



BENEATH THE SURFACE : UNRAVELING THE WEB OF INSTITUTIONAL CONSTRAINTS AND ELITE CAPTURE IN SHAPING PAKISTAN'S DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORY

Dr. Rashida Ahmad* & Dr. Attiya Khanam**

*Assistant Professor, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, The Women University Multan. Email: rashida.ahmad@wum.edu.pk

rashdaahmad2022@gmail.com

**Assistant Professor, Department of History and Pakistan Studies, The Women University Multan. Email: attiya.khanam@wum.edu.pk

attiya.khanam@wum.edu.pk

Abstract

Pakistan's development trajectory still suffers from basic institutional deficiencies and mass influence of elite capture. Although there are formal governance processes in place, the efficacy of these is marred by elite dominance, patron-client networks, and rent-seeking behaviour, which all distort the process of creating policies, distributing resources and providing public services. With particular attention to the dynamics of political economy, governance failures and socioeconomic consequences, this study explores the nexus of institutional shortcomings and elite capture and how this impacts development outcomes in Pakistan. It makes the case that elite capture will continue to hamper inclusive growth and equitable development unless key issues of institutional reform and accountability mechanisms are addressed through strong institutional oversight and accountability mechanisms, based on recent empirical research and governance diagnostic evaluations.

Key Words: Elite capture; Institutional quality; Governance; Political economy; Inclusive development; Pakistan

1. Introduction

It has been mentioned by several researches that elite capture is a major contributor to Pakistan's declining institutional efficacy. Often at the expense of the common good, powerful players use legislation, resources and state machinery to further their own parochial interests. Therefore, it is very important to understand such institutional limitations and elite capture interaction for understanding the ongoing problems of development in Pakistan and identifying the potential reform strategies.¹

Pakistan's path to development has been influenced for some time, not only by resource constraints but more crucially, by institutional weaknesses that allow capture of the state machine by the elite. While formal structures of governance - legislatures, regulatory institutions and administrative institutions - exist, the effectiveness of their operation is chronically hampered by the operation of patron-client networks, rent-seeking behaviour and shadow power structures operating outside of official accountability.² In such a context, institutions often have less the character of neutral arbiters of the public interest, and more the character of instruments, through which dominant political, economic and bureaucratic elites secure and reproduce their privileges. This dynamic undermines the rule-based government, policy priorities, as well as the ability of the state to provide inclusive development.³

The earlier and contemporary researchers have pointed out that elite capture in Pakistan is not intermittent corruption but systemic corruption which is embedded in institutional arrangements inherited from colonial administration legacies as well as solidified through



political evolution after independence. The structural environment that results in elites being able to abuse the laws, public resources and the policy making processes to enrich themselves makes our low rule of law, politicized bureaucracy, the lack of coherence in regulatory authority and poor transparency. As a consequence, development initiatives often fail to reach the intended beneficiaries, reforms get stuck at implementation stages and inequality remains prevalent despite recurrent policy interventions.⁴

Understanding Pakistan's enduring problems in development therefore involves transcending the conventional explanations of failure of governance into a political economy perspective which looks at the interplay of institutional constraints and elite capture. The connection between the two elements is a self-righting cycle whereby weak institutions make it easier to capture the elite, and through domesticating functions, which in turn causes weakening of the institutions. This interaction ends up manifested in poor development outcomes such as inefficient public spending, poor service delivery and low socioeconomic mobility.⁵

Research Objectives

This research aims to understand the interaction between institutional constraints and elite capture in Pakistan and how the interaction between these factors determines the development outcome. In particular, the aim of the study is:

- Identify the important institutional constraints that offer opportunities for elite capture in the Pakistani governance structure.
- Explore the processes by which elites impact on policy formulation, resource allocation and administrative processes.
- Evaluate the degree in which governance functions such as accountability, regulation and service delivery are distorted by elite capture.
- Analyze the implications of these distortions for the outcomes of development concerning inequality, provision of public services and effectiveness of reforms.
- Suggest reform paths to solve institutional weaknesses as well as elite dominance in the same time.

Literature Review

Research Gap in Existing Studies

A perusal of the available literature on elite capture, governance and development in Pakistan throws light on important findings but also indicates obvious analytical and empirical shortcomings that justify this study.

