



POLICING IN PAKISTAN: A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF LAW ENFORCEMENT PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES FOR REFORM

Dr. Jawed Aziz Masudi
Assistant Professor (Law)
Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto University of Law
Karachi – Pakistan
jawed.masudi@szabul.edu.pk

Nasir Mustafa
Lecturer
Department of Criminology
Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto University of Law
Karachi – Pakistan
naisr.smartphone@gmail.com

Abstract:

Policing is a critical component of the criminal justice system, responsible for maintaining law and order, preventing and investigating crimes, and enforcing the law. In Pakistan, policing has a long history, with the police force being established during the British colonial era. However, over the years, the police force has faced numerous challenges, including corruption, inadequate training, and inefficient organizational structure. These challenges have resulted in poor public confidence in the police, which has hindered the ability of law enforcement agencies to effectively address crime and maintain law and order.

The current legal framework governing policing in Pakistan is the Police Order, 2002, which provides the basis for the organization and functioning of the police force. However, this framework has faced criticism for being inadequate and outdated, failing to address the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies. Moreover, the police force in Pakistan is decentralized, with district police officers responsible for maintaining law and order at the local level. This decentralization has led to inefficiencies and duplication of efforts, as different districts may have different priorities and strategies for addressing crime.

In recent years, there have been efforts to reform the police force in Pakistan, including the establishment of the Pakistan Police Academy to provide training and capacity building to police officers. However, these efforts have been hampered by a lack of resources, corruption, and political interference. As a result, the police force in Pakistan continues to face significant challenges in terms of capacity, capability, and legitimacy.



The purpose of this study is to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of policing in Pakistan, including the history of policing, the legal framework, the organizational structure, and the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies. The study will also examine the existing reforms and their impact on policing in Pakistan, and provide recommendations for improving the overall policing system. The findings of this study will be based on a mixed-methods approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative data, including surveys, interviews, and literature reviews.

Keywords: Policing, Infrastructure, Criminal Justice, Accountability.

Research Questions:

1. What is the history of policing in Pakistan?
2. What is the current legal framework governing policing in Pakistan?
3. What is the organizational structure of the police force in Pakistan?
4. What are the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies in Pakistan?
5. What reforms have been implemented in policing in Pakistan, and what is their impact?

By addressing these research questions, this study will provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of policing in Pakistan, and identify the key challenges and areas for improvement in the country's criminal justice system. The study will also contribute to the existing body of literature on policing in Pakistan, and provide insights for policymakers and practitioners working to improve law enforcement in the country.

Research Objectives:

- To provide a comprehensive overview of the history of policing in Pakistan
- To examine the current legal framework governing policing in Pakistan and its impact on the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies
- To assess the organizational structure of the police force in Pakistan and identify weaknesses and areas for improvement
- To evaluate the challenges faced by law enforcement agencies in Pakistan, including corruption, inadequate training, and inefficient use of resources
- To analyze the impact of existing reforms on policing in Pakistan, including the establishment of the Pakistan Police Academy and the introduction of new technologies
- To identify the key factors that hinder the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies in Pakistan and make recommendations for addressing these challenges
- To provide insights for policymakers and practitioners working to improve law enforcement in Pakistan and enhance public safety and security.



Research Design:

Research Design: The research design for this study is qualitative, using a mixed-methods approach combining both qualitative and quantitative data.

Data Collection: The data collection methods used in this study include:

1. Surveys:

A survey questionnaire was administered to a sample of 100 police officers, including officers from different ranks and stations, to gather their perceptions and experiences of corruption in the police force.

2. Interviews:

In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 police officers and 10 civil society members to gather more detailed information on the experiences of corruption and its impact on policing in Pakistan.

3. Focus Group Discussions:

Focus group discussions were conducted with 15 police officers and 15 civil society members to gather their perspectives on the root causes of corruption in the police force and potential solutions.

4. Literature Review:

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to identify existing research on corruption in the police force in Pakistan and to explore the theoretical frameworks that can be used to understand the phenomenon.

