governance, and it is possible when people are satisfied about their basic needs. Stable economic and prosperous people provide a strong foundation to good governance. When people are satisfied about their basic needs, the country get growth and a better life (Tufail, 2018).

The rise in poverty in Pakistan is due to a variety of issues, including slow growth rates, low human resource development, and a lack of law and order. This has resulted in a rejection and division

mentality. As poverty increases depression and illness increase. This has enabled those who wanted to exploit the system to take over and take control and strike down the benefits of low economic growth. This has also led to the collapse of institutions of misrule and social segregation. There is often a belief that the institutional collapse has led to bad governance characterized by corruption, unemployment, inaccessibility, failure, and a lack of motivation and motivation.

Corruption and bad governance practices are inextricably linked. Government rules become more adaptable and flexible when vulnerabilities open, making it easier for people to exploit their influence and resources in an unpermitted and unlawful way. This undermines country's essential values by encouraging unethical behaviours like corruption, fraud, nepotism and favouritism. Finally, this condition undermines the rights of worthy individuals while also affecting the country's society and economy. As a result, there is a pressing need to impose good governance standards that will help to reduce corruption (Tyagi, 2019). The COVID-19 affected economy of Pakistan is in need of improvement (Khan et.al., 2021).

Good governance is vital for the development and prosperity of a country (Hanif, Khan and Rehman, 2021), but no country can do development and integration in the existence of bad governance. Keeping in view the diverse impacts of poverty on good governance in Pakistan, it is imperative to eradicate poverty from the country. The policy makers are required to do planning in this regard and adopt such policies which are helpful in eradicating poverty from the society. In Pakistan, a lack of precise and consistent poverty estimates has hampered the formulation of effective pro-poor policies. Despite Pakistan's lengthy history of anti-poverty measures and actions, but mostly failed due to many underlying reasons. Most of the programs of poverty eradications were failed because of less allocation of funds, as it accounts for just 2% of Gross Domestic Production, absence of coordination, ineffective execution of the programs, and lack of assessment and monitoring. Another important cause of poverty in the country is corruption. Corruption diverts resources from the poor to the wealthy, encourages bribery, and distorts government spending, discouraging foreign investment and stifling economic progress (Indrawati, 2016).

The present Pakistani administration has initiated several measures and adopted a multidimensional strategy for reducing poverty. During the last two decades, Pakistan has made moderate strides in the fight against poverty, cutting it in half since 2000. It is also among the first nations to include the Sustainable Development Goals in its national development plan (Shaikh and Anis, 2020). The latest official data suggests that the poverty headcount ratio reduced from 29.5 % in 2013–2014 (Shaikh and Anis, 2020) to 21.9 % in 2018-2019, which was the pre-COVID-19 duration. However, the World Bank analysis indicates that it increased 5% in 2020 once as approximately two million people fell into poverty as a result of COVID-19 (Business Standard, 2021). Poverty has a long history in Pakistan. This issue has been examined by the authority only in recent times. The main causes cited include lack of economic possibilities, lack of accountability, societal divisiveness, and governmental elitism.

The available literature suggests that the lack of good governance inhibits development and investments and exacerbates economic inequality and poverty. In reality, issues with governance undermine all initiatives to boost means of reductions of poverty like education, investment, opportunity creation and development of infrastructure. Weak institutions, weak growth, poverty, and discrimination in distributions of economic opportunities are characteristics of emerging nations, and they all contribute to low levels of economic development which ultimately result in poverty. These outcomes have a compounding effect that creates a poverty trap that is very challenging to escape. To achieve economic development, this circumstance compelled governments to implement significant reforms in their institutions of governance and economy. Does good leadership promote slow growth? The idea of good governance has been more important in development theory and implementation since the last few decades. It is widely recognized as being important to growth. In the last ten years, reducing poverty has once more taken precedence over all other developmental objectives. The global development movement is becoming increasingly interested in governance and institutional structures for a number of reasons. favourable political climate is necessary for financial program aimed to eradicate poverty to be successful. Economic progress is linked to lowering poverty and enhancing standard of life, which is why

changing the economy to attain a high rate of growth is so important. Although it is widely believed that economic progress and the eradication of poverty are closely related.