1. Fragmented Treatment of Institutions and Elite Capture

Most previous studies look at elite capture and institutional weakness as related but distinct phenomena. Governance diagnostics (e.g., World Bank; Transparency International) highlight on institutional inefficiencies as compared to the political economy studies (e.g., PIDE scholars; Gul & Ur Rahman; Ali & Asif)⁶ that focus on its elite dominance. However, very few studies systematically analyse the way that institutional constraints provide the enabling environment for elite capture, and how elite capture reproduces institutional weakness. The dynamic interaction between the two is under-theorized for Pakistan.

Gap: There is no complete analytical framework that would cause institutional constraints to affect whether elite capture and outcome of development.

2. Overemphasis on Corruption, Under emphasis on Structural Capture

A large portion of governance literature takes the problem to be one of corruption, mismanagement or lack of transparency. Though significant, this point of view causes elite



capture to belong to the malpractice of individual prescription instead of an institutional organization. The deeper issue of the way in which rules, procedures and administrative legacies work in systematically elite-favoring ways is insufficiently explored.⁷

Gap: There is a lack of transition between a discourse of corruption and discourse of structural political economy of elite capture.

3. Limited Connection to Development Outcomes

Many studies document elite influence on politics/governance, but few directly trace how such influence translates into concrete failures of development such as poor service delivery, poor persistence of inequality and stagnation of reform. The relationship between elite capture and quantifiable development outcomes is still implicit rather than empirically or analytically proven.⁸

Gap: Lack of strong association of elite capture mechanisms and particular development indicators and outcomes.

4. Historical Legacy Not Adequately Connected to Contemporary Governance

The histories of institutions and their colonial heritage (Khan; Haque and Zulfiqar)⁹ are being pointed out, but historical-institutional explanation is usually only descriptive. They do not adequately explain how these historical structures function in contemporary processes of governance and in policy environments

Gap: The absence of any linkage between past institutional formation and present-day distortions of governance.

5. Absence of a Feedback Loop Perspective

Existing studies tend overwhelmingly to adopt a linear explanation (weak institutions > bad governance > bad outcomes). They do not often conceptualize the problem as a self-reinforcing cycle, where the lack of development outcomes convinces more and more elites to rely on the state and makes it weaker and weaker.¹⁰

Gap: Missing feedback loop model explaining persistence of governance and development failure.

6. Limited Reform-Oriented Analysis

Most of the reports propose reforms (transparency, accountability, decentralization) but they tend not to think on how the elites may resist changing these reforms, or manipulating or even seizing the reforms. Thus, reform proposals are not based on the political economy realities of Pakistan.¹¹

Gap: Absence of politically realistic path-ways for reform which take into account elite resistance, institutional inertia, etc.

The present study addresses this gap as follows:

Examples: - Providing an integrated conceptual framework statistical linking institutions, elite capture, governance distortion, outcomes of development, and.

- Going beyond corruption narratives: towards the political economy of structure.
- Empirically and analytically related elite capture and development indicators.
- Connecting Historical institutional analysis with contemporary governance realities.
- Introducing a feedback loop model for the persistence.
- Offering reform options based on political economy limitations

This definitely makes current work an important development in the literature as opposed to being a duplication of existing research.

Significance of the Study



This study is significant for three basic reasons.

First, it contributes to the literature by institutionalizing the relationship between institutional theory and political economy analysis in the context of Pakistan, as this approach provides a more comprehensive explanation of development failure than either corruption or resource scarcity, an aspect reviewed by the approaches. By conceptualizing elite capture as an outcome of institutional constraints, the study goes a long way to developing a deeper structural understanding of governance challenges.

Second, the research is of practical policy relevance. By recognizing the roles and places of elite capture within institutional processes, it can point to the areas of entry for reform beyond stand-alone anti-corruption measures and instead focus on more fundamental institutional redesign.

Third, the study provides a framework for diagnosis that can be applied to other developing countries that are struggling with similar governance problems, hence, contributing to the overall comparative development discourse without straying from Pakistani specific political and institutional context.