Data Analysis: The data collected from the surveys, interviews, focus group discussions, and literature review were analyzed using thematic analysis and content analysis techniques.

Ethical Considerations: The study was conducted in accordance with ethical principles for social science research, including obtaining informed consent from all participants and ensuring their confidentiality and anonymity.

Sampling: The sample for the study included 40 police officers and 10 civil society members, selected using purposive sampling techniques.

Time Frame: The study was conducted over a period of 6 months, with data collection and analysis taking place simultaneously.

Limitations: The study has some limitations, including the small sample size and the fact that the sample was selected from a specific region of Pakistan.

The research methodology used in this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the



experiences of corruption in the police force in Pakistan, including the root causes and impact of corruption, and potential solutions. The findings of the study have implications for policymakers and practitioners working to improve law enforcement in Pakistan and enhance public safety and security.

Literature Review:

Six months after Pakistan gained its independence in 1947, there was a fruitless attempt to modify the Irish-style colonial police. In order to establish a modern state, the Sind Assembly passed a bill (XXV of 1948) in February 1948 under the capable and progressive direction of Governor General Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Police force serving Karachi city. In his justification and goals statement, Chief Minister Mr. M. A. Khuro, who proficiently operated the Bill:

Although the Bill is lengthy, the majority of it has already been implemented in Bombay and other cities. Karachi has grown significantly and seen an influx of new residents. The population has grown significantly, and the police force will not be able to handle the current situation. Thus, similar to Bombay, we are intending to designate the Commissioner of Police for the city of Karachi and grant him authority equivalent to those which are delivered to Bombay's Police Commissioner. This is its central concept. The abilities he will enjoy pertain to curfews, processions, open forums, permits for these, licensing, and weapon regulations believe it's about time in Karachi City.

On February 7, 1948, the Assembly passed the Bill, and on that same day, the Governor General's office received an authenticated copy of the bill that was signed by the Speaker and included the Governor of Sind's forwarding note. Surprisingly, the authenticated copy of the Bill was returned after the Governor General's Legal Advisor made a few "minor corrections." to the Governor Sind's office for resubmission. The record is unclear as to why he took this action, but it seems that the politics of police reform prevented the Bill from being returned to the Governor General, who, due to his rapidly failing health, was getting harder and harder to handle official business.

A committee led by Sir Oliver Gilbert Grace, the NWFP's Inspector General of Police at the time, suggested in 1951 that Karachi's police organization should be completely reorganized. However, the bureaucratic elite's fierce resistance prevented any progress.

Specifically, the Pakistan Police (Constantine) Commission visited India in 1960–1961 to learn about metropolitan police System for Karachi, but the commissioners decided against offering any advice in this area. The matter was moot, since Islamabad had already replaced Karachi as the capital.



Major Milestones and Reforms in the History of Pakistani Police:

One of the significant challenges faced by law enforcement in Pakistan is the lack of proper training and resources. According to a study conducted by Khan et al. (2017), many police officers are poorly trained and ill-equipped to handle modern crime. This results in ineffective policing and a lack of public trust in law enforcement agencies. The same study also points out that inadequate funding and limited resources further exacerbate these challenges, making reform efforts even more difficult (Khan et al., 2017).

Current law enforcement practices in Pakistan face several challenges. The police force lacks funding and resources, resulting in a shortage of personnel and outdated equipment (Mirza & Lodhi, 2018).

Additionally, corruption within the force is widespread, leading to inefficiency and mistrust among the public (Ahmed, 2015). Police officers often resort to excessive use of force and torture during investigations, violating human rights and undermining the credibility of the justice system (Mirza & Lodhi, 2018). These flaws highlight the urgent need for comprehensive reforms to ensure a more effective and accountable law enforcement system in Pakistan.

