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## **The Inter-Provincial Relationship during COVID-19 in Pakistan: A Case of Punjab and Sindh (March 2020-March 2021)**

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### **Abstract**

Covid-19 pandemic has caused serious and severe problems and difficulties for the individuals throughout the world. The governments of almost every country that are suffering badly by the virus have taken important steps regarding its control and prevention from the spread. Similarly, Pakistan also adopted policies regarding the control of the Covid-19, as the health of the public is one of the major concerns of the government. This research paper shows that how Punjab and Sindh, being the two provinces of Pakistan implemented the policies for the care of the individuals and control of the virus's transmission. The research has been conducted through primary data collection by getting the surveys filled physically, and consulting the official documents and reports of the Ministry of Health of the two provinces i.e. Punjab and Sindh as well as the higher authorities of the country. The data collected has been analysed through relative techniques. Resultantly, the research paper concludes that which province is better in controlling the spread of the virus through efficient policies. In addition to this, the research paper also highlights that do people continue supporting their favourite political parties even though it wins from some other province rather than their own.

**Key words:** *Pandemic, virus, policies, control, prevention, transmission, efficient*

### **Introduction**

COVID-19 is a viral disease that originally started in People's Republic of China but soon it started spreading to other parts of the world. The Islamic Republic of Pakistan also became the victim of this severe, highly contagious, and deadly virus. Many individuals lost their lives by

being infected from the virus. This viral disease was named as COVID-19 as it is a coronavirus disease of the year 2019. Just like the majority of the countries of the world, Pakistan also faced severe and harsh consequences of this infectious viral disease. As a major proportion of Pakistanis are working in foreign countries, so they also became a source of spreading the virus. Punjab and Sindh are highly populous provinces of Pakistan and that is why the ratio of infected individuals is higher in these provinces as compared to other provinces.

The central government, federal government, and the provincial governments of Pakistan keenly observed this sensitive situation from March 2020, as a sudden rise in the corona patients was occurring in Pakistan, and started making and implementing such policies that could help to reduce the spread of the virus. They put in every possible effort to handle this difficult situation. The government imposed lockdown to ring the situation in control. But as the governments are different in the provinces of Punjab and Sindh, so some differences exist in the policy making and workability of the policies in these two provinces. This research paper helps in analysing the causes and reasons of similarities and differences in the terms of these provinces of the same country i.e. Pakistan.

The government shaped a committee for the effective working for the control of the spread of the virus named as NCOC, National Command and Operation Centre. This committee works for bringing the entire country on the same page in terms of combatting with the virus and the treatment of the patients.

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is a federation, in which the central government works along with the provincial governments. The powers are divided among the central and the provincial governments. Previously healthcare came under the central government, but now the provincial governments control it. Many a times, it is seen that the political party, which comes in power in the central government, is not present in all the provincial governments. According to the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution of Pakistan, it is the responsibility of the provincial governments to look after the healthcare in their provinces. Before the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment, majority of the powers were given to the central government but by introducing the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment, provincial autonomy was granted to the provinces. Therefore, during COVID-19, the governments of Punjab and Sindh acted differently in handling the problem. This might be due to the differences

in the political parties, political conflict, or some other reasons. This forms the basis of the hypothesis.

### **Objectives**

- i. To critically analyse the roles of the Punjab and Sindh Governments in the effective control of COVID-19
- ii. To observe that which provincial government adopted a better strategy for the control and prevention of the disease
- iii. To understand that do the political parties keep their political differences aside in the difficult times as of pandemic i.e. COVID-19.
- iv. To see that do people continue supporting their favourite political party even if it is in power other than their own province

### **Research Questions**

- i. Which of the two provincial governments (PTI in Punjab, PPP in Sindh) worked efficiently during COVID-19?
- ii. Do political parties continue their politics even during the times of pandemic?

### **Literature Review**

#### **Start of COVID-19**

COVID-19 initially broke out in 2019 in one of the provinces named as, Hubei Province, of China. By 2020, this viral disease got into other countries as well. Keeping in view the worst-case scenarios, The World Health Organization (WHO) declared worldwide emergency as the cases were growing rapidly not only in China but other countries as well. The number of infected patients was rising tremendously, with each passing day, the situation was getting bad, and no signs of improvement were seen. One of the initial symptoms among the coronavirus patients was pneumonia with the oxygen saturation dropping spontaneously. A patient's lungs were badly damaged which was visible through X-rays. COVID-19 has put almost every country of the world in severe crisis due to its rapid spread. Moreover, there are no known treatments of this

disease. Even the superpowers are facing hard times in this unprecedented situation of COVID-19 (Velavan and Meyer). Thus, this disease of coronavirus that previously started in one of China's provinces became a pandemic.

The people of Wuhan City of China were suffering from an unusual pneumonia in the end of the year 2019. After observations, it was declared that this pneumonia is being caused by the coronavirus. Since then, the virus has transmitted and spread to almost every part of the world and many people have died due to this deadly and fatal coronavirus. The countries have suffered badly as many individuals have lost their lives and due to the unstable industrial and business conditions the economies have declined too. Adopting hygienic measures can control the spread of this virus. These days vaccines are being administered worldwide to help fight with this serious disease (M. Ciotti, S. Angeletti, et al).