In this context, this research builds on the case for arguing that meaningful development reform in Pakistan hinges on not only changes in economic policies, but also on the need to restructure institutional arrangements that currently allow elite capture to thrive.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1 Institutional Constraints

Formal rules and informal norms are used by institutions in order to structure social, political and economic relations. Theoretically, robust institutions encourage collaborative action, reduce uncertainty and boost accountability. But, lack of adequate law enforcement, weakly structured administrative systems, and politicization of bureaucratic institutions are some examples of institutional restrictions in Pakistan. These flaws make room for more discretionary decision making and less government capacity.¹²

2.2 Elite Capture

The term "elite capture" refers to the appropriation of public resources and the decision-making process by a small group of privileged players. Political families, high officials, corporate tycoons and interests with links to the military are examples of Pakistan's elites, who enjoy an outsized amount of influence in allocating resources and setting policy aims. To shape the course of governance to their own advantage these actors deploy political networks, social status and economic power.

Historical legacies of the centralized power and patronage politics have contributed to elite domination across industries. Consequently, informal power structures with lack of accountability and transparency are operating alongside formal democratic and administrative institutions.¹³

The World Bank (2019) as well as Ahmad Jawad and Zehraa (2024)¹⁴ mention these how closed institutional forms, poor regulatory capacity and absence of market openness, create spaces where only connected actors have access to opportunity. These works establish the lack of autonomy, transparency and competitiveness in the institutions of Pakistan which they feel is are not autonomous enough for inclusive development. In preference to functioning as neutral rule-based systems, institutions act as gatekeeping systems. This is congruent with the first component of the framework: institutional constraints are those conditions that structure elite capture as a possible outcome.



3. Institutional Constraints and Elite Capture in Pakistan

3.1 Governance Weaknesses and Economic Distortions

International financial institutions have recently done some diagnostic exercises, which demonstrate the continued weaknesses in governance in Pakistan in particular with respect to taxation, public procurement, and supervision of state-owned firms. According to an IMF-World Bank governance and corruption assessment, addressing these problems could increase Pakistan's GDP by about five to six percent each five years, as this points out the severe financial implications of institutional disintegration. These faux are an expression of political incentives based on the interests of elites rather than mere technological failures. Rent-seeking activities could persisting for the lack of enforcement and scattered regulations, and thus skewing economic activities and hindering growth.¹⁵

Khan (2024), Haque and Zulfiqar (2024) and Zulfiqar and Moosvi (2022)¹⁶ give the historical-institutional answer to the question of why elite capture continues. They believe colonial modes of administration had concentrated power in small groups and reforms after independence didn't break down the hierarchies. As a result, elite dominance was instituted, not politically transient. This contributes to the framework by stating why the problem of elite capture is reproduced over time and why reforms don't dislodge elite capture.

3.2 Elite Capture and Policy Outcomes

Development strategies are determined through elite capture in terms of unequal control for regulatory discretion and financial allocations. Bureaucratic and political elites, for example, preferentially allocate public funding to desired communities or programs that offer the possibility of rent capture, according to empirical research analysis at the provincial level. This practice perpetuates clientelistic political behaviour and increases regional differences.

Furthermore, despite being formally established, democratic and electoral institutions are at times characterized by a lack of substantive content due to the typically weak party structures and elite dominance. Instead of actual democratic consolidation, these forces construct hybrid forms of governance and block transparency while threatening the rule of law.¹⁷

4. Developmental Implications

4.1 Economic Growth and Inequality

Elite capture distorts economic interests by giving preferential treatment to tax cuts, subsidies and government contracts to the elite affiliated firms. Such practices contribute to the concentration of wealth, a reduction of the available resources in the form of public funds and also limit the amount of investments in infrastructural development and human capital. Small and medium scale businesses have high barriers to entry and lack of proper investment in education and healthcare reduces the growth in the long-term.