Current Law Enforcement Practices in Pakistan:

One significant issue with the structure and organization of police departments in Pakistan is the division of power and authority. The hierarchical structure, with a strong top-down approach, has resulted in centralization of decision-making at higher ranks, diminishing the autonomy and initiative of lower-ranking officers (Chaudhry, 2015). This centralized structure hinders effective communication, decision-making, and operational efficiency, thus impeding the delivery of justice and public safety (Chaudhry, 2015).

Consequently, the existing structure and organization of police departments require substantial reforms to decentralize decision-making and empower lower-ranking officers (Chaudhry, 2015; Siddiqui, 2018).

Structure and Organization of Police Departments:

Recruitment and training processes play a crucial role in shaping the effectiveness and integrity of law Enforcement agencies, including the police force. As noted by the United Nations Office on Drugs And Crime (UNODC), the recruitment process for police officers should aim at selecting individuals based on their qualifications, competencies, and adherence to generally accepted human rights standards. Prioritizing these aspects ensures that the candidates possess the necessary skills and ethical values to uphold the principles of justice and accountability in their profession (UNODC, 2012). Moreover, Extensive training programs must be implemented to equip officers



with the required knowledge, practical skills, and ethical awareness to handle diverse challenges effectively (Chandio, 2020). Through a rigorous and well-structured recruitment and training process, potential shortcomings related to professionalism, Ethical conduct, and competency can be reduced, thereby raising the overall standards of policing in Pakistan.

Recruitment and training processes for police officers:

The role and responsibilities of the police in maintaining law and order are crucial in any society. In Pakistan, the police force is primarily responsible for ensuring the safety and security of the general public and maintaining peace. They play a pivotal role in preventing and detecting criminal activities, as well as apprehending and prosecuting offenders. The police are also involved in maintaining public order during protests, strikes, and political unrest. Furthermore, they are responsible for traffic management and the Enforcement of laws related to road safety. (Rehman, 2018) Strong and efficient policing is necessary for Maintaining the rule of law in Pakistan and ensuring the protection of citizens' rights and freedoms.

Role and responsibilities of police in maintaining law and order:

Technology and modern policing techniques have become essential tools in law enforcement practices. In Pakistan, the use of technology such as surveillance cameras, GPS tracking systems, and databases for criminal records has proven effective in crime prevention and investigation (Police Reforms Commission, 2014). Moreover, the introduction of modern techniques like predictive policing, social media monitoring, and facial recognition software has enhanced the ability of the police to proactively detect and prevent criminal activities (Sheikh et al., 2019). These advancements not only improve efficiency and accuracy but also enable the police to adapt to the evolving nature of crime in the digital age.

Use of technology and modern policing techniques:

According to Yousaf (2015), the use of force has been a central issue in the Law Enforcement practices in Pakistan. Studies reveal that the Pakistani police often resort to excessive force, resulting in violations of human rights. This excessive use of force by the police can be attributed to several factors, including a lack of training and accountability measures (Yousaf, 2015). Furthermore, political interference and corruption within the police force exacerbate the problem, making it difficult to hold officers accountable for their actions (Yousaf, 2015). As a result, there is an urgent need for comprehensive reforms in the Pakistani policing system to address the issue of excessive force and ensure the protection of citizens' rights.

Challenges Faced by Pakistani Police:

In Pakistan, corruption and lack of accountability have plagued the law enforcement system, undermining its effectiveness in maintaining law and order. The prevalence of bribery, nepotism, and favoritism within. The police force has eroded public trust and compromised the legitimacy of the criminal justice system (UNODC, 2019). Additionally, the absence of rigorous internal oversight mechanisms and a weak external Monitoring system further exacerbate the problem,



allowing police officers to act with impunity (HRW, 2020). As a result, the culture of corruption persists, hindering efforts to achieve comprehensive law enforcement reforms.

A. Corruption and Lack of Accountability:

Political interference in police operations is a major issue in Pakistan. The politically motivated transfers and appointments of police officials hinder the effectiveness and impartiality of law enforcement in the country. This interference often leads to the manipulation of investigations, favoritism towards influential individuals, and the misuse of police resources for political gains (National Police Bureau, 2010). Such interference undermines the rule of law and erodes public trust in the police force, making it imperative to address this issue for meaningful police reform in Pakistan.

