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Exploring the Impacts of Social Capital on Public Political Participation: An Empirical Examination of Balochistan, Pakistan

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Abstract

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Keywords: Social Capital, Political Participation, Norms of Reciprocity, Social Development, Pakistan

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Exploring the Impacts of Social Capital on Public Political Participation: An Empirical Examination of Balochistan, Pakistan

Abstract

John Stuart Mill's assertion that democracy may not be viable in non-European countries gains traction when examining public political participation in Baluchistan. The fertile land of Baluchistan seems unfertile for democracy due to its absolute tribal system, scattered population, and societal stagnation. The present research was conducted while considering these factors. In this regard, 460 useful samples were analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences and Analysis of Moment Structures version 24.0. The study finds that social capital is one of the most significant variables that can increase public political participation and psychological involvement in national affairs. It offers a robust conceptualization for the political agents, and parties of Baluchistan for developing the civic sense and norms of reciprocity towards political participation among the people. This study offers the best option of public participation in politics to achieve economic, and social development and prosperity in society.

Keywords:

[Social Capital](#), [Political Participation](#), [Norms of Reciprocity](#), [Social Development](#), [Pakistan](#)

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Introduction

The state of Pakistan and the province of Baluchistan have had an uncertain and difficult past, since the verge of independence. Right after the birth of Pakistan, on the issue of Kalat state, the first insurgency in Baluchistan began. The foundation

stone for the second Baluch insurgency was laid in 1955 in the form of a one-unit scheme. Both of these insurgencies were short-lived but the third which was started in 1973 during the Prime Ministership of Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is said to be the most destructive, hazardous, and prolonged (Akhter, Waheed, & Abid, [2022](#)). In this way, Baluchistan



faced another turmoil during the era of Zia ul Haq. The relations between Baluchistan and the center remained hot throughout the democratic regimes of P.M Benazir Bhutto and Muhammad Nawaz Shareef. Inter-tribal clashes were also witnessed during this decade. A new chapter in the political history of Baluchistan was started with the arrival of President Musharraf. Due to uncertain relations with the state of Pakistan, Baluchistan has never enjoyed influence over the mainstream decisions of the country (Javaid, 2010). Even decisions related to the core provincial matters are usually made by the center through the native Sardars/Nawabs. It is due to the inappropriate political representation, the civil and military bureaucracy of Islamabad used to decide the fate of the distant local population of Baluchistan. The case of Baluchistan for provincial autonomy may be justified but we must not ignore the fact that the political structure of the province is quite different from the rest of the country.

Geographically, Baluchistan is the largest province of Pakistan and home to diverse ethnic and tribal groups, including Baloch, Pashtuns, Brahuis, and others. Tribal affiliations, loyalties, and power dynamics have a strong influence on the political landscape of the province. Being tribal, the society is dominated by the heads of the tribes, commonly known as *Sardars* or *Nawabs*. The Sardars/ Nawabs are the real sovereigns and sole policymakers of their respective tribes. In some instances, tribal laws hold more authority than governmental laws, exerting significant influence in the political landscape (Atif, Anwar, & Ahmad, 2023). Tribal leaders have played a crucial role in shaping the political dynamics of the province by rallying support from their tribes during elections and exerting influence over political decision-making processes. The tribal structures in Baluchistan operate through intricate networks of patronage (Noraiee, 2020). Political figures often depend on the backing of tribal heads to uphold and strengthen their power. In exchange, these leaders provide patronage, which includes political positions, government contracts, and resources, to the tribal elites. This interdependence reinforces the role of tribalism within the political system and reinforces the dominance of tribal leaders. Additionally, tribal affiliations and support strongly impact electoral outcomes, with candidates who possess strong tribal connections enjoying an advantage in local elections (Kao, 2022). The loyalty of tribal constituents to their respective leaders often translates into votes, giving tribal-affiliated