The accounts provided by Transparency International Pakistan (2025), and associated governance diagnostics, depict the processes of perversion of accountability systems by elite capture, overstretched by governing bodies and politicised by the bureau continuum. Institutions that are supposed to enforce rules protect elite interests instead. The regulatory authorities are deprived of independence and the police focus selectively. This is in line with the framework's fourth step - elite capture turns governance institutions from tools of development into shields for elite interests.¹⁸

4.2 Public Trust and Institutional Legitimacy

The lack of trust in government is caused by institutional restraints and elite takeovers. When citizens believe public resources are systematically diverted to a select few and there are not



strong accountability mechanisms then there is less confidence in state institutions. This loss of legitimacy may contribute to this social dissatisfaction and may result in the inability to act collectively towards sustainable development.¹⁹

5. Policy Implications and Reform Pathways

Instead of incremental reforms to the procedure, fundamental reforms are required to overcome institutional limitations and elite capture at the fundamental level. Some reform tactics are to reduce the discretionary use of the public resources, enhance fiscal transparency and strengthen the accountability systems. The central objectives of this venture include simplification of the tax system, improved public procurement practices, and the operational independence of the control bodies.

There is a general agreement on all sources that elite capture and institutional weakness results in inefficiency in public spending, failure in service delivery and inequality and stalled reforms. Ahmad Jawad and Zehraa 2024²⁰ show it Financial development distortion, World Bank 2019 link it to the weak governance and fail to reform Transparency International 2025 link to corruption and poor service delivery. This is consistent with the last step of the framework - that development outcomes are not chance, but the logical consequence of captured institutions.

Decentralisation reforms that truly empower local governments and political and electoral reforms that curb elite domination are also important in helping to align governance structures with the general needs of society.²¹

6. Pakistan-Specific Case Studies

6.1 Elite Capture in Pakistan's Taxation System

One of the best examples of the elite capture through institutional constraints may be seen in the tax system in Pakistan. Pakistan's tax to GDP ratio has always been low at around 9-10 per cent, a large margin below regional comparatives, despite any promise and IMF-backed initiatives on reform. This result is an outcome of deliberate political choices driven by elite interests in addition to inefficiencies of administration.²²

The best example of elite capture is the exempting of politically significant industries from effective taxation, including retail commerce, real estate, agriculture, and some industrial groups. Despite the high contribution that agriculture makes to GDP, attempts at imposing a meaningful agricultural income tax have been continuously opposed by large landowners who, many of whom are holders of parliamentary postilions. In a similar vein, real estate industry benefits from systematic undervaluation, amnesty programs and shoddy documentation to build wealth on a large scale with little outlay of money.

Elite capture also gets institutionalized due to the constraints within the institutional framework of the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR). Bureaucratic autonomy is undermined by frequent changes in postings due to leadership turnover, by the political meddling in assigning postings, and by arbitrary enforcement powers. The FBR is not an impartial tax body; in reality, it is another form of a selectively coercive entity where the formal classes of the manufacturing and salaried classes are heavily taxed while elite-linked sectors bargain for exemption and indulgence. There are serious repercussions for development. Public investment in social security, health care and education is constrained by a low tax base and inequality is exacerbated by a reliance on indirect tax. Thus, the elite control of the tax system undermines fiscal capacity and continues to cycle through high levels of inequality



and low rates of growth in Pakistan.²³

6.2 State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs): Patronage, Inefficiency, and Fiscal Drain

Another important place that institutional flaws create an opportunity for elite capture with direct costs to development are state-owned businesses. Hundreds of billions of rupees of chronic losses have been accumulated annually by major SOEs, i.e., Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) and the electricity distribution companies (DISCOs).

Unfavorable market situations are not the sole cause of such losses. Rather, they are a result of politicized structures of governance in which nominations to boards and top management are often made less on qualification than on political or personal connections.⁹ Instead of using SOEs to offer services, political elites use SOEs to pass out jobs, parcel out contracts and pocket rent, turning public businesses into instruments of political survival.²⁴

6.3 Local Governance and Development Funds: Clientelism at the Grassroots

Local governance reforms in Pakistan were aimed at decentralizing power and making development more responsive. In reality, however, elite capture has been able to sink its deep roots even at the lowest levels of government, as a result of poor institutional architecture. Provincial control over local government legislation coupled with irregular local elections has reduced true devolution.

The discretionary development funds given to Members of National and Provincial Assemblies are just one example of the way elite capture works at the local level. Such funds are often given out based on political affiliation instead of estimated developmental requirements. Local elites - often organized through kinship (biradari) networks - dominate decision-making, marginalizing poorer communities and political opponents.

