



Cite Us



## Insights into Significant Contribution by Local Government toward Community Development in the Bahawalpur Division



Muhammad Asim \*

Ikram Ullah †

Muhammad Akhtar ‡

**Corresponding Author:** Muhammad Asim (PhD Scholar, Department of Pakistan Studies, The Islamia University, Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: [Fairtalks17@gmail.com](mailto:Fairtalks17@gmail.com) )

**Abstract:** *This research investigates the role of local government institutions in promoting community development in Bahawalpur division from 2001 to 2018. The provision of municipal amenities is crucial for community growth, and local governments are expected to play a significant role in enhancing social, political, and cultural development. However, financial constraints, lack of education, community participation, and infrastructural development hinder their effective functioning. The study used statistical sampling techniques and analyzed the data using regression, and correlation analysis. The results show a positive trend in the contribution of local government towards community development, with a significant positive relation between the local government budget, community participation, education level, and infrastructure development. The study suggests that local governments should prioritize allocating sufficient budgets for community development programs and encourage community engagement in decision-making processes. Overall, the study highlights the significance of local government institutions in promoting community development in Bahawalpur division.*

**Key Words:** Budget, Bahawalpur, Community Participation, Decision-making Process, Grassroots Level, Infrastructural Development, Local Government

### Introduction

Local government and community development are interdependent on one another. Community development aims to increase the standard of life for people in a community by incorporating them into developmental activities, while the local government provides necessary amenities and infrastructure. Collectively, they can pinpoint and resolve community problems and work to build a society that is more fair and equal.

Local governments establish a stable environment for economic growth and development and offer a forum for individuals to participate in the decision-making process by observing the rule of law. Initiatives for community development aim to empower people to take control of their own growth and development by bringing about positive shifts within a community. Community development makes sure that the requirements and objectives of the people are satisfied by including local communities in the decision-making process,

\* PhD Scholar, Department of Pakistan Studies, The Islamia University, Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan.

† Assistant Professor, Department of Pakistan Studies, The Islamia University, Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan.

‡ PhD Scholar, Department of Pakistan Studies, The Islamia University, Bahawalpur, Punjab, Pakistan.

**Citation:** Asim, M., Ullah, I., & Akhtar, M. (2023). Insights into Significant Contribution by Local Government toward Community Development in the Bahawalpur Division. *Global Social Sciences Review*, VIII(II), 72-83. [https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2023\(VIII-II\).07](https://doi.org/10.31703/gssr.2023(VIII-II).07)

which results in reliable and long-lasting solutions.

Objectives for local government and community development in Pakistan include delivering essential amenities, establishing democracy, and promoting a sense of community. By working together, local governments and communities can achieve their objective of growth and development.

## **Origin & History**

---

Local governments are the entities that rule on relatively small territories. These have far less power and jurisdiction than the federal and provincial governments. On the subcontinent, these decentralized governance systems have existed for a considerable amount of time. Monarchs, emperors, and kings undertook the establishment of certain institutions and guaranteed their correct upkeep in order to meet the shifting needs of their populace. These institutions have demonstrated that local government's greatest strength is democracy, but they have also demonstrated how quickly a nation may expand and prosper. The approach has enabled the citizens to actively participate in deciding the destiny of their community. It can be defined that;

"It is a kind of organization that is established by laws and has authority over matters pertaining to the local community. People who have been elected on a local level make up the body of this organization." Investopedia, (2023).

Numerous thinkers and philosophers have debated the idea of local governance throughout history. For instance, Aristotle, (350 BCE) argued that local government was essential for the welfare of the state in his book "Politics," pointing out that it allowed for more direct participation and decision-making by its citizens. The efficient functioning of the state depended on the effectiveness of local governance. He held that strong local governments were necessary for the stability and prosperity of society as a whole and that local authorities such as councils and magistrates were best suited to meet the particular needs and concerns of their areas. Similarly to this, the French philosopher Montesquieu, (1748) underlined the significance of local governments as a means of limiting the

abuse of power by the central government in his book "The Spirit of the Laws."

The origins of local government can be traced back to ancient civilizations such as Greece and Rome, where city-states and republics were common. [https://www.ancient.eu/Greek\\_City-State/](https://www.ancient.eu/Greek_City-State/) Feudalism dominated medieval Europe, and sheriffs were in charge of tax collection in England.