As no treatment and cure of COVID-19 exists, it is advised to the people that they should not do to those areas and places where COVID-19 is present and avoid eating wild animals. People who have recently travelled should quarantine themselves for at least fourteen days. Public transport should be avoided. Safe distance of 6 feet should be maintained. Hands should be washed regularly and the sanitizer should be applied for disinfection purposes. The people suffering from COVID-19 should isolate themselves and should not contact other individuals so that the contraction, transmission, and spread of the virus can be controlled (Wu, Chen, Chan).

This virus spread across 209 countries including the American, Australian, European, and Asian countries. Pakistan, which shares her borders with China, also became the victim of this fatal virus. COVID-19's first case was reported in China in December 2019 and in Pakistan, the first case of COVID-19 was identified in February 2020 in Sindh. Another case was confirmed in Islamabad on the same day i.e. 26 February 2020. This marks the onset of COVID-19 in Pakistan. Within days, the number of coronavirus patients started increasing. It was common in those Pakistani citizens who had recently visited a foreign country majorly Iran and Syria, and came back to Pakistan. According to the reports by May 2020, there were 881 confirmed cases of corona patients in Sindh and 1493 cases of such patients in Punjab. As Punjab has the highest population among all the provinces of Pakistan, therefore more number of corona patients. The number of recovered patients was higher in Sindh as compared to Punjab. The Government of

Pakistan took all the necessary steps to fight with this disease. The Pakistan Government designated six of the Punjab and four of the Sindh's hospitals for the treatment of COVID-19 patients (Waris, Atta and Ali).

### **COVID-19 in Pakistan**

Pakistan was not ready for the virus. People were of the view that this virus is only restricted to the Wuhan City of China and would not get into other countries. It was the case with Pakistan as well. The Government of Pakistan as well as the public of Pakistan was not prepared for this viral disease. Allowing the pilgrims to enter the country without testing them became the reason of getting the virus into the country. The inefficient healthcare system of Pakistan, lack of resources, and insufficient GDP resulted in massive outbreak of the disease in Pakistan. In addition to this, higher literacy rate, non-acceptance of the severity of the disease, regarding this virus as a means of stopping the spread of Islam as it was said that people should pray in homes rather than mosques added up to the sensitivity of the issue. The government of Pakistan imposed travel bans and lockdown but the citizens of Pakistan continued gathering up and ignoring the SOPs (Noreen, Dil and Niazi).

### **Policies for dealing COVID-19 in Punjab and Sindh**

The Chief Minister of Punjab, Usman Buzdar, closely observed the situation of Punjab. He concluded in a meeting that a letter of recommendations should be forwarded to the Federal Government of Pakistan in order to take strict measures in Lahore city as the number of COVID-19 patients was increasing tremendously in this very city. He was of the view that a separate action plan should be made and introduced in Lahore as the positivity rate was much higher in Lahore as compared to other cities. Lahore was contributing to more than fifty percent of the total number of the positive cases in Punjab. To put it in CM Buzdar's words: "There is no single residential area or workplace in Lahore that is Corona free" (Punjab Govt to send recommendations to Centre for tightening virus restrictions in Lahore).

The Pakistani Government started controlling the pandemic through imposing lockdown in certain areas of the country where the number of cases was increasing at a faster pace. This was

known as partial or smart lockdown in various parts of Pakistan. The Government ordered to close all the public and private departments in order to prevent the transmission and spread of the virus. In order to distribute food and other life necessities to the people in need, Corona Relief Tiger Force came into existence in order to lend a helping hand to the Government to deal with the issue of Corona virus. Ehsaas program was also introduced for the people suffering from corona (Ali, Akram and Haider).

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under United States initiated the inauguration of Command and Control Centre in Sindh, Pakistan. This Command and Control Centre would work in coordination with the Health Department of Sindh to control and manage the condition and situation of COVID-19 in Sindh. It was decided that similar Command and Control centers would be established in the other provinces of Pakistan as well for better and efficient management and control of the virus (Stewart).

In (August 2020) the Punjab Government allowed the re-opening of the educational institutions but with the strict following of SOPs. The co-curricular activities were restricted. It was stated that the students should not be allowed to take swings or to take part in competitions organized within school and outside the school boundaries. The temperature of the students should be checked with the thermal gun at the school gate. The wearing of the mask should be made compulsory, sanitizer should be given to the students, and the students should continue washing their hands from time to time.

The number of COVID-19 cases rose in Pakistan as compared to China, the country in which Coronavirus began (June 2020). However, the authenticity of the cases is still doubtful, as many people suffering from this fatal disease have not registered themselves as corona positive patients. The individuals who are inspired by the religious leaderships believe that it is a tactic of Non-Muslims to eliminate the Muslims from the world. Thus, they kept on going to the mosques despite Government's strict orders and instructions. Many religious scholars regarded that the wrongdoings of women have caused this virus to spread. People also started to believe that going to the hospital on the onset of symptoms believe that you would return dead from the hospital. This confused nation ignored SOPs and so the virus spread without control due to the combined negligence of the Pakistani public.

Lahore, having the highest number of Corona positive cases in Punjab, demands for the implementation of strict, severe, and intense policies for the control and prevention of the disease. Dr. Firdous Ashiq Awan, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Usman Buzdar, stated that the ignorance in following the SOPs has resulted in the surge in the number of corona cases (March 2021). The outdoor and indoor ceremonies, wedding ceremonies, indoor and outdoor dining at the restaurants and recreational spots across the city are closed, so that the number of positive cases can be reduced.