This trend is aggravated by institutional limitations. Local governments are not legally protected from meddling by the province, have no administrative independence, or have fiscal autonomy. Therefore, instead of accountability going down to the citizens, it goes up to political patrons. Rather than serving as equity measures, development programs are turned into election mobilization strategies giving rise to concerned uneven spaces and contributing to social marginalization.²⁵

7. Comparative Insights and Synthesis

A recurring pattern is there in the local government, SOEs and taxation: the institutional flaws are actively contributing to the elite capture rather than being passive bystanders. Formal regulations are found in every industry, but these regulate at varying times and in an arbitrary manner (established through the selective enforcement of rules, allowing elites to dominate institutions to their own advantage).

Not isolated policy failures but symptoms of a bigger political economy problem are low budgetary capacity, ineffective public services and uneven geographical development. These examples illustrate the ways in which Pakistan's hybrid institutional order hinders inclusive development by combining the ordinary democratic processes with informal and unsystematic power patterns.²⁶

8. Implications for Development and Reform

These case studies illustrate that in the absence of tackling underlying imbalances of power, technical reforms that for instance digitize tax payments or establish plans to restructure SOE ownership or new local government legislation are likely to fail. Reforms on the economic



governance institutions to make them immune from political meddling are necessary for the sustainable growth of Pakistan.

Reduce discretionary powers over public resources; increase the accountability systems both horizontally and vertically; empower citizens rather than intermediary elites. Institutional improvements risk being hijacked and reproducing the same governance faults that they try to suppress if they fail to challenge the elite power.²⁷

Discussion

The results derived from the reviewed literature and the conceptual framework seem to suggest that challenges in the development of Pakistan are not simply the demand of scarce resources, administrative inefficiency or episodic corruption. Rather, they result from a structural interaction between institutional constraints and elite capture that has the effect of distorting the process of governance and undermining the development outcome. Institutions that should have been designed according to rule-based mechanisms for public welfare function according to patron-client logics in which informal power supersedes formal authority. This is the reason that repeated reforms in taxation, public service delivery, decentralization and accountability have had limited and often temporary results.

The discussion brings out the institutional nature of elite capture in Pakistan. Weak rule of law, politicized bureaucracy, limited regulatory autonomy and lack of transparency make it easy for elites to influence policies and resource allocation to their advantage. Over time, this capturing gets normalized to get embedded in institutional routines. As a result, governance systems lose their developmental aspects and become arrangements for the protection of elite interests.

One major insight that has come out of the analysis is the self-reinforcing feedback loop. Poor development outcomes - for instance, inequality levels, poor public services, and failures of reform - also lead to greater citizen dependency on patronage networks to obtain resources and opportunities. This dependence increases elite influence and further dilutes institutional accountability. Since then, institutional weakness, and elite capture, are not independent issues but part of a vicious circular in the reproduction of failure in governance.

The discussion also highlights the reasons why traditional anti-corruption or administrative reforms barely work. Such reforms usually focus on symptoms (i.e. bribing, inefficiency), rather than on structural incentives that enable elites to manipulate institutions. Without changing the institutional environment that allows them to capture, reforms are either resisted, weakened or absorbed by the very elites they try to control.

Conclusion

Pakistan's development outcomes are due to the interplay of institutional constraints and elite capture. While there are formal institutional frameworks for the provision of services and their delivery, elite influence, patronage politics and governance weaknesses hamper their effectiveness. The result is distorted policies, inequitable resource allocation and less than optimal development outcomes. Sustainable progress is a process that involves institutional reforms which will improve capacity, democratize institutions and reduce the room for elite capture, so that state institutions and policy align with wider public interests.

Recommendations

Dealing with Pakistan's development problems involves institutional reform and limits to elite dominance, which need to be undertaken concurrently. The recommendations of the following are drawn from the analysis:



1. Strengthening Rule Based Institutional Autonomy

- Enhance independence of regulatory institutions, institutions of accountability and oversight agencies from political interference.
- Bring in legal provisions to ensure that civil servants and regulators are not pressuring elites.
- Take administration procedures and digitize them so there is less discretionary authority.

2. Transparency, in terms of Policy and Resource Allocation

- Require disclosure of allocation of development projects and procurement contracts to public and utilization of budget.
- Open data platforms to enable citizen and civil society monitoring of the expenditure of the government.
- Institutionalize social audits at the local levels of government.

