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LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS: A CASE STUDY OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN AND XINJIANG, CHINA LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Local government, universally, has always remained supporting input regarding the development process at grass root level. According to the majority of studies on decentralization in the developing nations, the ineffectiveness of decentralization is being caused by an insufficient local government framework, ineffective implementation and lack of funds, as a result local service delivery has been affected while grassroots level of democracy remains un-strengthened. This comparative research evaluates Local Government Systems of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan and Xinjiang, China to analyze the capability and efficiency in the two local government systems in term of public services provision and devolution of power to grass root level. The two systems have comparisons as well as contrasts because of working under the universal concept of local government however in fundamentally different political, social and economic configurations. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa places a premium on democratic representation and the devolution of power to local authorities whereas Xinjiang places a premium on stability and reflects tight central control. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa local government system experiences issues like inconsistency, capacity building, frequent changes and issues in resource allocation in contrast to Xinjiang local government system. Variations in service delivery, accountability, and citizen engagement have been caused by these factors and divergent methods.

Key Words: Local Government, Decentralization, Tehsil Municipal Administration, Effective, Efficiency, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Xinjiang.

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Introduction

According to Awan and Uzma (2019), decentralization can be defined as the transfer of authority to locally elected administrations. As stated by Awan and Uzma (2019), the concept of "transferring power" involves the allocation of increased political authority, financial assets, and administrative responsibilities to local governing bodies (Awan, 2019). Cao and Jongmoo (2015) define decentralization as the process by which the central government relinquishes its authority in planning, decision-making, and administrative functions, transferring these powers to various entities such as local administrative units, field organizations, parastatal and semi-autonomous organizations, local governments, and nongovernmental groups. In this particular scenario, the terms "local governments" and "decentralization" are regarded as synonymous. Local government can be defined as institutions that possess significant political, administrative, and financial power, alongside locally elected officials who are vested with the authority to take action with responsibility. This definition aligns more closely with devolutionary concepts.

Fenwick (2019) provides a comprehensive analysis and clarification of the concept of local government devolution within a specific geographical area. According to Fenwick (2019) decentralization can be understood as the process through which a designated function, along with its associated administrative, political, and economic aspects, is transferred from the central government (i.e., the national government) to local governments (i.e., municipal governments) that operate autonomously from the central authority.

Local government is regarded as a platform for testing administrative innovations before their implementation at the national level. The decentralization of municipal affairs enables cost-effectiveness by reducing the financial burden on the central government. Furthermore, it cultivates a sense of allegiance among individuals, thereby aiding the government in addressing socio-ethnic disparities. Policymakers employ the mechanism of local democracy as a mean to obscure their policy initiatives and direct community activism towards achieving intended socio-cultural, economic and political transformations within society. The existence of municipal government predates the establishment of national administrations,

indicating that it is not a recent development. In the highly centralized Feudalist European Empires of Britain, Scotland, France, and Italy, many municipal corporations, communes, and counties existed prior to the foundation of the central government and were subsequently incorporated into national governments(Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018).

In the German political system, a robust federal government assumes the role of formulating policies, while local governments are granted substantial autonomy and are entrusted with the responsibility of implementation by managing service delivery systems at the local levels. The French model of local government is characterized by its adherence to the medieval Napoleonic traditions of centralized governance. This model places significant importance on maintaining a continuous chain of command and the concurrent exercise of powers, as highlighted by Kersting et al. (2009). The province or local administrations in China are integral constituents of the central government. The functional autonomy of various tiers of government frequently intersects as a result of the generally substantial scale of local governments in China and the collaborative nature of service delivery activities at the local level. In Anglo-Saxon countries, the local governments are perceived as the entities entrusted with the implementation of national welfare programs and the provision of services as mandated by the national parliament. In the recently formed democratic nations of Eastern Europe, local governance entities amalgamate the tenets of Western liberalism with traditional centralized practices (Berna, 2020).

Given the prevalence of localized issues that tend to be confined in their nature and extent, there is a constant and pressing demand for timely solutions. This arises from the dynamic nature of local demands, which often undergo changes from the moment a problem is recognized to the point when strategies for its resolution are put into effect. As a result, the local government, due to its comparatively shorter tenure vis-a-vis provincial or central governments, is widely recognized as an effective mechanism for short-term problem-solving. This is attributed to its ability to formulate and execute short-term plans that specifically target the issues faced by local communities(Hussain, 2018).