The Government ended up the lockdown, which resulted in immense spread of the virus. Almost every house had a COVID positive patient (June 2020). The Health Department of Sindh put this statistical analysis forward. It was declared that if the situation prevails, then the number of beds and ventilators for the patients would be less. The Sindh Government said that people are of the view that one should not fear Corona but this does not mean that the individuals should avoid or ignore the precautionary and preventive measures.

The Pakistani public and the Pakistani Government are equally ignorant and negligent of the COVID-19 outbreak. President Alvi visited China at the times when everyone was avoiding travelling to and from China because of the COVID-19 (March 2020). It was stated that Pakistan was learning crisis handling from its close neighbor and friend, China. Unfortunately, no practical implementation of the policies or steps for the control and prevention was seen even though the positivity rate was rising. The entry of pilgrims into the country without any check and balance added to the severity of the disease and the spread of the virus.

Murtaza Wahab, (April 2021) the spokesperson of Sindh Government, told that the provincial government is considering of cancelling the elective surgeries. This order was given because the number of positive cases was increasing and the possibility of oxygen shortage was also existing. In order to avoid the severity of the situation, the government decided to cancel the elective surgeries in the government and private hospitals. However, the emergency operations would be carried out as per routine.

### **Challenges and difficulties in the implementation of the COVID-19 policies in Pakistan**

The Government of Pakistan was facing a number of challenges. It was looking for ways in order to reduce the number of positive cases in the country, at the same time, the economy of the country was going to the lowest levels. This was because the industries and businesses were closed due to lockdown. The small-scale and middle-sized businesses with very few reserves were completely shattered. People lost their jobs and the entire country was going through the phase of worst crisis (Shafi, Liu and Ren).

In Pakistan, the coronavirus did not follow a smooth trend. The number of positive cases varied in all the four provinces of Pakistan. This might be because the population density is not the same in all the provinces of Pakistan. Punjab is the most populated province and the positivity rate is also the highest in Punjab. As, greater the number of individuals in a place, greater the risk of getting the virus as it is a contagious virus. The second populous province is Sindh, and so after Punjab, the highest rate of COVID-19 patients was in Sindh (Anser, Yousaf and Khan).

In order to control and stop the transfer and spread of the disease, the lockdown would be extended in the districts where the positivity rate is greater than 12%. In Punjab, the districts with positivity rate of 12% or above are Multan, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, Sargodha, and Sialkot (March 2021). The Government banned all those events which required the gathering of people and ordered the people to stay in homes. The market timings was reduced on week days and the shops were closed on the weekend.

Considering the current situation (February 2021) of the Punjab and particularly Lahore, more orders were given by the provincial government to handle the situation. It was made obligatory for every citizen to wear a facemask outside his or her house. Only fifty percent of the staff would be present in the houses and workplaces. The remaining fifty percent would work while staying in their homes. All sorts of indoor and outdoor functions and wedding ceremonies would be discontinued. The recreational and amusements spots would be closed till further notice so that the spread of virus can be controlled.

### **Role of the Ministry of Health**

In this period of COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Health and the Government of Pakistan is trying to curb the disease as earliest as possible and many organizations are working with the



Government of Pakistan to deal with these unprecedented time. ICRC is also helping the Government of Pakistan to survive through these difficult times by donating PPE kits, hygienic materials, materials for waste management, and items for disinfection. Moreover, it is also donating the equipment necessary for the burial of the deceased individuals (Pakistan: ICRC Operational Response to COVID-19).

The Ministry of Health of the Government of Pakistan designed a National Action Plan (NAP) for the the prevention and treatment of COVID-19. The NAP was aimed at preparing the nation to deal with this novel coronavirus, increasing the recovery rate, and decrease the death rate. Moreover, one of its major aims was to make the central, federal, and provincial governments aware of the seriousness of the disease and work for the prevention and protection. To stop the spread of the virus by containing it into those areas where it was active was one of the major objectives of NAP (National Action Plan for Corona Virus Disease (COVID-19) Pakistan).

The UK Variant caused more chaos and destruction in the beginning of the year 2021 in Punjab, rather than the entire previous year of 2020. The positivity rate is increasing at a very great speed as compared to all the records of the last year (April 2021). The third wave is declared the most severe. Even though, the vaccination drive began in various regions of the country, but still the cases and deaths are out of control.

To control the severity of the third-wave of the novel coronavirus, the Punjab Government has imposed lockdown in seven main cities of Punjab (March 2021). This action is taken so that the people should stay in their homes and the transmission of the disease can be controlled. As compared to the previous year, in which complete lockdown was imposed. This time the government has taken the initiative of imposing smart or partial lockdown. It may be due to the fact that complete lockdown impacts badly on those individuals who survive by daily earning.

The onset of COVID-19 was quite unusual and many countries suffered a lot due to this viral disease as no sufficient research was done previously on this virus. The treatment of this disease is not known and so that is why this virus is getting out of control. Even the great and superpowers of all times can do nothing in front of this virus. The outbreak of COVID-19 has showed that humans should always be prepared that even though the world is technologically

much advanced but still much improvement is required as many organisms are unknown and many diseases exist without any treatment like COVID-19 (Fauci, Lane, and Redfield).