3. Bureaucratic and Civil Service Reform

- Reduce politicization in postings and promotions by merit systems.
- Strengthen the capacity and ethics of the civil service.
- Introduce performance-based evaluation associated with the delivery of services.

4. Decentralization coupled with Accountability

- Empower the local governments financially and administratively and embed good audit and monitoring systems.
- Deter local capture of elites by establishing community involvement and availability of transparency.

Tables

Table 1. Elite Capture and Institutional Constraints in Pakistan’s Taxation System

Dimension	Institutional Constraint	Mechanism of Capture	Elite Development Outcome
Tax Base	Narrow tax structure	Elite resistance to direct taxation	Low tax-to-GDP ratio
Enforcement	Weak FBR autonomy	Selective enforcement	Burden on salaried class
Policy Design	Exemptions and amnesties	and Preferential elite treatment	Regressive taxation
Accountability	Political interference	Protection of defaulters	Reduced social spending

Source: Author’s compilation based on IMF (2024) and World Bank (2023).

Table 2. State-Owned Enterprises as Sites of Elite Capture

SOE Sector	Institutional Weakness	Elite Capture Practice	Development Impact
PIA	Politicized management	Patronage hiring	Chronic financial losses
PSM	Weak oversight	Rent-seeking contracts	Repeated bailouts
Energy DISCOs	Fragmented regulation	Political protection	Circular debt
Railways	Lack of accountability	Elite route allocation	Service deterioration

Source: World Bank (2020); Pasha (2018).

Table 3. Local Governance, Development Funds, and Clientelism



Governance Level	Institutional Limitation	Elite Channel	Capture Development Consequence
Local Governments	Limited autonomy	Provincial dependence	Weak service delivery
Development Funds	Discretionary allocation	Political favoritism	Uneven development
Accountability	Upward reporting	Patron dominance	Low public trust
Elections	Irregular polls	Elite entrenchment	Persistent inequality

Source: Zaidi (2015).

Table 4. Comparative Synthesis of Elite Capture Across Sectors

Sector	Elite Form	Institutional Enabler	Key Distortion
Taxation	Political-economic elites	Weak enforcement	Fiscal fragility
SOEs	Political-bureaucratic elites	Politicized governance	Inefficiency
Local Governance	Local notables	Centralized control	Spatial inequality
Overall	Interlocking elites	Hybrid institutions	Low inclusive growth

Endnotes

¹ Daron Acemoglu., S. Johnson & James A. Robinson, *The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation*. *American Economic Review*, 91(5), (2021). 1369–1401. <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.91.5.1369>

² Muhammad Ahmed Ashfaq, *Pakistan: State Autonomy, extraction and elite capture- A theoretical conurbation*. *Pakistan Development Review*, 56:2, (2017).127-162.

³ Hamza Alavi , *The State in post-colonial societies: Pakistan and Bangladesh*. *New Left Review*. (1972)

Rosita Armytage, *Big capital in an unequal world: The micropolitics of wealth in Pakistan*. *Berghahn Dislocations*. New York; Oxford.(2020).

⁴ J.H. Chang, *Institutions and economic development: theory, policy and history*. *Journal of institutional economics*, 7(4),(2011). 473-498. *Development How to Series, Vol. 3, February*. *Development Papers, Paper No. 109, December, The World Bank*.

⁵ Daron, Acemoglu, S., Johnson, & James A. Robinson., Chapter 6 Institutions as a Fundamental Cause of Long-Run Growth. In P. Aghion & S. N. Durlauf (Eds.), *Handbook of Economic Growth* (Vol. 1,) (2005). pp. 385–472). Elsevier. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1574-0684\(05\)01006-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1574-0684(05)01006-3)

⁶ Gul Muhammad Gul and Aziz Ur Rahman, “Elite Capture and Its Implication for Pakistan 2018–2022,” *The Dialogue* 20, no. 2 (2025)..

⁷ Daron, Acemoglu., & James A. Robinson, Political institutions and comparative development. *NBER Reporter*, 2, 10., (2015).

⁸ Chang, *Institutions and economic development: theory, policy and history*, 2011.



-----DiCaprio, Alisa , *Introduction: The Role of Elites in Economic Development*. In Alice H., Amsden, DiCaprio, Alisa and Robinson, James, A. (Eds) *The Role of Elites in Economic Development*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, (2012).