For good governance, efficiency in service delivery is very important. Therefore, different governments across initiate plans to get greater efficiency and effectiveness in their service sectors. The third layer of the three-sector economy is the service sector. This industry produces repair works and maintenance, training and consultancy rather than products manufacturing. Jobs in the service industry include education, healthcare, housekeeping, and sightseeing. A healthy society and expanding economy depend heavily on this service sector. Such companies hire brilliant people who offer priceless services and intangible commodities. Understanding the function that the service sectors play in society can assist people who are interested in a job in service better comprehend their job alternatives. The service sector performs operations that benefit consumers, customers, business, or the broader public in addition to giving individuals intangible goods or services. Unlike manufacturing businesses, service companies don't really rely on the selling of tangible commodities and products to make a profit. Conversely, those who are employed in the service industry concentrate on finishing projects and offering services for accomplishment of specific tasks. In Pakistan there are wide range of inefficiency and unaffectedness in service sector. The government needs to introduce such plans and initiatives which bring efficiency and effectiveness in service sector.

Uneven distribution of income and poor growth rates, which have an impact on emerging nations' welfare characteristics, are their biggest issues. It was tacitly expected that anytime we met our goal of a faster growth rate, the benefits of growth would inevitably assist the less fortunate. As indicated by the expanding income disparity throughout the time of increased economic growth, experience of the emerging countries demonstrates that the affluent benefitted more from the poor. The reasoning of low levels of current output, job, and income distribution equilibrium frequently leads to adjustments in monetary strategy. Government frequently adopts policies to attain high levels of employment and earnings development and growth as well as equitable income distribution in order to escape this low rate of equilibrium dilemma. To achieve these policy objectives, solid policy



tools are necessary. Any macroeconomic plan's effects have been investigated by looking at how they affect distribution of income and economic expansion. In recent years, policies have been designed to lower levels of poverty while also improving society's quality of life by efficient and effective government. The emphasis has switched to governance issues and the substantive nature of growth as an outcome of this new economic ideology, which has caused a significant shift in the policy orientation of nations. For a more comprehensive concept and measurement of financial well-being, the manifestation of human capacities that increase the variety of human choices is crucial. Then, one of the crucial components for turning progress and well-being into a sustainable framework is institutional framework. In addition to other policy elements like government policies to distribute means for poverty alleviation and economic disparity reduction, the organizational governance framework is essential for sustainable growth. Since UNO recommended in 1954 that the income of a country be bolstered by an additional set of indices, reflecting numerous constitutions and indicators of aggregate advancement and well-being, the idea of incorporating other economic indicators along with per-capita income growth has received a lot of attention. Although the government sector represents a significant part of this particular sample, its effectiveness is low. In order to improve public sector effectiveness, it is necessary to reduce corruption, crowd out resources, and boost the effectiveness of public organizations. There is a positive relationship between production growth and improved distribution of income of the financial system. It was previously believed that if the government accomplished the goal of production growth, then it would have to give up the social assistance element by attempting to make distribution of income worse, and likewise. The rise in revenue generation activities in the economy brought on by the production growth would lower the jobless rate, which is a critical issue for emerging nations. The public sector can address this issue and boost both growth and distribution of income. Whenever the government raises spending in an efficient and productive way, it accomplishes both goals concurrently and improves societal welfare (Shafique, Haq and Arif, 2006).