candidates an edge. There is a complex web of patronage networks across the province that bounds the political landscape to revolve around interdependence and patronage, reinforcement of tribalism in politics, strong dominance of tribal heads, electoral advantage, and political pluralism. This tendency can result in the dominance of specific tribes or families in the political landscape of the province. The complexities caused by tribalism can result in limited political representation for marginalized groups. The tribal heads are the key players; be it political role or social. Mostly, candidates with Sardar's support win. Therefore, the only marginalized group is the commoners (the ruled) within the province (Grigoriadis, 2006). The dominance of certain tribes or families in politics often leads to the concentration of power and resources in their hands, while other communities may be excluded or marginalized. This can undermine democratic principles of inclusivity and equal representation. As described above, tribal affiliations tend to influence voting patterns and candidate selection. Clan-based politics, where voters support candidates from their own tribe or clan, can limit choices and perpetuate the dominance of specific tribal groups. This can hinder the emergence of diverse political platforms and ideas, potentially limiting the democratic process. Similarly, tribal leaders act as patrons to provide resources and support to their tribal constituents (Lucero, Emerson, Beurle, & Roubideaux, 2020). While this can foster a sense of solidarity, it can also create clientelistic relationships that prioritize personal connections over democratic decision-making. Political leaders may rely on these relationships for electoral support, thereby undermining the principle of an informed and engaged electorate. In this way, tribalism can contribute to gender inequality in political participation (Prillaman, 2023). Traditional tribal norms and patriarchal structures often limit women's involvement in politics, resulting in their underrepresentation in decision-making processes. Ongoing conflicts, often rooted in tribal grievances, can disrupt the functioning of institutions, suppress political freedoms, and discourage citizens from actively engaging in politics.

Thus, it can be argued that the political structure of Baluchistan is highly individualized (individual means the Sardar or Nawab). In Baluchistan, the Sardar holds a unique position of traditional leadership and influence. However, the Sardar's

ability to operate independently and challenge the military's influence is limited. Sardars are more powerful traditionally, culturally, and socially while military power is undivided when it comes to the strategic location of the province, natural resources, and separatist elements. The military's substantial presence in Baluchistan plays a significant role in shaping local politics and governance. Sometimes both of these powers depend on each other). It is the individual or personal clout over the system that makes it weak. A common man is more interested in the social matters of the tribe rather than the political affairs of the country. Therefore, public political participation is arguably low in the province which can be observed from their vote turnout which remained low.

Social Capital and Public Political Participation

Social capital is something related to social networks, trust, and norms that create an atmosphere of social cooperation for mutual benefit (Dyreson, 2001). Besides, there is a huge affiliation of social capital with political participation. An individual has higher social capital on account of the strong facilitation of social relations in human society (Kingsley, Foenander, & Bailey, 2020). Social capital is embodied with various factors, but civic engagement along with networks and the degree of reciprocity with respect to norms have more predicting power on political participation.

The degree of norms pertaining to reciprocity indicates an interchange of information which have been contributed and considered plausible through social gatherings. Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) conceptualized the term social capital as being related to "money capital". In a similar way, remarkably, a network of civic engagement is the final and foremost pillar of social capital (Portes, 1998). Such a predictor is based on cooperation and the associations that have been molded by linkage with others as regards delicate social existence in an assembly of individuals (Dold & Lewis, 2022).

Despite the fact, that Baluchistan is one of the areas where the tribal system is quite absolute, social capital seems a potential factor that may help to make the tribal system antique by enhancing public participation in politics. It is believed that people's participation in the electoral process and the level of freedom on the day of polling can play a catalytic

role for democracy to function effectively (Mangi, Soomro, & Larik, 2021). Across the world, various techniques have been used to increase people's psychological involvement in political affairs or participation in the voting process. These techniques, such as; the usage of social media (Kim & Ellison, 2022), mainstream media, motivational conferences, and seminars, but all of these tools said to be useless in areas like Baluchistan, because of its peculiar demographic characteristics, low level of education, and uncertain conditions of security.

The tribal society is often characterized by close-knit communities where social relationships and networks hold great importance. Therefore, it can be argued that social capital can play a basic role in facilitating political participation. Social capital facilitates the flow of information within tribal communities (Musavengane & Simatele, 2016). Within a tightly interconnected community, individuals frequently obtain dependable information through personal relationships and social networks. This information sharing can enable members of the community to make informed decisions about political issues and candidates, leading to increased participation (Mangi, Shah, & Ali Soomro, 2019). Likewise, these societies often have a strong tradition of collective action and decision-making. Social capital strengthens the bonds within the community and enhances solidarity, making it easier to mobilize groups of people for political purposes (Ntontis, Drury, Amlôt, Rubin, & Williams, 2020). Whether it's organizing protests, advocating for policy changes, or supporting specific candidates, social capital can facilitate collective action and amplify the political voice of the tribal community. In addition, social capital can exert social pressure and promote accountability among individuals (Zhang, Zheng, Zhang, & Hu, 2020). When people are socially connected and have shared norms and values, deviating from expected political participation norms can lead to social repercussions. This can encourage individuals to participate actively in political processes to maintain their standing and reputation within the community. Further, social capital can empower individuals within tribal societies to represent the interests and concerns of their community (Fenton, Keegan, & Parry, 2023). Well-connected individuals who possess social capital may assume leadership roles, acting as advocates and spokespersons for the

community's political aspirations. Their influence and access to resources can enhance political participation by mobilizing support and amplifying tribal voices in decision-making processes.