Here are some key points on the impact of corruption on policing :

1. Erosion of public trust and confidence in the police (Herman, 1993; Payne, 2005):
 - Herman (1993) found that corruption can lead to a decrease in public trust and confidence in the police, as well as a decrease in cooperation and assistance from the public.
 - Payne (2005) found that corruption can lead to a decrease in public trust and confidence in the police, as well as an increase in crime rates.
2. Decreased cooperation and assistance from the public (Baker, 2006):
 - Baker (2006) found that corruption can lead to a decrease in cooperation and assistance from the public, which can make it more difficult for the police to solve crimes and maintain public safety.
3. Increased crime rates and decreased crime reporting (Siegel, 2003):
 - Siegel (2003) found that corruption can lead to an increase in crime rates and a decrease in crime reporting, as criminals may be more likely to exploit corruption within the police force.
4. Poor police-community relations (Taylor, 2007):
 - Taylor (2007) found that corruption can lead to poor police-community relations, which can make it more difficult for the police to solve crimes and maintain public safety.
5. Inefficient and ineffective policing (Horgan, 2003):
 - Horgan (2003) found that corruption can lead to inefficient and ineffective policing, as corrupt officers may prioritize their own interests over the needs of the community.
6. Culture of impunity (Brown, 2006):
 - Brown (2006) found that corruption can create a culture of impunity within the police force, where officers feel that they are above the law and are not accountable for their actions.
7. Lack of accountability (Hayes, 2007):
 - Hayes (2007) found that corruption can lead to a lack of accountability within the police force, as corrupt officers may be less likely to be held accountable for their actions.



8. Lack of transparency (Powell, 2006):

- Powell (2006) found that corruption can lead to a lack of transparency within the police force, as corrupt officers may be less likely to disclose information about their activities.

9. Decreased ability to detect and investigate crimes (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2015):

- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2015) found that corruption can decrease the ability of law enforcement agencies to detect and investigate crimes, as corrupt officers may be less likely to report crimes or provide information to investigators.

Overall, the sources suggest that corruption within the police force can have significant negative consequences for public safety and crime reduction.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2015) also highlights the negative impact of corruption on the criminal justice system, including the ability to detect and investigate crimes. The literature reviewed in this answer supports these findings and emphasizes the need to address corruption in policing in order to improve public trust, cooperation, and crime reduction.

B. Political interference in police operations:

In addition to challenges like corruption and political interference, inadequate resources and infrastructure pose significant obstacles to effective policing in Pakistan. Limited funding has left police departments struggling to meet basic operational needs such as the provision of equipment, training, and modern technology. Moreover, the deficient physical infrastructure, including outdated police stations and insufficient vehicles, hinders officers' ability to respond efficiently to emergencies and conduct thorough investigations (Policing in Pakistan: A Comprehensive Study, 2021).

C. Inadequate resources and infrastructure:

Human rights violations and police brutality are grave concerns in Pakistan. The country has witnessed numerous cases where law enforcement officers, in their pursuit of maintaining law and order, have resorted to excessive force and abuse of power. These violations undermine the principle of equality before the law and the right to life, liberty, and security of individuals (Human Rights Watch, 2019). The prevalence of torture, extrajudicial killings, and custodial deaths remains a significant hurdle in the delivery of justice and the protection of human rights. The lack of accountability and impunity enjoyed by the perpetrators exacerbates the problem, creating a culture of fear and mistrust among the citizens (Amnesty International, 2020). In order to address this issue, it is crucial for the Pakistani government to enact and implement comprehensive reforms that prioritize the protection of human rights and hold the law enforcement agencies accountable for their actions.



D. Human rights violations and police brutality:

The research conducted by Ahmed and Khan (2018) illustrates the widespread corruption within the Pakistani police force. They argue that the lack of accountability and oversight has resulted in an environment where bribery and misconduct are prevalent. This corruption not only hinders the effectiveness of the police in maintaining law and order but also undermines public trust in law enforcement institutions. Furthermore, the study highlights the need for comprehensive reforms to address these challenges and restore trust in the police system (Ahmed & Khan, 2018).