The nature of government (central/local) as well as how it interacts with other

institutions, the private sector and civil society has been an evolving process. In the 1970s, when a government dominated all other actors in the political, administrative, economic and legal spheres, government was not what it is now. However, with the arrival of modern public administration and the word "governance," the business sector and civil society also became significant actors. Decentralization's scope has so expanded, giving the private sector and civil society greater room. As opposed to trickle-down theories of economic growth, this movement within the state has also received endorsement from the international organization for human centered development. Different kinds of decentralization are possible (Myerson, 2019). According to the authors there are four distinct forms of decentralization. De-concentrating administrative power and accountability to a partially independent body is known as administrative decentralization. Political decentralization involves transferring authority to local governments, boosting public engagement, and empowering citizens. Economic decentralization includes deregulation, market liberalization, state companies privatization and public-private partnerships whereas fiscal decentralization refers to the sharing of public funds across all levels of government.

China is a unitary state, although every administrative division has a local people's congress (also known as a local legislature). It is characterized as a "federation in unitary state" as a result (Fenwick, 2019). The local people's congress is further broken down into committees, such as the chairmen committees and standing committees. Every member of these committees is chosen by the People's Congress. In the province of Xinjiang, the head of government is known as the governor (Enikolopov & Zhuravskaya, 2017). The head of government is known as the mayor at the prefecture, the governor at the county level, and the magistrate at the township level (Wen & Xu, 2018). China elects its leaders both directly and indirectly. The government now consists of 34 governments at the provincial level, 300 governments at the prefecture level, 3000 governments at the county level, and a total of 40,000 governments at the township level (Effiom, 2019).

According to a report by the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT), China's Central Government's top authority is known as Party Committee, including the Politburo at national level, the provincial party committee at the

provincial level, and the prefecture party committee at the prefecture level. Every unit has party committees and a local congress, much as in the center. The head is known as the party committee secretary at the province level. In a similar manner, the title is county committee secretary at the county level, prefecture party secretary at the prefecture level, and township committee secretary at the township level(Ezean, 2019).

Problem Statement

The local government system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has not been improved primarily for political reasons as a result of a variety of connected problems with implementation and efficient operation. The municipal government system continued to operate, although intermittently. When it did, it underwent many adjustments and remained mostly ineffective. Ironically, Pakistan has had several military takeovers that have prevented liberal democracy from ever taking root at the national level (Myerson, 2019). With regard to the transfer of administrative, political, and financial power from the provinces to elected local government, the democratic forces clarified the constitutional status of local government in 2010 through the eighteenth constitutional amendment, but they routinely postponed local government elections in Pakistan, displaying their lack of eagerness for the renovation of local democracy. The whole procedure of reforms in institutions in these states took place within certain global contexts, so even though this study's comparative analysis is case specific and strictly focused on the local governance in two selected provinces of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan and Xinjiang China, it also examines global trends in local governance and similarities or differences in approaches of various decentralized governments.

Research Questions

Besides answering the questions such as how the two local government systems evolved in contrasting socio-political and economic configurations and how the two systems are different or similar in terms of structure, efficiency and devolution of power?, the research attempts to provide response to a primary question that is how have Xinjiang and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa utilized local democracy as a tool to bring about the required socio-

cultural and behavioral change in highly centralized societies to reduce the monopolistic influence of national leadership?

Objectives of the study

For comparing the local government systems in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan and Xinjiang China, this study attempts to achieve the following objectives.

- To analyze the capability and efficiency in the local government system generally in terms of public services provision and devolution of power to general public at grass root level in both provinces.
- To propose a model for better service delivery in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa based on lessons drawn from the comparative study.

Theoretical Framework

During 1776 Adam Smith introduced “Rational Choice Theory”. According to him (An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, 1776), human nature’s tendency toward self-interest resulted in societal prosperity (Husain, 2011). Rational Choice Theory (RCT) provides the basic framework to conduct this study. The rational choice theory investigates a significant relationship between citizen/public desires and the effects of government actions and offers good justification for the operation of local government when seen in the context of rationality. The rational choice theory also supports the link between democracy and local government, arguing that democratically elected local authorities are the most effective means of reflecting local public preferences. The simplest way to explain this theoretical argument is to say that since elected local government representatives are closer to the community and therefore better able to identify local needs, it should be their duty to develop rational plans of action for meeting those needs in accordance with the resources at hand. The approximation of rationality or the degree of community happiness, as expressed by elected officials, would define the true costs and benefits of local government in this entire equation (Smith B. , 1985). It is claimed that a researcher may use the Rational Choice Theory