Even though the pilgrims that came from the foreign countries became the source of introducing the COVID-19 in Pakistan, but still many of the individuals contracted the virus within the country, as people did not follow the SOPs. Pakistan was receiving medical aid in the form of ventilators, N95 masks, and facemasks from China. As China controlled the virus effectively, thus Pakistani Government also sought help from Chinese medical staff in dealing with the virus (Pakistan: COVID-19 – Situation Update as of 30<sup>th</sup> of March 2020).

The COVID-19 has taken the form of a global pandemic. The policy for the control and prevention should be based on the principle of inclusion. While applying this policy, the people who are not given equal citizen rights should be considered. People who lack normal health facilities, and face discrimination in the society due to the differences on the basis of finances, cast, color, or race should be included and taken care of. This requires sincerity and loyalty so that all the people of a country could get equal facilities. The corona tests should be carried out free of cost and the individuals should be offered equal employment opportunities (Berger, Evans and Phelan).

### **Different mechanisms for dealing with COVID-19 under different provincial governments**

The different political parties of Pakistan have come up with their own vaccination, educational, and economic policies in view of COVID-19. Pakistan People's Party has stated that they would buy the vaccines on donations and would also purchase it. The vaccine would be administered free of cost. Licenses would be offered to pharmaceutical companies for the local manufacturing of vaccines. For educational purposes, schools would be opened but when the situation would be somewhat better. Meanwhile, students would be taught online. They would ensure that no one would face internet connectivity issues (Pakistan People's Party: Policies Under COVID-19 Vaccination, Education, and Economy)

Similarly, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, the political party in rule in Pakistan has also given its policy. They have divided the public in different stages for the efficient, proper and in-time administration of the vaccine. Their preference is to administer the vaccines to the frontline

healthcare workers and old-age individuals. Regarding education, they are of the view that the educational institution should remain closed until the situation gets under the control. Alternatively, the educational institutions should switch to online mode of teaching (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf: Policies Under COVID-19 Vaccination, Education and Economy).

### **Research Gap**

The literature review and the reading of the articles reveals that the Punjab and Sindh Government adopted different policies at different times for controlling the spread of the disease. Many a times, it also happened that both the governments implemented the same policy but in different time slots. Thus, the research gap is that the reason of such difference is not known. Therefore, the research is conducted for finding out the facts, reasons, and causes of the existence of these differences within the two provincial governments.

### **Hypothesis**

*Hypothesis 1: “The political affiliation of people continues with their favorite political party even though they are in power in some other province and they support them despite how inefficient they are, i.e. If a Punjabi supports PPP, he would keep on supporting it even if it wins from Sindh rather than Punjab.”*

*Hypothesis 2: “The different political parties in power in different provinces continue their politics rather than focusing on the management of the problems even in difficult times as of pandemic (COVID-19).”*

### **Research Methodology**

The methodology for this research paper is of quantitative nature. Both primary and secondary data has been collected. For this purpose, a survey questionnaire of fifteen close-ended questions was distributed and sent online through WhatsApp to 25 Punjabi and 25 Sindhi students of Forman Christian College, Lahore and Capital University of Science and Technology, Islamabad and some others. Out of the total fifteen questions, five questions were general and ten were related to the topic. The reason of taking equal number of Punjabi and Sindhi students was to

take a representative sample of the two provinces. This helped in getting an idea of the overall Punjabi and Sindhi population. As according to the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution of Pakistan, healthcare comes under the provincial governments. For secondary research purposes, the journal articles, official documents and reports from the ministry of health's websites of Punjab and Sindh, scholarly journals from credible and authentic sources like Jstor, Google Scholar, HEC website, and books relevant to the topic are consulted.

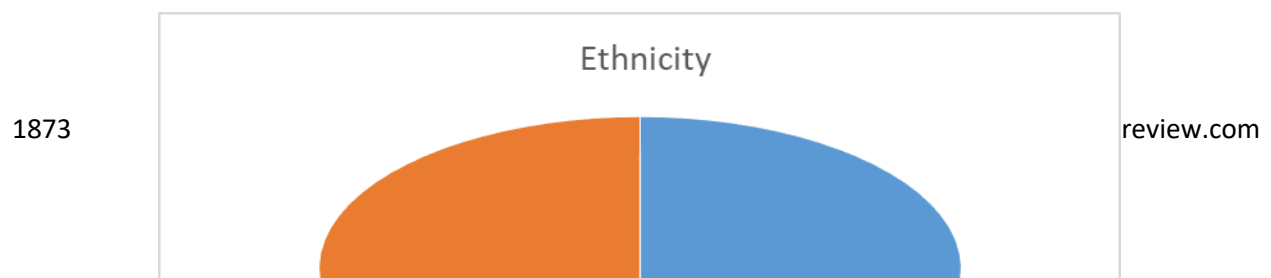
It is possible that the people would support their respective political parties who are in power in their respective provinces. Furthermore, there is a possibility that people would support their political affiliation even though their favourite political party is in power is some other province as PPP supporters in Punjab might believe that Sindh government is more efficient than Punjab Government. Similarly, PTI supporters in Sindh might believe that Punjab Government has a better administration in terms of COVID-19 control and they might believe that a central policy should be applied rather than different provincial policies and vice versa. People instead of critically analysing the situation, support their political parties blindly. The Pakistani citizens are still of the view that COVID-19 is not serious at all and it is just a propaganda. All these questions were asked in the survey questionnaire to prove whether the hypothesis stands true or is proven false. The answers to the question is mentioned in the Discussion section of the research paper and then the conclusions are drawn on the basis of the answers to the questions asked in the survey. As the survey is of the quantitative type, therefore, appropriate graphs are drawn to statistically analyse the answers.