Conclusively, social capital enables individuals in Baluchistan to play an active role in molding the course of their respective regions. It offers a platform for underrepresented perspectives to gain visibility, nurturing a feeling of shared influence and responsibility in the political process. These adept supporters utilize their social capital to urge beneficial transformations, ultimately leading toward a society that is more inclusive and empowered. The study may provide a useful direction to political parties, political or social activists, and planners. By pursuing the results of the study, political parties may develop an image of norms of reciprocity and civic sense among the people of the province. Furthermore, it may be a healthy addition to the published literature in the context of Baluchistan.

Literature Review and Conceptualization

In America, Europe, and some countries in Asia, the level of public participation in political affairs was observed high in the bygone days. The higher public participation indicated a higher level of public trust in national institutions as well as the electoral process (Mangi et al., 2019). The participation developed a sense of attachment and ownership among the public which helped these societies to develop in every aspect (Peregrine, 2017). Being a part of society, researchers performed accordingly; hence, various components of society such as; education (Willeck & Mendelberg, 2022), income (Sari, Mokoagow, & Andari, 2023), socio-political status, social capital (Bosi, Lavizzari, & Portos, 2022), social networks and many more have been examined. Furthermore, with the passage of time, new problems and issues erupted even in developed societies; therefore, it was the need of time to investigate the factors that caused these problems. Thus, once again people's psychological factors like; attitude, behavior, intention, trust, and distrust became crucial for the researchers of almost all domains of social sciences (Dirks & Skarlicki, 2004). Nevertheless, various researchers investigated and explored the importance and function of social trust, voting patterns, and individual inclination toward leadership in order to enhance citizen's

participation in political affairs (S. Kim, 2010; Mahmood, Sohail, Mushtaq, & Rizvi, 2014).

Mahmood *et al.* (2014) strongly stressed that people's participation in political or national affairs made obvious involvement of the various groups of individuals such as; youth, the educated, the middle-class; and the working class. As observed by Mangi *et al.* (2019) adolescents are more interested in political participation through online tools such as the Internet. The result of the study brought out the investigation in form of the factors such as; age, income, self-efficacy, and utilized time on social media as participated groups that are highly found among adolescents of the country. Conversely, it is not guaranteed that higher political participation would flourish democracy or not (Krishna, 2002). Various researchers have formulated the notion of social capital which is an essential speculative and scholastic meditation in the scientific era along with the studies of social science (Hurlbert, Beggs, & Haines, 2001). Additionally, social capital consists of two basic factors the degree of association between basic networks and social networks (Ragnedda & Ruiiu, 2020). Social capital generally depends on the domain of social networks to assist people for the sake of access to supplication and resources. (Hurlbert et al., 2001; Portes, 1998). Meanwhile, the notion pertaining to social capital varies from researcher to researcher with respect to the locale. It is found that when both religiosity and corporate performance are high, social capital has a detrimental effect on tax avoidance (Chircop, Fabrizi, Ipino, & Parbonetti, 2018). On the other hand, the domain researchers also highlighted the considerable influence of social capital on environmental knowledge and pro-environmental attitudes (Castaneda, Martinez, Marte, & Roxas, 2015). Literature demonstrated that if an individual produces a trust and act of kindness, then, another individual resorts towards responses for the first one, after that it develops a responsibility upon the second in a society. Similarly, it would become helpful for numerous individuals in favor of social networks leading towards financial capital. Hence, individuals possess a great level of responsibility as counted unsettled with respect to such factors. Besides, prediction in the case of information with the support of academic social networks as perused through the element of anticipation is found essential in this way (Tohidinia & Mosakhani, 2010). Tohidinia and Mosakhani (2010) coerced the reciprocity of norms being linked with information