⁹ Nadeem Ul Haque and Fahd Zulfiqar, *Not Elite Capture but Capture by Colonial-made Elite*, PIDE Knowledge Brief no. 121 (Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, 2024).

¹⁰ Ijaz, Nabi, *Pakistan's Development Challenges: Federalism, Security, and Governance*. Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, 2013.

-----World Bank. *Pakistan: Governance and Institutional Reform Diagnostics*. Washington, DC: World Bank, various years.

¹¹ Stiglitz, Joseph E. *The Price of Inequality*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2012.

World Bank. *World Development Report 2017: Governance and the Law*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2017.

¹² Mushtaq H. Khan, "Political Settlements and the Governance of Growth-Enhancing Institutions," ESID Working Paper no. 4 (University of Manchester, 2010).

¹³ *Pakistan National Human Development Report 2020. The three Ps of inequality: Power, people and policy*. United Nations Development Programme. Platteau, Jean-Philippe. (2004). *Monitoring elite capture in community-driven development*. *Development and Change*, 35: 2, 223-46.

¹⁴ Ahmad Jawad and Sania Zehraa, "Openness Mitigates Elite Capture and Improves Financial Development: An Analysis of Pakistan," *Asian Journal of Academic Research* 5, no. 2 (Summer 2024): 1–15.

¹⁵ International Monetary Fund and World Bank, *Pakistan: Governance and Corruption Diagnostic Assessment* (Washington, DC: IMF, 2025).

¹⁶ Nadeem ul Haque and Fahd Zulfiqar, *Not Elite Capture but Capture by Colonial-Made Elites*, PIDE Knowledge Brief no. 121 (Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, 2024).

-----Fida Muhammad Khan, "Elite Capture and Governance in Pakistan: Unravelling Historical Patterns," *Discourse* (RASTA-PIDE), 2024.

-----Fahd Zulfiqar and Abbas Moosvi, *Understanding Elite Capture*, PIDE Knowledge Brief no. 67 (Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, 2022).

¹⁷ Gul, Gul Muhammad, and Aziz Ur Rahman. "Elite Capture and Its Implication for Pakistan 2018–2022." *The Dialogue* 20, no. 2 (2025).

¹⁸ Hafiz A. Pasha, *Growth and Inequality in Pakistan* (Islamabad: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2018)



¹⁹ Jawad, Ahmad, and Sania Zehraa. „Openness Mitigates Elite Capture and Improves Financial Development: An Analysis of Pakistan. *Asian Journal of Academic Research* 5, no. 2 (2024): 1–15.

²⁰ Jawad, Ahmad, and Sania Zehraa, *Openness Mitigates Elite Capture and Improves Financial Development: An Analysis of Pakistan, 2024*.

²¹ World Bank, *Pakistan@100: Shaping the Future* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2023).

²² International Monetary Fund, *Pakistan: Selected Issues Paper* (Washington, DC: IMF, 2024).

²³ Asim Ijaz Khwaja and Atif R. Mian, “Tax Farming Redux: Experimental Evidence on Performance Pay for Tax Collectors,” *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 131, no. 1 (2016): 219–271.

²⁴ World Bank, *Pakistan—Reforming State-Owned Enterprises* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2020).

²⁵ Mushtaq H. Khan, *Rent-Seeking as Process*. In *Rents, Rent-Seeking and Economic Development*, edited by Mushtaq H. Khan and Jomo K. S. London: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

----- Anne O.Krueger, *The Political Economy of the Rent-Seeking Society*, *American Economic Review* 64, no. 3 (1974): 291–30Stiglitz, Joseph E. *The Price of Inequality*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2012.

-----World Bank. *World Development Report 2017: Governance and the Law*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2017.

²⁶ Ali Cheema, Asim Ijaz Khwaja, and Adnan Qadir. *Local Government Reform in Pakistan: Context, Content and Causes*. In *Decentralization and Local Governance in Developing Countries*, edited by Pranab Bardhan and Dilip Mookherjee. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006.

²⁷ Nadeem ul Haque and Fahd Zulfiqar, *Not Elite Capture but Capture by Colonial-Made Elites*, PIDE Knowledge Brief no. 121 (Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, 2024)