as “A validation of relations between individual preferences and the local government assignments” (Singh, 2019). Several well-established theories contend that municipal governments are present in every state, regardless of its many forms and political beliefs, local government always desire managing service provision operations better than any other administrative entity because of its proximity to residents of a small locality. Local government, which is a kind of politics at the most basic level, always makes sure that the quality of public services is in line with local preferences; as a result, it involves locals in the process of making decisions on their needs and requirements (Ezean, 2019). Greater public participation boosts a sense of loyalty among citizens and increases citizen satisfaction, both of which allow the government to defend its authority (Singh, 2019).

Due to the fact that most local issues are constrained in type or scope and always call for an expedient solution since by the time the issue is identified and a solution plan is put in place, local requirements have frequently altered. The finest short-term problem-solving mechanism is considered to be local government due to its shorter tenure than provincial or central administrations (Aydin, 2012).

An economic and social theory called rational choice theory makes the assumption that people make choices based on logical calculations meant to maximize their own utility or self-interest. It is frequently used in many different disciplines, including as criminology, sociology, political science, and economics. According to the theory, people assess the pros and drawbacks of several options before choosing what they believe will provide them the most happiness or benefit. It has helped us understand how people behave in a variety of situations, from purchasing decisions to voting patterns and criminal decision-making. In numerous ways, the rational choice theory is applicable to municipal government.

Research Methodology

This article is based on a combination of 'theoretical' and 'historical' examination of the literature on decentralization utilizing case study approach, in accordance with Labaree's (2009) typology of literature review. A theoretical review is carried out to look at pertinent

studies on decentralization in developing nations. The literature review focuses on concepts. Thus, the framework of a review is the evaluation of ideas like improved service delivery, institutional accountability, and decentralized democracy at the grassroots level. These ideas cover pertinent, non-geographically restricted literature on the subject. The review, however brief, provides readers about what has been discovered about decentralization indifferent emerging nations. The theoretical review aids in determining the causes of the decentralization successes and failures in the majority of these nations. On the other hand, the 'historical' analysis of the literature shows how Khyber Pakhtukhwa, Pakistan's case differs from that of most developing and developed nations and how it contributes to the body of knowledge on decentralization. The historical review focuses on analyzing the pre-colonial era's historical context for decentralization in Khyber Pakhtukhwa, Pakistan. The query pertaining to the question that "What lessons can be learnt from decentralization of Xinjiang, China and how this study is helpful for other developing countries in the world?" is conducted using case study method. It is also believed by Cheema (2018) that for qualitative research, case study technique is most suitable and is a widely used technique. The current study is also of the same nature as in this study an analysis of the history of all levels of the state institutions in Pakistan are analyzed. By using this technique, a thorough understanding and knowledge of certain actors, their perspectives and timely actions can be obtained by the researcher (Cheema, 2018). This article elaborates this concept specifically. According to Mohr (1982) variance (factor) or process theories are the most frequent sources of theoretical models, including historical ones. In variance theories independent variables affect the dependent variables differently. Broadly, the process theories (Mohr 1982) depend on events and states to assist elaborate dynamic phenomena. The literature review chose articles, books, journal articles, newspapers, and reports from non-government organizations (NGOs) to find out the variation in dependent variables underlying the successes and failures of decentralization as well as the social and political processes that gave rise to such a phenomenon. Both models were deemed appropriate for this paper despite the potential constraints of the general applicability of a particular situation.