positively and significantly. Good governance and social cohesion serve as an excellent contributor to economic development (Emara & El-Said, 2021). In the same perspective, it is found different network formations drive balanced social communication among individuals (Postelnicu & Hermes, 2018). Social capital plays a beneficial role in Greek political institutions, particularly in relation to democracy (Daskalopoulou, 2018). However, a shift in the dynamics of this relationship has been observed following the global economic crisis, as highlighted by Daskalopoulou (2018). Conversely, in Bangladesh, it is discovered that norms of reciprocity, social networks, civic participation, and social trust are inversely correlated with poverty (Islam & Alam, 2018). Reciprocity of norms is recognized as an essential factor of social capital (Bhandari & Yasunobu, 2009). In a similar mode, the notion of trust and reciprocity of norms varies from researcher to researcher. So far the values pertaining to reciprocity's notion weighed through discussion/dialogues regarding the basic constituent of social capital. In addition to this, the various researchers opined regarding the norms of reciprocity in the context of social capital adequately. Norms of reciprocity are divided into two categories, negative and positive, receivers, and givers (Igel, Brandt, Haberkern, & Szydlik, 2009; Staub & Sherk, 1970). However, the individuals' engagement within the networks has been recognized as "the heart of democracy" (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Henceforth, it is initially suggested through the

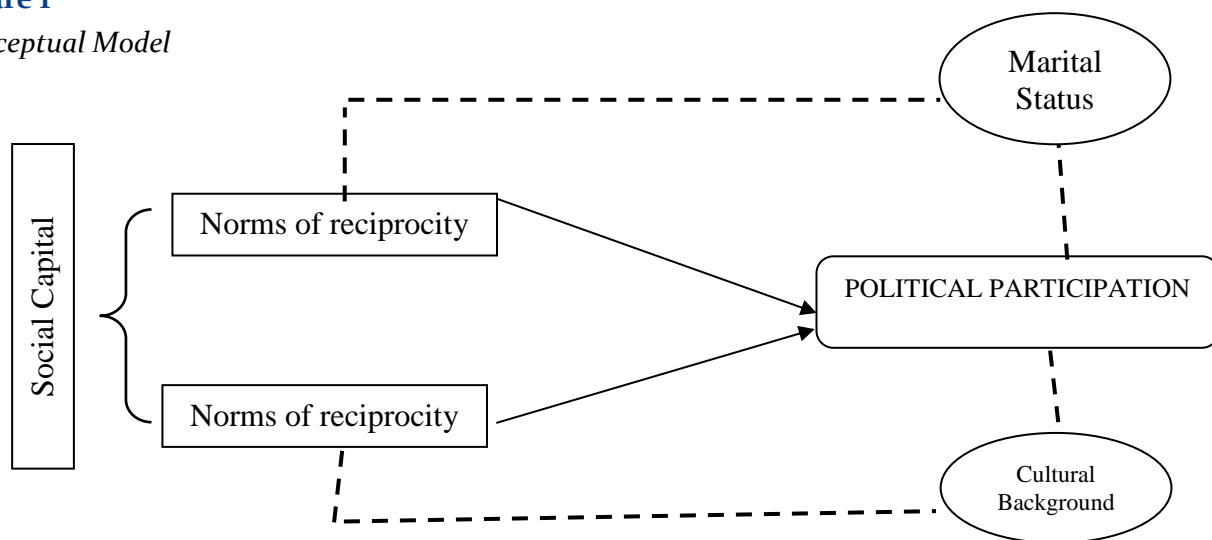
different researchers and taught people who had remained busy in civic engagement of networks that were estimated to gain various meaningful behaviors and political attitudes.

As a result, the literature clearly shows significant and a positive association among the degree of reciprocity of norms and civic engagement of networks and partaking in politics. Furthermore, the researchers developed the following conceptual model on the basis of the variables explained above along with two demographic variables for knowing the marital status and cultural background of the respondents (Figure 1). Moreover, on the basis of conceptualization, two hypotheses were generated for investigation in a proper mode.

The current study focuses on investigating social capital's influence on public political participation for some reasons; firstly, despite the fact that Baluchistan is the largest province of the country the parallel fact is that it has never given a central position in the legislative process or national affairs. Secondly, due to uncertain conditions of law order and scattered population, social scientists have rarely focused on the province. Thirdly, public political attachment or involvement remained low when compared to the other provinces of the country. Finally, it is assumed in Pakistan that the people of Baluchistan are more loyal to their tribes as compared to federalism, therefore, the majority of them do not bother to participate in the electoral process.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model



Source: Developed by the researcher

Based on the above conceptual model and relationships; the following hypotheses were developed.