### Discussion and Analysis

Of all the questions asked in the survey, the important ones would be included here. The descriptive statistical techniques are applied on them, graphs are drawn, and the results are calculated. The important questions are:

- “What is your ethnicity?”

As this variable is categorical in nature, therefore, the best method to represent the answers of this variable is by drawing a pie-chart.



*Figure. 1: Ethnicity*

**Explanation:** This graph shows that from the total of 50 students on which the survey was conducted, 25 of the students i.e. (50%) of the sample population comprised of Punjabi students and the other 25 people i.e. (50%) of the sample population was of Sindhi students.

There is no mode in this as both the values are equal.

- “What is your favourite political party?”

As this variable is categorical in nature, therefore, the best method to represent the answers of this variable is by drawing a pie-chart.

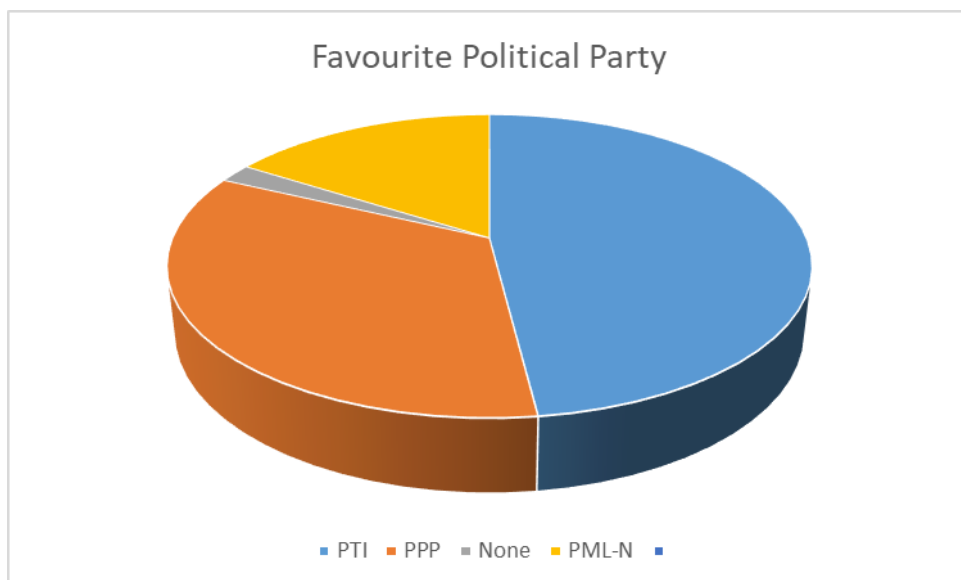


Figure. 2: Favourite political party

**Explanation:** This graph represents that the majority of the population supports PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf) as their favourite political party. This shows that it is not really necessary for a Punjabi or Sindhi individual to support the political party which forms the provincial government in that province.

The mode for this question i.e. the most occurring value is PTI.

- “Which provincial government dealt with the COVID-19 effectively?”

This variable is also of categorical nature, thus the data is represented in the form of pie-chart.