Significance of the study

The restoration of democratic local government institutions has been a subject of ongoing dispute between the ruling democratic forces and the opposition in Pakistan's national context. In relation to the constitutional position of local government concerning the transfer of political, administrative, and financial powers from provinces to elected local authorities, it is noteworthy that local government elections in Pakistan were frequently delayed in 2010. This delay can be seen as an indication of the democratic forces' limited enthusiasm for the reinstatement of local democracy. There was apprehension regarding the allocation of development funds towards the bolstering of local government institutions, as it was feared that such support would foster local leadership and consequently diminish their authority over local affairs. The obstructionist stance exhibited by democratic factions and politically entrenched elites has impeded Pakistan's progress in establishing effective systems of local self-governance. In contrast, while communist and secular factions in China have consistently hindered the development of liberal democracy on a national scale, they have dedicated significant efforts to promoting grassroots democracy and have achieved notable advancements in their pursuit of liberal democratic principles. The Chinese National Council has recognized the advancements made by Xinjiang in fulfilling the criteria of local governance, as evidenced by its diverse performance evaluation reports. Since there haven't been any comparative studies of this kind, it's critical to use this one to enhance the local government system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. As a result, in order to understand how efficiently their requirements are met at their doorstep, the amenities that the Xinjiang province provides to the general people will be compared in this research. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government Act of 2013 and the Local Government (Amended) Act of 2019 will be considered in the context of this comparison and critical analysis. This study compares the local government systems of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with the Chinese Xinjiang province in order to better understand their differences and similarities in terms of law, organizational structure, power distribution, and service delivery. It is possible to learn from this experience to enhance the effectiveness and service delivery of the local government system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Literature Review

Singh (2019) lists nine crucial criteria that define successful governance i.e. participation, the rule of law, openness, responsiveness, a focus on consensus, equality, efficiency, accountability and strategic vision. Singh examines the historical evolution of different systems of local government throughout the globe and looks at the reform initiatives taken by different governments to address these issues. He claims that by erasing the distinction between rural and urban areas, globalization and increasing infrastructure development have made the 21st century the century of cities. The traditional idea of local government has been as a provider of services to the local communities. The phenomenon of local governance has superseded traditional local government structures, indicating a diminished significance and limited efficacy of established institutions in exerting control over local political affairs. It is imperative to acknowledge that the concept of local governance should not be conflated with that of local government within the given context. The term "local government" commonly denotes the specialized entity responsible for the administration of a specific locality. In essence, the term "state governance" refers to the mechanisms through which the state exercises its authority. This should be distinguished from the broader definition of "local governance," which pertains to the various methods or activities employed by local governments. According to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), local governance refers to the utilization of administrative, economic, and political authority in the management of local matters within the legal framework (Singh, 2019).

While the concept of local government is not novel, it is important to acknowledge that endeavors to establish a universally applicable model of local governance have thus far proven unsuccessful. This can be attributed to variations in the fundamental aspects and roles of local governance, as well as the diverse array of reform strategies and objectives pursued globally. The Nordic welfare states prioritize the provision of comprehensive services to residents throughout their entire lives, while the Swiss model of local government exhibits greater autonomy compared to Denmark and Norway. This autonomy encompasses not only fiscal matters but also extends to areas such as citizenship, immigration, and economic relations with foreign countries (Mohmand, 2019). People have almost completely disappeared, and now

issues like environmental degradation, poverty, inadequate healthcare, inadequate sanitation, and ethno-religious conflicts are also included in the remit of local government.

According to Cheema (2019), Pakistan's many local government reforms have been a component of more extensive political and constitutional engineering. It's interesting to note that these local systems were instituted by military regimes in an effort to gain political legitimacy and establish a rival base of subjugated local elites. Reforms to local governance have been enacted top-down. During the British period, the same pattern of introduction of reforms by non-representative administration, co-opting local elite, and top-down approach is also discernible. A similar transfer of authority from the federal government to the provinces or the local government did not occur in any of the military regime's local government reforms. As a result, there was constant conflict between the province administration and municipal institutions as well as between political parties.

According to TajandNauman(2019), there are a number of reasons why local government systems have mostly failed, including an insufficient local government framework, elite capture and flawed implementation procedures. Local governance in Pakistan has seen several experiments. Ironically military regimes have constructed the majority of local government systems. According to Taj and Nauman, military rulers have adopted this tactic due to personal motives rather than any respect for democracy. Military governments sought to create legitimacy via local government elections. In order to create a different patronage system at the local level, local government institutions have been utilized to co-opt local politicians and feudal leaders. This tactic was also effective in reducing the power of political parties. Political parties are hesitant to have local elections because lawmakers do not want to share power with local representatives, and because municipal elections might end the monopoly of a small number of powerful families(Taj & Nauman, 2019).

According to Jintang et al. (2013), the management strategies implemented in Xinjiang demonstrate a consideration for the ethnic diversity of the region as well as a commitment to preserving and honoring established cultures and customs. The initial endeavors of the Qing government to uphold political power, facilitate the gradual revival of the economy, and

ensure the sustenance of the population in Xinjiang were heavily reliant on this assemblage of protocols(Liu & Li, 2013).