1. H1. Reciprocity norms significantly and positively influence the level of individuals' political engagement in Baluchistan.
2. H2. Networks of civic engagement have a substantial and positive role in fostering individual political participation in Baluchistan.

Research Methodology

The Baloch, the Jats, and Meds are believed to be the earliest inhabitants of Baluchistan. The Pashtuns are also counted among the early settlers (Faiz, 2021). The Meds reside along the coasts. The Pashtuns predominantly gather in their homes located behind Takht-e-Suleman. The Baloch people can be categorized into three main groups: Sulemani Baloch, Makrani, and Rakshani. Makrani and Rakshani Balochs live in the northwestern region of Baluchistan and belong to various Baloch tribes lacking strong tribal systems (Syed, Shah, Xu, & Xu, 2022). Conversely, Sulemani tribes inhabit the southeastern part of Baluchistan. Unlike the Makrani and Rakshani tribes, the Sulemani tribes possess a robust tribal system. Although educated individuals can be found among the Sulemani Balochs, they still prefer tribal life and embrace tribalism.

Therefore, the quantitative data for the current study was collected from the respondents belonging to the Sulemani Baloch origin by adopting a cross-sectional method. Quetta the capital of the province, Kalat, Khuzdar, Mastung, and Nushki are known for having a substantial population of Sulemani Baloch. Therefore, these cities were focused. Being a non-Baloch it was difficult to identify the tribal origin of the respondents. Therefore, a local enumerator for this purpose was arranged. The minimum age of the respondent was 20 years and there was no limitation for the maximum age. Due to the social restrictions, all the participants were male. However, the researchers have employed a positivist approach (scientific measurement), which is largely associated with the behavior of individuals (Alakwe, 2017).

Population and Sample Size

In the research, the term "population" refers to the

complete set of all origins (Li, Higgins, & Deeks, 2019). The sample is a necessary requirement for empirical studies, adopting a positivist approach and providing comprehensive evidence while dealing with a smaller number of components (Guad et al., 2021). According to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) guideline, as the population expands, the sample size increases at a diminishing rate until it reaches a state of equilibrium, ultimately stabilizing at slightly over 380 samples (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). It is unnecessary to expand the sample size beyond this number for the purpose of ensuring reliability and efficiency (Zhao & Qiu, 2013). Additionally, in relation to the sample size, the researcher also noted that a minimum of 200 returned samples is required to conduct multivariate statistical analysis. Based on recommendations from field researchers, a total of 800 survey questionnaires were initially distributed, resulting in 460 returned samples and a response rate of 57.5 percent. After data cleaning and screening, a total of 414 samples were used for the final investigation.

Measures

Political participation- The factor of political participation focuses on the freedom to express opinions, the ability to engage in political affairs at the provincial or national level, and the opportunity to be considered as a candidate for nomination and holding office in various government positions. Six items were derived from the Asian Barometer Survey conducted in 2001 for inclusion in this assessment.

Norms of Reciprocity- This pertains to the evaluation of reciprocity norms by investigating individuals' perceptions of society's helpfulness and trustworthiness (Soithong, 2011). Eight items were adopted from Soithong's (2011) study for this purpose. The sample items of the scale were "Most people in your neighborhood are willing to help if you need it" and "This area is a place where local people look after each other". The measurement of all items was conducted using a five-point Likert scale, where respondents could indicate their level of agreement on a scale ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5).

Networks of People Connections- This section is connected to the nature of groups or organizations, the roles and duties of their members, and the

motivations behind their involvement in the organization. Fourteen items were adopted from Soithong's (2011) study to address these aspects. The sample items of the scale were "Having an opportunity to make a difference to social issues" and "I am associated with the political party/ political group". These items were measured as follows (strongly agree=1, and strongly disagree=5).

Data Analysis and Results

Two software have been used, (SPSS) and Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 24.0 for IBM Windows were used for data examination. In order to ensure valid results, necessary tests were conducted in a proper manner. In the last, the hypotheses were assessed through AMOS.

Data Cleaning and Screening

Broadly, prior to getting the results of hypotheses testing, the data was cleaned and screened in a proper way. The assurance of data (cleaning and screening) is obligatory to omit the mistakes and errors that may be destructive for mess-up the results of analysis. Such errors appear in the shape of missing values, outliers, linearity, normality, and

multicollinearity of data which really generate confusion so as to identify the effects and associations within the predictors and dependent variables (Hellerstein, 2008).