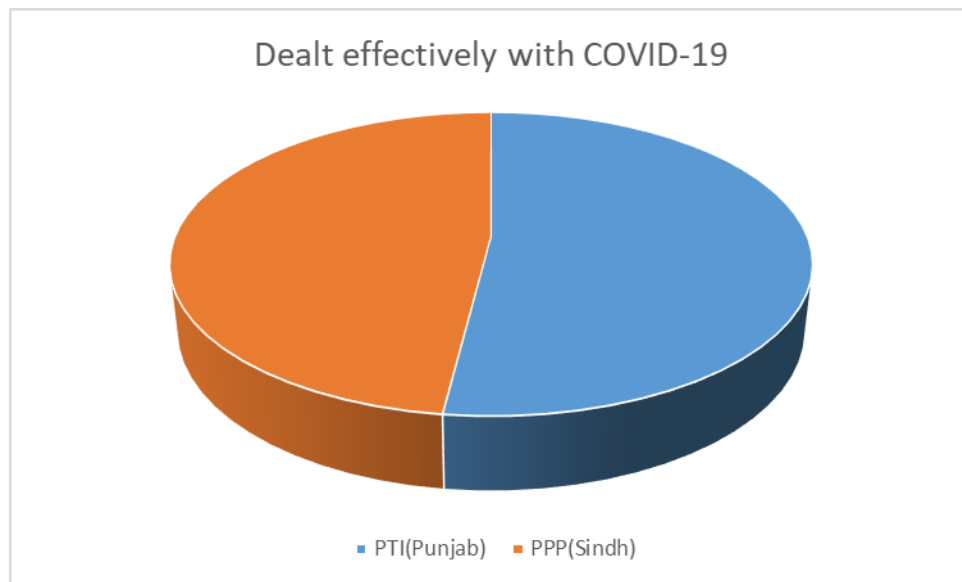


Figure. 3: Dealt Effectively with COVID-19

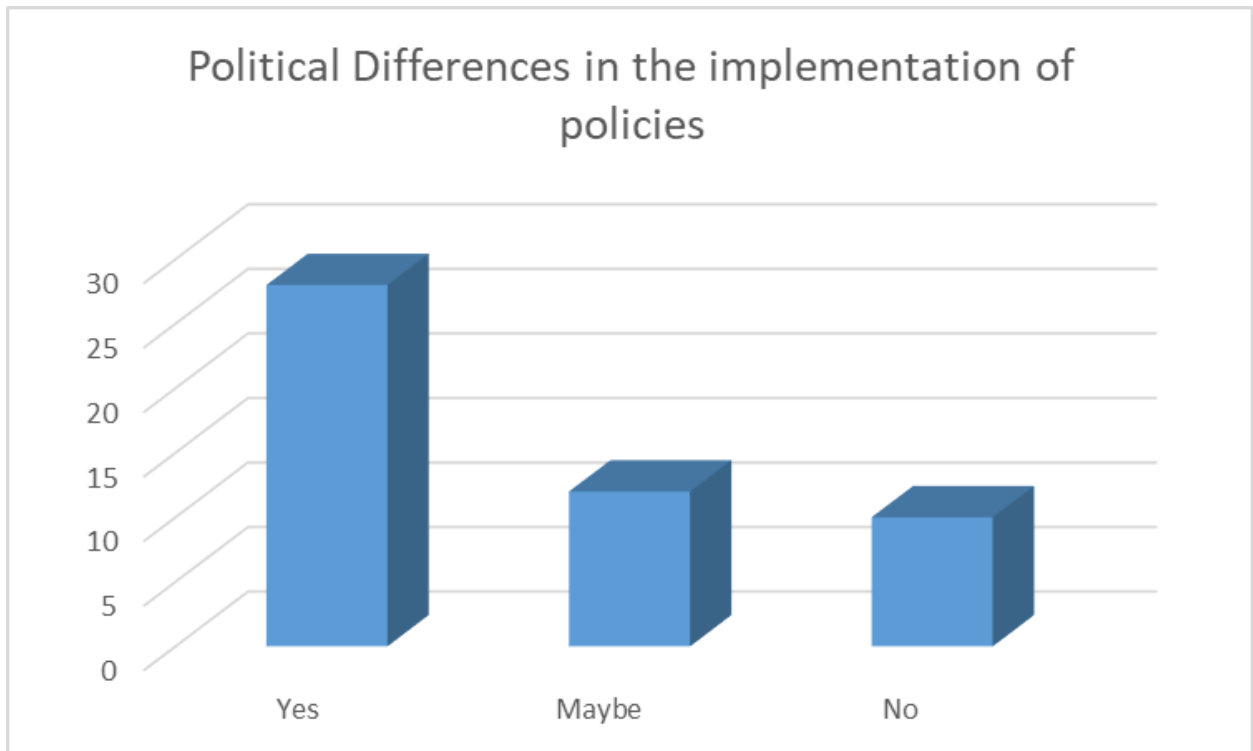
**Explanation:** According to the respondents, the PTI government in Punjab dealt with the situation of COVID-19 effectively as compared to the PPP in Sindh. However the difference is

not much as 26 students out of 50 i.e. 52% of the population believe that PTI worked effectively. Even though this difference is quite negligible. This shows that people believe that almost both the provincial governments worked effectively.

The mode for this question is PTI (Punjab).

- “What do you think that was there a political conflict or political difference among the Punjab and Sindh’s provincial governments that they implemented the same policies but at different times?”

The variable in this question is of ordinal nature. For ordinal variables, bar-graph is drawn for the analysis.



*Figure. 4: Political differences in the implementation of policies*

**Explanation:** The graph shows that majority of the people, 28 out of 50 i.e. 56% of the people living in Punjab and Sindh believe that the provincial governments of Punjab and Sindh implemented the same policies at different times. This is because of the political conflict that exists between the two provincial governments i.e. PTI in Punjab and PPP in Sindh.

For ordinal variables, the measures of central tendency are mode and median.

The mode is “Yes”, political conflict exists in implementing the same policies at different times in the two governments.

The median is calculated by  $(n+1/2)$ ,  $(50+1/2)$ ,  $(51/2)$ ,  $25.5^{\text{th}}$  value. The  $25.5^{\text{th}}$  value here falls in “Yes”, as  $25^{\text{th}}$  and  $26^{\text{th}}$  values are “Yes”.

- “Do you believe that different political parties when in power play politics even in the times of pandemic (recently COVID-19)?



The variable in this question is of ordinal nature. For ordinal variables, bar-graph is drawn for the analysis.