VriesandReddy (2018) studied the main characteristic of the local government system in Xinjiang i.e.a system based on an ideology that combines socialism with Chinese traits. It means that the socialist economic system is practiced while respecting the local culture. The nation formerly faced charges that its political and economic institutions were extractive due to its distinctive governance structure. According to the study of Fenwick (2019) the philosophy of the Communist Party manages the government with a determination to preserve and improve the living conditions of its constituents. The Communist Party implemented several measures in order to make this system of local administration a reality. These changes stood out for mixing liberal and communist principles, beliefs, and actions.

Ezean (2019) mentioned in his work that since regional and company (Water and Sanitation Companies)studies provide a more refined analysis for successful service delivery, the system also duplicated the hierarchical structure in provinces, towns, and at regional levels.

Local Government System in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

In each province of Pakistan, the local government varies by size, taxable capacity and population. However, in all four provinces the three-tier system is present (Siddiqui & Nellis, 2018). At the upper tier in this system is the District Government (DG) and its Zilla (District)Council. As per section 14 of the KhyberPakhtunkhwa Local Government Ordinance(LGO) 2001, thirty departments likeeducation, health, roads, agricultural extension,(including community development/ social welfareand industrial development) and others related todelivery of social services, have been kept in eleven groups. These have been administratively andfinancially devolved to district governments. The districts have been created on the precedentof provincial departments and have been assigned with specified sources of own revenue generation(Muhammad & Yasin, 2011).

The second tier comprises Tehsil (Towns in Peshawar) Municipal Administrations (TMA) and its Tehsil/Town Council. Each district area is divided into TMA jurisdictions, with the number depending upon the area and population of a district. This tier was created from the pre-2001 urban local bodies, for example, Town Committees, Municipal Committees and Municipal Corporation by adding the rural hinterland (Nauman & Gul, 2019). Originally, the Tehsils were geographic entities created under the 1967 Land Revenue Act for land revenue administration. With the changes in 2001, the entire Tehsil became entitled to services delivery earlier provided only in the urban centers. The jurisdiction of local bodies (corporation, municipal committee, town committee) under the earlier local government system had extended to incorporated urban areas only. For rural areas, another local body, the District Council, existed with a smaller set of functions. The TMA jurisdiction includes both rural and urban areas, with the earlier urban nucleus serving as its headquarter.

The TMA functions are largely municipal services and urban building control. As part of the transformation, the provincial Public Health Engineering Department, the agency responsible for supply of drinking water and sanitation facilities in rural areas, was merged into TMA providing it with the organizational structure to extend its services into the newly annexed rural areas. In practice, the Public Health Engineering Department has remained independent till date (Taj & Nauman, 2019).

The third tier of Local Government is the Union Administration and its elected Council. The TMA area is divided into Unions, both in urban and rural areas. The unions perform a few minor functions and have little power to raise revenue. They are financed by a fixed provincial grant from General Sales Tax in lieu of Zilla (District) Tax. This tax was disbanded by the Federal Government in pre-devolution era. Most districts, notwithstanding their rural or urban character, are treated alike in the law. In general, the assignment of functions and sources of revenue is not different between urban or rural districts (Hussain, 2018). The exception to the rule is the City District (Peshawar declared "City District"). The assignment of functions and revenue varies from the ordinary Districts only slightly. The major difference is that instead of being divided into Tehsil Municipal Administrations, the Peshawar City District is divided into four Town Municipal Administrations. In city district the service delivery became more

centralized after the division of functions between the two tiers such as building control, urban planning, and water supply are among main functions of City District of Peshawar, but in ordinary districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa they are under the control of Tehsil Municipal Administrations. All the District Governments, TMAs, and Union Administrations differ in budgetary capacity, staffing, population and size (Chaudhry, 2019).

The local governmentsystem in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while performing duties faces several challenges that have negative impact on their efficient service delivery due to frequent changes by the federal and provincial government (Aknur, 2013). Since independence we have seen various types of local governmentsystems by various governments including marshal law i.e., local government ordinance 1959 (Husain, 2011), local government ordinance 1979, local government ordinance 2001 and Local Government Act 2013 and latest Local Government Amended Act 2019 due to which local government system not implemented in true sense (Chatiza & Chakaipa, 2018). In this regard the federal government as well as provincial governments need to assist the local governmentboth financially and should help them in implementation of their policies in order to provide better services to the citizens at their doorstep which is the true spirit of article 140A of the Constitution of Pakistan (Myerson, 2019). That “Each province shall by law establish a local government system and devolve political administrative and financial responsibility and authority to the elected representatives of the local government” (Chaudhry, 2019).