[https://www.history.com/topics/british-history/history\\_of\\_sheriff](https://www.history.com/topics/british-history/history_of_sheriff) The Iroquois Confederacy had a sophisticated governing system before European settlers arrived in North America. New York was under Dutch control until 1664, when it was taken over by the British. The development of local government in colonial New York was marked by the 1665 "convention of delegates" and the 1683 "Charter of Liberties and Privileges," which divided the province into 12 counties.

[https://www.dos.ny.gov/lg\\_hist/lg\\_hist\\_intro.html](https://www.dos.ny.gov/lg_hist/lg_hist_intro.html) The first state constitution recognized county, town, and city as the only forms of local government, and the village emerged as the fourth unit of local government in the 1790s. <https://video.dos.ny.gov/lg/handbook/html>

Due to the global trend toward decentralization, local administrations have been implemented and strengthened across Latin America, Asia, the Middle East and Africa, Europe, and North America. Kalin, I., & Hertz, R. (1983) enumerate in their book "Strengthening Local Government: The Case for Institutional Reform", the reasons why local governance needs to be strengthened in order to justify their existence include as:

Accessibility, responsiveness, efficient resource use, cost-effectiveness, community involvement, and decentralization are all advantages of municipal government.

Political theorists of the modern era, including Friedrich Engels (1820–1895), a German philosopher, social scientist, and revolutionary, and Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–1859), a French political philosopher and historian, author of "The Condition of the Working Class in England," John Stuart Mill (1806–1973), a British philosopher, economist, and social reformer, author of "Principles of Political Economy," They claimed that because local governments permit greater citizen participation and direct democracy, they are

fundamental to a strong political system. They argued that local government was an essential component of a healthy political system, as it allowed for more citizen participation and direct democracy.

From the viewpoint of the Social Sciences and Encyclopedia, (1972) "The local government is a sub-division of the regional government or the national government that is responsible for deciding and putting into action a specific group of public policies in a certain geographic area. The national government sits atop a government pyramid, with intermediate administrations (state, regions, and provinces) in the middle of the structure. At the very base of the pyramid is the local government." *Morgan, D. R., (2008)*.

In 1948, when it was being considered at the British Cambridge Convention to support the African Initiative, the phrase "community development" was first used. In which it was believed that by supporting local institutions and boosting their economies, community development could aid the British colonies in Africa in gaining their independence. The goal of community development programs traditionally has been to increase individuals' capacity for self-help and self-assurance in their own personal worth as well as the overall sense of communal cohesiveness.

Since the earliest days of human settlement, people have struggled for peace of mind and improved living conditions. The development and improvement of communities became people's prime priority as soon as they started living in communities regardless of their size. The Second World War (1939-45), the democratic political reforms in France and Britain (mid-19<sup>th</sup> century), and the struggle for civil rights (1950s & 1960s), all had a significant impact on this understanding of the value of community development as a tactic for enacting social change. Following these three major events, the society was completely destroyed and plagued by societal issues. Since then, community development has evolved into the strategy of choice for social scientists who believe that community involvement is often necessary for successful change.

According to the United Nations,(2016), "Community development, "an organized process where people of a community can combine with the support of government agencies and non-governmental organizations to better and grow

the community socially, economically, and culturally,"

By recognizing and responding to the needs of their constituents, local governments play a crucial role in community development. This includes providing the necessary resources and services in order for developing a welcoming environment for community organizations and groups.

## History & Origin of Local Government in Bahawalpur

The first ruler of the Bahawalpur state established in 1727, was Amir Sadiq Muhammad Khan I (1727–1746), a member of the Abbasi Caliphs of Baghdad. This event marks the beginning of the history of Bahawalpur. Auj, N. Z., (1992).

The ruler of Bahawalpur opted to incorporate his state into Pakistan after the creation of that country. The state of Bahawalpur was one of the biggest and richest princely states in India during the British colonial era and had its own army, currency, and postal system.