Bad governance is also leading to price inflation in Pakistan many times which is ultimately affected the rate of poverty in Pakistan. The rate

of price inflation has an impact on how poverty levels fluctuate over time. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) modified national poverty line for 2004-2005 lacks supportive evidence, raising concerns about the applicability of poverty forecasts based on the CPI method, even though the Planning Commission's reconsideration of the line of poverty for 2001-2002 was rationally and empirically valid. Since the CPI's gauge of inflation is less than the sensitive price index and the index based on household surveys, it understates the amount of poverty in 2004-2005. According to the government method and poverty lines derived from the data of household survey, the number of poor people in Pakistan first rose from 31.1% in 1998-1999 to 34.4% in 2001-2002 before falling to 29.3% in 2004-2005 (Anwar, 2006). The advantages of strong economic expansion appear to have been undermined by high inflation, which has led to a higher poverty threshold and lower poverty elimination. Therefore, if the government wanted to safeguard the poor people, it must lower inflation. Although the prevalence of poverty decreased by 1.8 % from 1998-1999 to 2004-2005, the total number of poor people in Pakistan grew by 2.6 million during that time. Poverty levels decreased across the provinces in Sindh, Punjab, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but grew in Balochistan from 1998 to 2005. Likewise, to this, urban poverty throughout this time period only decreased in Punjab and Sindh, remaining unchanged in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan (Anwar, 2006). Although Pakistan's goal to reduce poverty had relied heavily on strong governance, independent institutions' construction of governance indicators revealed increasing tendencies. The rating of that nation's extremely corrupt government officials and politicians appears to have become worse throughout this time, according to trends in bribery. Evidence of increasing levels of corruption is compatible with rising patterns in inequality since these trends are exacerbated by corruption, which keeps the allocation of assets uneven. The correlation between deteriorating governance metrics and a decrease in poverty shows that the strong financial growth rate was mostly responsible for the decrease in poverty. The level of decrease in poverty might have been significantly higher, had the governance indices improved. Therefore, it is necessary to pursue governance changes with greater zeal in order to raise the existing pace of reduction of poverty.

The idea of governance has recently received substantial attention in Pakistan as well as worldwide among policymakers. According to the empirical study of Chaudhry, I. S., Malik, S. and Imran, A. (2006), the

incidence of urban poverty falls as a result of good governance. According to the facts, factors that significantly influence the likelihood of being a poor person include dependency ratio, levels of participation, rate of women participation, educated household heads, tangible assets, employees in the informal and casual sectors, people per room, and governance. Furthermore, the idea that there is a negative correlation between governance and poverty is obvious. Because development needs consistent economic growth, and growth stability is a key goal because volatility costs the poor and inhibits progress (Azid, et.al., 2006). Many traditional government evils have been attributed to them, including chronic corruption in underdeveloped nations and expensive service delivery in rich nations. The e-government has been lauded as the solution. Pakistan, a third world nation, implements a staged strategy to smoothly convert its traditional administration into an e-government (Ghayur, 2006).

Corruption is a grave problem that exists in Pakistan from long time. Any particular nation's level of corruption is directly and significantly correlated with its level of economic development. According to Transparency International, nearly five times as many individuals survive on less than US\$1 per day in nations where more than 60% of citizens admit giving money as compared to nations where fewer than 30% of citizens do so. Despite of a country's wealth, government that are more transparent and answerable to their constituents have good development outcomes overall. Nevertheless, a lot of development goals are ignored when there is significant levels of corruption. This connection holds true for all development objectives relating to water and sanitation, infectious illnesses, maternal and health, education, and hunger and poverty (Transparency International, 2014). Economic growth and development can be aided by open and responsible government. The goal of development has indeed been made successfully in nations with robust legal systems. Equally essential to economic development is the rule of law.

## **CONCLUSION**

Good governance is very necessary for the smooth running and development of any country, but it can't be created or maintained in the existence of poverty. On the other hand, bad governance is also one of the main causes of poverty. They are interlinked with each other. Poverty is one of the main causes of the bad governance in

Pakistan. It has created a lot of problems in the way of establishment of good governance in the country. Therefore, the policymakers in Pakistan should focus on addressing the poverty and its fundamental causes. The widespread poverty in country is the result of the lack of economic opportunities. It is a multi-dimensional issue in the country requires and multi-dimensional approaches to solve, predominantly creation of economic opportunities and equal access to them without any discrimination.

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