Currently, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government (Amended) Act, 2019 is a two-tier system composed of Tehsil council and village/neighborhood council. The government aims to consider the same system for newly merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The proposed local government system is a two-tier system in which neighborhood and village councils would be the key tier at tehsil level. This study has the significance of evaluating competence, design, effectiveness, distribution of authority at both tiers i.e., at VC/NC level or at the tehsil council level. According to one source Pakistan’s local government system is mainly affected by the political interference, for this purpose strong policies should be made with their proper implementation to avoid uncertainty about statute of powers and functions of the local government bodies (Vries& Reddy, 2018).

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government Act 2013 was not implemented in all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. However the possibility of implementation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government Act 2013 and Amended Act 2019 seems difficult because Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Local Government Act 2013 consisted of three (3) tiers having 24 devolved offices, while Amended Act 2019 is consisting of two-tier system and the number of devolved offices were reduced to 11 due to which service delivery is negatively affected(PILDAT, 2016).

Local Government System in Xinjiang China

According to Guang and Yuanyuan (2018), the Chinese National Community has a rich meaning when compared to the traditional word for the Chinese country, and its awareness is a subjective mapping to the objective reality of the Chinese national community. This study has examined the correlation between the vertical trajectory of the collective consciousness of the Chinese national community and its process of formation. Moreover, the collective memory of the Chinese populace exhibits a multitude of characteristics that correspond to various historical periods in China.

In terms of state structure China has gone through many changes because of its long historical development. Since the foundation of Peoples Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, its structure was changed several times. In China, they used to have five levels in their local government system. Currently, as per their constitution, China uses a centralized structure where the entire administrative system is divided into four levels: provincial, municipal, county and town(Berna, 2020). There are four types of provincial governments in China: (general) provincial government, autonomous region government, municipal government of centrally administered cities and government of special administrative regions(SARs).Regarding, functions of local government in Xinjiang according to the Constitution (Article 107), the function of local government is to manage economic and other affairs within its jurisdiction.

It is notable that the local administrative officers in Xinjiang are elected through an indirect election system, in which the local voters elect the representatives to the People's Congresses who then have the right to elect the officers of local governments. The candidates

for the positions of senior officer and vice officer should be nominated by the presidium of the people's representatives or co-nominated by more than ten representatives (Organic Law of PRC on Local NPC and Local Government, Article 8). Local governments in Xinjiang China operate within a hierarchical leadership system at various levels, in which the lower level is the principal subordinate to the high levels (Zhu, 2019).

A report published by Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency(PILDAT) explored that under the central government the leading party authority is known as Committee i.e., politburo at central level and provincial party committee at provincial level and prefecture party committee at prefecture(PILDAT, 2016). Just like in center the party committees and congress of local people are present at every unit. At provincial level the head is known as party committee secretary, similarly, at county level it is called county committee secretary, at prefecture- prefecture party secretary and at township-township committee secretary(Ezean, 2019). China is a unitary state and still it has local people's congress (or local legislatures) at every administrative unit. Due to this fact it is known as "federation in unitary state" (Aknur, 2013). The local people's congress is further divided into committees like standing committee and chairman's committee etc. All such committees are elected deputies of the people congress. In Xinjiang province the provincial head of the government is called Governor (Enikolopov & Zhuravskaya, 2017). Similarly, the government head at Prefecture is called Mayor, at county level it is also governor and at township level the head of the government is called magistrate (Fenwick, 2019). In China the governments are elected both through direct and indirect elections. The current status of the government is such that at its provincial level it has 34 governments, similarly at prefecture level there are 300 governments, at county level there are 3000 governments and at township level there are total 40,000 governments (Effiom, 2019).

Municipal governments are led by the provincial governments. Similarly, the city governments lead country governments, and the country governments lead town governments. This shows that the lower-level governments are principally under the instructions, supervision, and leadership of high-level governments. This means that on one hand the local governments independently exercises their powers under instructions of provincial and federal governments,

and on the other hand they have to obey the high level governments by completing the assigned tasks given by higher level governments(Wen&Yuanyuan, 2018).