In this way, other phases such as; confirmation of Scale's options/choices, missing values analysis, and all kinds of outliers (Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate) been detected with the different statistical tests. Moreover, for surety in the accuracy of the results, normality and multicollinearity assumptions were also confirmed carefully.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

As usual, EFA was employed through the principal component analysis (PCA) for extracting the uppermost variance (Luo, Arizmendi, & Gates, 2019). In addition, to attain the promising findings of EFA, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was conducted to measure the adequacy of sampling. The results ensured that KMO values were above the required values of 0.70 (table 1), which is accepted (Sofroniou & Hutcheson, 1999). Similarly, the score of Bartlett's test of Sphericity is ($p < .000$) which rejected the null hypothesis (Table I).

Table 1

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.778
	Approx. Chi-Square	6136.925
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Df	120
	Sig.	0.000

Furthermore, the commonalities scores were examined to assess the overall variance or discrepancy of the original variables. Items with commonalities score below 0.5 (50%) were considered weak items (Rashid, Amirah, & Yusof, 2019). Out of the 28 items we used, a few of them

demonstrated commonalities scores below 0.5. As a result, the items which contained the commonalities scores lower than 0.5, were dropped before performing the factor analysis. While retaining items are presented in Table II.

Table 2

Communalities

Items	Initial	Extraction	Items	Initial	Extraction
POON5	1.000	0.800	NOTY5	1.000	0.515
POON2	1.000	0.797	NOTY1	1.000	0.815
POON4	1.000	0.835	NOTY4	1.000	0.826
POON3	1.000	0.838	NOTY3	1.000	0.760
POON1	1.000	0.815	NOTY8	1.000	0.690

Items	Initial	Extraction	Items	Initial	Extraction
NOCE3	1.000	0.695			
NOCE4	1.000	0.744			
NOCE6	1.000	0.695			
NOCE7	1.000	0.869			
NOCE12	1.000	0.755			
NOCE9	1.000	0.704			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

So as to observe the practical factor's position; Eigenvalues were made confident through the Principal Component Extraction Method. However, eigenvalues were identified as greater than 1 which is significant (Hair, 2009). A total variance clarified along with Eigenvalues and prominent greater than 1 for the residual of three factors (Table III)

Eigenvalues assured that a contribution significant of factors (Tabachnick, Fidell, & Ullman, 2013). Finally, the clarification of the associations among items and their individual factors was observed through factor loadings. As a result, the range of factor loading endured between 0.716-0.932 (Table IV).

Table 3
Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.829	30.178	30.178	4.829	30.178	30.178	4.443	27.766	27.766
2	4.321	27.009	57.187	4.321	27.009	57.187	4.111	25.697	53.463
3	3.003	18.771	75.958	3.003	18.771	75.958	3.599	22.495	75.958

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 4
Rotated Component Matrix

	Component		
	1	2	3
NOCE7	0.932		
NOCE12	0.865		
NOCE4	0.854		
NOCE9	0.832		
NOCE3	0.830		
NOCE6	0.830		
POON4		0.911	
POON3		0.904	
POON1		0.897	
POON5		0.890	
POON2		0.882	
NOTY1			0.894
NOTY4			0.892
NOTY3			0.872
NOTY8			0.823
NOTY5			0.716

Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Hypotheses Confirmation

After confirming the number of factors with precise loadings, we applied the confirmatory factor analysis to confirm the proposed hypothesized paths

(Brown, 2015). Structural Equation Molding (SEM) was employed to observe the influence of independent (predictors) variables on dependent (criterion) variables through Analysis of Moment Structures (AMOS) version 24.0 for Windows (Figure II).