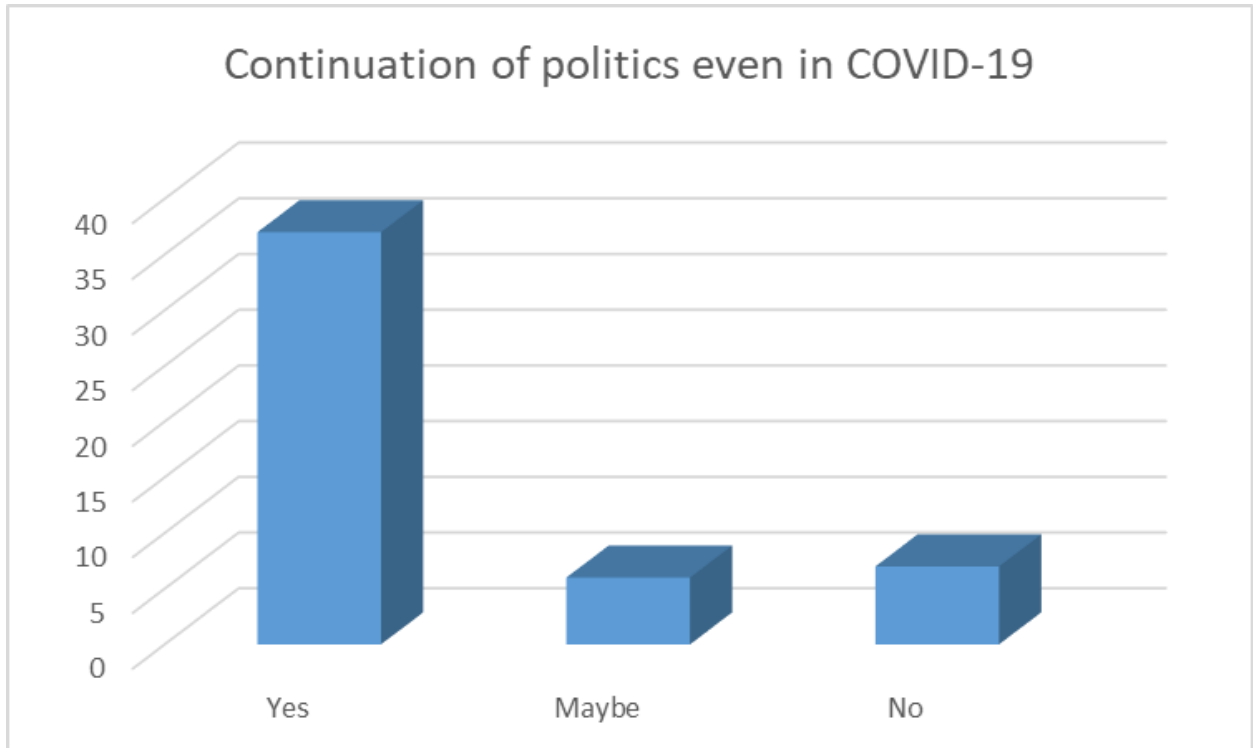


Figure. 5: Continuation of politics even in COVID-19

**Explanation:** This graph represents that 37 out of 50 i.e. 74% of the people believe that the political parties that are in power in different provinces continue playing the political game even in the difficult times of pandemic i.e. COVID-19.

6 out of 50 i.e. 12% of the people believe that this might be true and might be false.

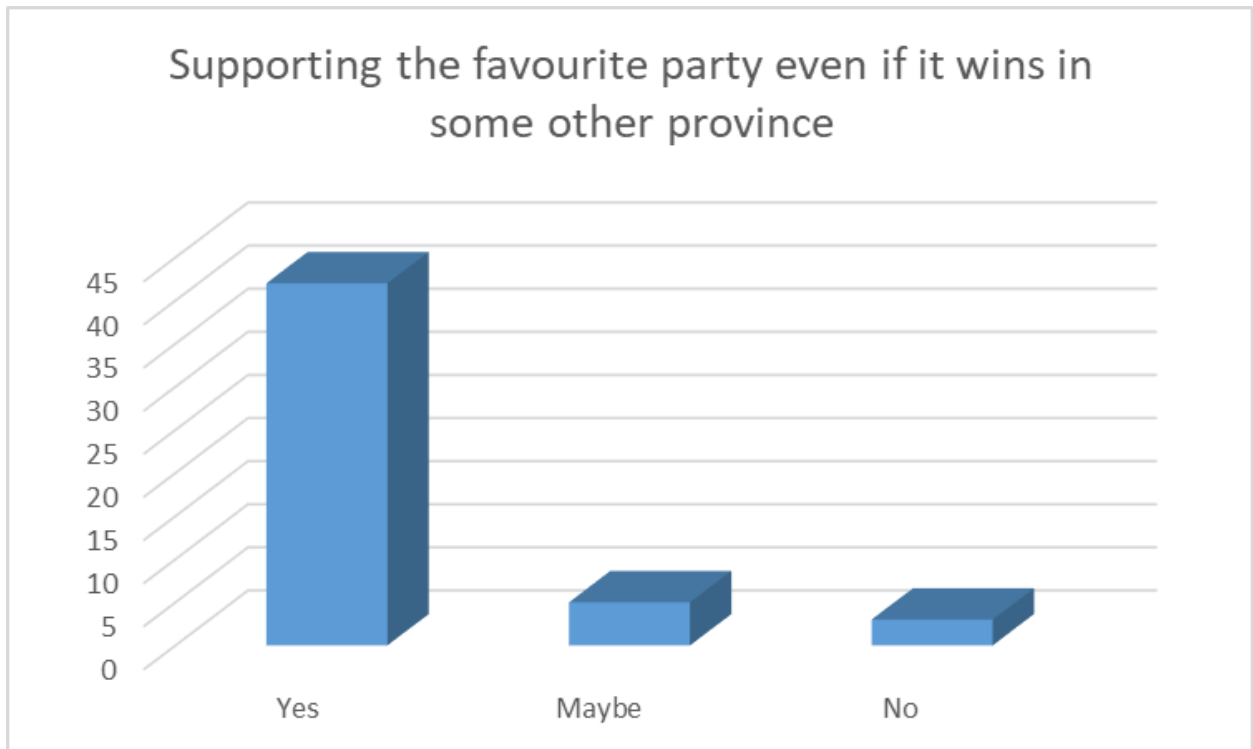
Whereas, 7 out of 50 i.e. 14% of the people are of the view that the political parties do not play the political game during the pandemics.