Brief Comparisons/ Contrastsof the Two Local Government Systems

The local government systems of Xinjiang, China, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) in Pakistan are different from each other because of their distinct political, cultural, economic and historical backgrounds. Here's a brief analysis of comparisons and contrasts of each local government system on the basis of data collected from various officers and elected personnel (Tehsil Meyers and Chairmen) on the local government system (Act 2019) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwaas well as data collected on Xinjiang local government.

Comparisons

1. District Level: Xinjiang, an autonomous area of China, having district and county level governments like Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan.
- 2.Cultural Diversity: Both regions have a wide variety of ethnic groups and languages, numerous Pashtun tribes reside in KP, and Xinjiang is home to a sizable Uighur community.
3. Local Assemblies: Both have Local assemblies for controlling small administrative unit which are responsible for services delivery
4. Central Government influence: The central government has a big say over local governance in both regions, particularly when it comes to security and ethnic issues, Xinjiang has a history of strict central control.
5. Developmental Projects: Both governments have initiated development projects to improve infrastructure and services delivery. For example, the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) impacts KP's developmentwhile China's Belt and Road Initiative has significant development projects for Xinjiang.

Contrasts

- 1.Political Systems: Xinjiang operates within China's one-party system While KP works within Pakistan's democratic framework. In contrast to KP, Xinjiang's local administration enjoys less autonomy.
- 2.Ethnic Relations: Xinjiang has faced significant ethnic tensions, especially between the Uighur population and the Han Chinese, leading to strict government control, While KP does

not have the same level of ethnic tension as Xinjiang.

3. Legal Systems: Xinjiang has been criticized for human rights abuses while the legal system in KP, Pakistan works within democratic norms and not faced with such circumstances.

4. Religious and Cultural Differences: Xinjiang has faced strict control over religious practices and cultural expression, while in KP, cultural and religious practices are more freely practiced.

5. Economic Systems: China's economic policies have significantly influenced Xinjiang's economy particularly through "China's Go West Policy", while KP's economy is integrated into Pakistan's broader economic framework having no such priority policy.

6. International Relations: Pakistan's foreign policy serves as a major conduit for KP's involvement in international relations, while Xinjiang's strategic location has made it an important player in China's foreign policy and international trade particularly for trade and energy relations with energy rich Central Asia.

One can observe that the political, cultural, and economic environments of Xinjiang and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are fundamentally different, despite the fact that both regions have intricate and varied local government structures that are affected by respective central governments. In comparison to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Xinjiang's local government functions under more stringent central control and has encountered more serious issues pertaining to ethnic conflicts, human rights, and cultural expression in contrast to Pakistan's democratic framework.

Conclusions

In summary, this study has offered a thorough comparison of the local government structures in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, and Xinjiang, China. Several significant insights and discoveries have been made after a thorough investigation of the historical context, structure, functions, and results of these systems.

Firstly, it is clear that both regions' local governing institutions have undergone considerable changes throughout the recent time. While Xinjiang adopted a distinctive and heavily centralized model, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa underwent a transition from a centralized to a decentralized structure. The distinctive political, cultural, and historical settings of each location are reflected in these changes.

Secondly, our analysis has brought to light the distinct roles and duties that local governments are given in each region. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa places a premium on democratic representation and the devolution of power to local authorities, whereas Xinjiang places a premium on stability and tight central control. Variations in service delivery, accountability, and citizen engagement have been caused by these divergent methods.

Thirdly, a wide range of variables including political dynamics, economic situations and ethnic diversity have influenced the outcomes of various local government systems. The system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has showed potential in terms of community engagement and local development but it also has issues with resource allocation and capacity-building. Contrarily, the system in Xinjiang has been successful in preserving stability and economic progress but has caused issues with minority and human rights.

In light of these findings, it is essential to recognize that no single local government model can be universally applicable. Context matters greatly in shaping the effectiveness and appropriateness of a particular system. Policymakers and researchers should consider the specific needs and circumstances of their regions when designing and evaluating local government structures.

This comparative analysis also highlights the value of ongoing research and international discussion between states and regions. In the field of local government, there is a significant possibility for cross-border learning and collaboration through the sharing of perspectives and best practices. In conclusion, the comparison of the local governance structures in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, and Xinjiang, China, sheds light on the subtleties and complexities of local governance across a range of situations. In addition to encouraging more research in this crucial area of study, it is our intention that this research report will help people comprehend the opportunities and problems that local governments face on a global scale.

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