Figure 2

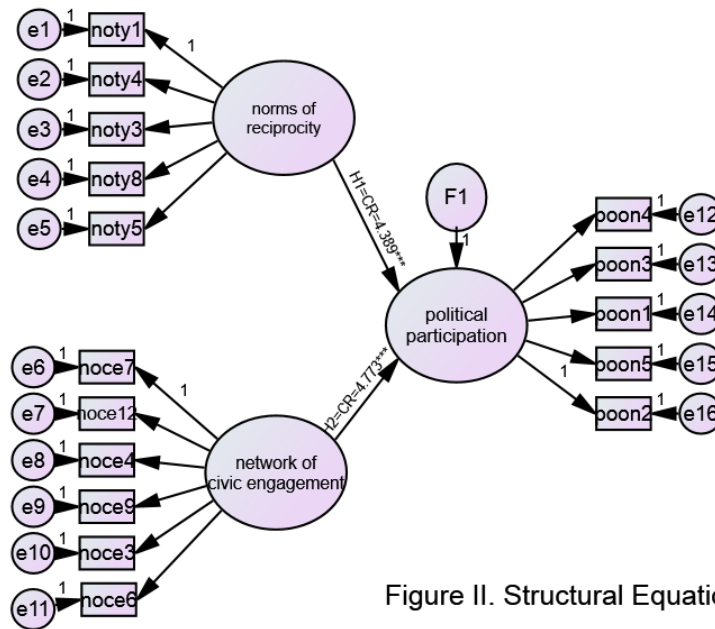


Figure II. Structural Equation Model

Regarding hypotheses confirmation, the path results of regression for hypothesis one (H1), emphasized (S. E=0.074; C. R=4.389; p= <0.01) a positive and significant impact of norms of reciprocity on political participation. Thus, hypothesis 1 (H1) was supported. Similarly, the regression weights for H2

emphasized that (S. E=0.085; C. R=4.773; p= <0.01) (Table V). Therefore, hypothesis H2 was accepted by showing a significant and positive connection to networks of people's involvement in the political participation of Baluchistan.

Table 5

Hypothesized paths

Dependent variable	Path	Independent variables	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Political participation	<---	Norms of reciprocity	0.324	0.074	4.389	***
Political participation	<---	Networks of Civic Engagement	0.494	0.085	4.773	***

Note: p=significance level at <.0.01

Discussion and Conclusion

Nowadays, the consolidation of democracy is a great concern for almost every country in the world. For the stability of democracy, public involvement is an important ingredient to build and shape it according

to the wishes of the people. For a stagnant and isolated area like Balochistan, it is difficult for the political system to be stabilized due to feudalism, inherited politics, and the illiterate who have a strong economic base through land farming. The

public is reluctant to take part in political activities due to poor facilities such as; lack of freedom of speech, translucency, and public distrust over the entire political system.

The objective of the current research was to examine the relationship between social capital and political participation at the provincial level. To accomplish this, a conceptual framework was created that identified the key factors related to both the dependent and independent variables. Data was gathered through the use of a modified questionnaire. The targeted respondents were the common individuals casting the right of votes and actively participating in elections i.e. election campaigns, work, and support. The sampling technique was random. At the initial stage, a total of 800, survey questionnaires were handed over by personal visits. The response rate remained at 57.5 percent with returned samples of 460. Finally, 414 samples were applied for the research task.

Statistic software such as SPSS and AMOS were utilized. The overall Cronbach's alpha (α) reliability of the questionnaire was found 0.812 along with satisfactory individual factor reliability. The regression scores for H1 and H2 emphasized positive and significant societal capital factors such as norms of reciprocity and networks of people engagement in politics and participation among people of Baluchistan. Such positive results concurred with the various previous studies (Mahmood et al., 2014; Putnam, 1994; Tohidinia & Mosakhani, 2010). The positive associations among the factors such as political participation, norms of reciprocity, and networks of civic engagement among the respondents of Baluchistan may reflect that there is

a great civic sense and reciprocity among the people and they are actively participating in politics and its related activities. There is no doubt that tribalism is negatively affecting the lives of the commoners but one of the most important positive impacts of it is the strong bondage among the tribesmen. The fact that people in Baluchistan who engage in politics also tend to have strong connections with others and believe in helping each other might mean that they have a good sense of community and teamwork.

Conclusively, the study finds a positive and significant impact of social capital on public political participation. The outcome of the study may offer a strong conceptualization for the political activists, the election commission of Pakistan, and parties of Baluchistan for developing the civic sense and norms of reciprocity towards political participation among the people of the province. Additionally, the study may contribute to the related literature of political science and sociology in general and specifically for Pakistan.

The study revolves around the quantitative method which is one of the basic limitations of it. A survey questionnaire was utilized to obtain responses from the participants. It only focused Baluchistan province of Pakistan none of the other provinces were touched. Concerning the practical implications of the research, it may offer a guideline to policymakers and planners to develop the norms of reciprocity and civic sense through motivation and encouragement. The results of the study also provide some key points on how people can participate in politics.

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