The mode is “Yes”, political parties keep on playing the political game even during pandemic..

The median is calculated by  $(n+1/2)$ ,  $(50+1/2)$ ,  $(51/2)$ ,  $25.5^{\text{th}}$  value. The  $25.5^{\text{th}}$  value here falls in “Yes”, as  $25^{\text{th}}$  and  $26^{\text{th}}$  values are “Yes”.

- “Do you think that the supporters of a particular political party keep on supporting their favourite party even if their party wins in some other province rather than their own?”

The variable in this question is of ordinal nature. For ordinal variables, bar-graph is drawn for the analysis.



*Figure. 6: Supporting the favourite party even if it wins in some other province*

**Explanation:** The graph shows that majority of the people i.e. 42 out of 50 (84%) believe that they would continue supporting their political party blindly even if it wins from some other province. This shows that people focus on their affiliation with the political parties rather than their working, management, and efficiency.

5 out of 50 (10%) of the people are of the view that this might be true, and might be false.

3 out of 50 (6%) of the people believe that they would not support their political party if it wins from some other province rather than their own.

The mode is “Yes”, people keep on supporting their political party even if it wins from some other province.

The median is calculated by  $(n+1/2)$ ,  $(50+1/2)$ ,  $(51/2)$ ,  $25.5^{th}$  value. The  $25.5^{th}$  value here falls in “Yes”, as  $25^{th}$  and  $26^{th}$  values are “Yes”.

### Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis can be tested by using the technique of bivariate statistics i.e. building a contingency table and then applying the eye-balling method on it.

#### Hypothesis 1:

In the Hypothesis 1, there are two variables. The first variable is favourite political party (independent variable) and Provincial Government (dependent variable).

As these variables are categorical and ordinal, so the following contingency table is drawn as:

<b>Favourite Political Party/ Provincial Government</b>	<b>PPP</b>	<b>PTI</b>	<b>PML-N</b>	<b>PML-Q</b>	<b>JUI</b>	<b>ANP</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Total</b>
PTI in Punjab	2(12%)	18(75%)	5(63%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	1(100%)	26(52%)
PPP in Sindh	15(88%)	6(25%)	3(37%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	24(48%)
Total	17(100%)	24(100%)	8(100%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	1(100%)	50(100%)

According to the contingency table, the following results can be drawn:

- 88% of the PPP supporters support PPP in Sindh
- 12% of the PPP supporters support PTI in Punjab
- 75% of the PTI supporters support PTI in Punjab
- 25% of the PTI supporters support PPP in Sindh

Hence, this proves that the majority of PPP supporters support PPP in Sindh, and the majority of PTI supporters support PTI in Punjab.

Thus, the hypothesis has been proven true.

### **Hypothesis 2:**

In view of the Fig. 5, it is shown that majority of the people support the opinion that the different political parties that are in power in different provinces carry on their political difference and play the political game even in the pandemic (COVID-19).

Thus, the hypothesis is proven true.

### **Application of theory**

In this paper, the theory of **competitive federalism** holds true. In Punjab, the Provincial Government is formed by PTI. In Sindh, the Provincial Government, which is in power, is PPP. As both the parties hold extreme grudges and conflicts from each other and can never be on the same page. In view of COVID-19, this case is also quite evident. The right approach would have been that all the provincial governments should have worked in close coordination with NCOG as COVID-19 is a global pandemic rather than a separate provincial healthcare issue. Even though, under 18<sup>th</sup> amendment, healthcare comes under the autonomous powers of provinces.

It is observed that PTI in Punjab and Sindh in PPP applied the same policies as suggested by NCOG at different times and with some modifications, giving a hint of competition, political differences, and political conflicts between them. Therefore, the theory of competitive federalism holds true as the federating units of Pakistan i.e. Punjab and Sindh kept on continuing their personal political differences and competitions even in the face of COVID-19.

## **Conclusion**

From the above mentioned details of the research paper, it has been proven that the first hypothesis stands true i.e.

*“The political affiliation of people continues with their favorite political party even though they are in power in some other province and they support them despite how inefficient they are, i.e. If a Punjabi supports PPP, he would keep on supporting it even if it wins from Sindh rather than Punjab.”*

The contingency table has shown the majority of the results. However, some individuals also supported the other party but the majority of the results reveal that people blindly follow and support their political parties ignoring the real meaning of a political party and efficient provincial government. As the sample size was a small one, so a generalized conclusion cannot be drawn.

The other hypothesis has also been proven true in view of Fig. 5 i.e.

*“The different political parties in power in different provinces continue their politics rather than focusing on the management of the problems even in difficult times as of pandemic (COVID-19).”*

It is revealed that the two provincial governments of Pakistan i.e. PTI in Punjab and PPP in Sindh kept on playing their political game even during COVID-19. The Punjab Government kept on considering itself better and superior than the Sindh Government. Similarly, the Sindh Government had a strong belief that their policies were far better than the Punjab Government and that is why both of the provincial governments implemented the same policies with the differences in the time or implemented them with some modifications so that their politics should continue.

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