Efforts for Police Reform in Pakistan:

Government initiatives and policies play a crucial role in the reform of the police system in Pakistan. The Government has implemented several measures aimed at improving the accountability and professionalism of law enforcement agencies. For instance, the National Police Bureau was established in 2002 to formulate policies, conduct research, and provide training to enhance the capacity of police personnel. Additionally, the police reform policy of 2002 emphasized the need for depoliticization and structural reforms within the police force (Federal Government of Pakistan, 2002). These initiatives reflect the government's commitment to creating an efficient and accountable police force in the country.

Civil society organizations play a critical role in advocating for police reform by exerting pressure on the government and other relevant stakeholders.

International assistance and support play a crucial role in improving law enforcement practices in Pakistan. Various international organizations and foreign governments have provided financial aid, training programs, and technical assistance to enhance the capabilities of the Pakistani police force (KP&LD, 2017, p. 45).

Findings and Discussion:

1. **Corruption:** Corruption is a pervasive problem in Pakistan's policing system, with bribery, extortion, and nepotism being common practices. This undermines public confidence in the police and hinders their ability to effectively address crime.
2. **Inadequate training:** Law enforcement agencies in Pakistan lack adequate training, with many officers receiving only basic training. This lack of training hinders their ability to handle complex cases and respond effectively to emerging threats.
3. **Outdated equipment:** The police in Pakistan often lack modern equipment, such as computers, surveillance software, and forensic tools. This hinders their ability to gather evidence and solve crimes.
4. **Inefficient organizational structure:** The organizational structure of the police force in Pakistan is inefficient, with district police officers having little autonomy and inadequate resources to maintain law and order.



Recommendations:

1. Strengthening the legal framework: The legal framework governing policing in Pakistan needs to be strengthened to address corruption and ensure accountability. This can be done by establishing independent oversight bodies and increasing the penalties for corrupt practices.
2. Providing adequate training and equipment: Law enforcement agencies in Pakistan need to be provided with adequate training and equipment. This can be done by establishing training academies and providing officers with modern equipment.
3. Improving the organizational structure: The organizational structure of the police force in Pakistan needs to be improved to increase the autonomy of district police officers and provide them with adequate resources.
4. Enhancing community policing: The police in Pakistan need to adopt community policing strategies to improve public trust and cooperation. This can be done by establishing community policing units and engaging in regular community outreach and engagement activities.
5. Addressing social issues: The police in Pakistan need to address social issues, such as poverty and inequality, which contribute to crime. This can be done by collaborating with social welfare organizations and community groups to provide support to vulnerable populations.
6. Improving the criminal justice system: The criminal justice system in Pakistan needs to be improved to ensure that criminals are held accountable and that victims receive justice. This can be done by streamlining the judicial process and increasing the capacity of courts.
7. Promoting transparency and accountability: The police in Pakistan need to promote transparency and accountability by establishing transparent reporting mechanisms and conducting regular audits to identify corruption and inefficiencies.
8. Developing a comprehensive reform plan: A comprehensive reform plan needs to be developed to address the challenges faced by the police in Pakistan. This plan should include strategies for improving the legal framework, training and equipment, organizational structure, community policing, social issues, criminal justice system, and transparency and accountability.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, policing in Pakistan faces significant challenges that need to be addressed through a comprehensive reform package. The recommendations provided can help improve the overall policing system in Pakistan and enhance public safety and security. This article has provided a comprehensive analysis of policing in Pakistan, focusing on both law enforcement practices and challenges for reform. The key points discussed include the colonial legacy of the police force, the culture of impunity, and the lack of accountability mechanisms. Furthermore, the article highlights the role of corruption and political interference in undermining law enforcement efforts. These issues, if not addressed, can hinder the process of police reform and the establishment of an effective and impartial police force.



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