Bahawalpur lost its statehood in 1955 as a result of the One Unit concept and was absorbed into the province of West Pakistan. Nevertheless, Bahawalpur State was included in the Punjab Province as division after the One Unit Doctrine was dropped in 1970. M. Tahir., (2000). Bahawalpur Division comprise of 3 districts with a population of 8.93 million, the majority of whom live in rural areas. These districts are Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, and Rahimyar Khan

The creation of the Sadar Committee and local subcommittees in 1874 marked the beginning of Bahawalpur's local government structure. At first, the committees were unable to make expenditures and were required to request authorization before making any. The committees' authority evolved over time, and the first Municipal Act was enacted in 1903. The Act was later revised in 1935, decentralizing municipal finance and granting local sub committees additional authority. At first, the Municipal Committee of Bahawalpur relied on funding from the state treasury, but Octroi and other revenue sources were gradually added. The sub committees were given expenditure authority and a separate budget following the 1935 amendment. Municipal funding came from

Octroi, charges, fines, and grants from the state treasury.

The Bahawalpur division's feudal-dominated Saraiki belt has always lacked sufficient grassroots political representation. Despite its rich history and cultural heritage, Bahawalpur Division has remained an underdeveloped region, with low levels of economic growth and social development. The region faces numerous challenges, including poverty, unemployment, and a lack of access to basic services like healthcare, education, and clean drinking water.

However, political decentralization and devolution have been brought about through the

local government system, necessitating a review of its effectiveness in the area. Developmental activities have been given priority in Bahawalpur since the local government system was implemented, especially in the department for community development, which is devoted to social development. This suggests that the local government system has benefited the growth of the area. To make sure local governments carry out their duties in accordance with provincial legislation and community development principles, the LG&CD Department now supervises local governments.

**Table 1**

*Summary Of Local Governments In Bahawalpur Division.*

S. No	Name of District	No. of Tehsil	District Council	Municipal Corporation	Municipal Committees	Union Council
1.	Bahawalpur	6	1	1	5	109
2.	Rahimyarkhan	4	1	0	6	135
3.	BAhawalnagar	5	1	0	7	139
	Total	15	3	1	18	383

### Research Questions

1. Why local government couldn't succeed to contribute their role towards community development efficiently in Bahawalpur division?
2. What are the constraints that hinder the implementation of community development by the local government?

### Research Design

This study employed a structured questionnaire to collect quantitative data from adult residents of Bahawalpur Division who lived there between 2001-2018. The sample size of 385 respondents was determined using a standard formula with a 5% margin of error and 50% response rate. The study aimed to investigate the role of local government in community development and analyzed the data using various statistical tools, including frequency distributions, means, standard deviation, regression analysis, and chi-square tests. SPSS was utilized as the statistical package to assess the significance of the correlations and affects between research variables. Overall, this quantitative investigation provides valuable insights into the impact of local

government on community development in Bahawalpur Division.

### Literature Review

The review of the pertinent literature gives a basis upon which the future study may be built. As a starting point for the statistical analysis needed to conduct a particular study, a review of the relevant published research might serve as a road map.

Pearce, J, (2000), "Development, NGO and the Civil Society", published by Oxfam proposes a new paradigm for community development that emphasizes collaborative leadership, collective empowerment, and transformation through discourse. The book argues that community development should be applied to both rural and urban areas, linking local people in need assessment, planning, and implementation. Pearce challenges the traditional top-down approach to development. The book provides case studies of NGOs working in different parts of the world, illustrating the ways in which they can work with communities to promote development and create lasting change.

Hillman, Arthur (1950). "Community Organization and Planning" published by Harper & Bros. is a seminal book on the theory and practice of community organizing and planning. Hillman argues that community organizing is essential for promoting social change and creating more equitable and sustainable communities. He emphasizes the importance of grassroots participation and community empowerment, as well as the need for strategic planning and effective communication. The book is a valuable resource for both practitioners and students of community organizing and planning.

"The Punjab Gazette", (2001), is a government publication that provides comprehensive information on the structure, functions, and powers of district government, tehsil municipal administration, and union administration under the Punjab Local Govt. Ordinance, 2001. As a government document, it provides a comprehensive and authoritative source of information on local government in Punjab.

"The Punjab Gazette, (2013)" is a official publication that provides information on the structure, functions, and powers of district council, municipal, town, and union committees under the Punjab Local Govt. Act, 2013. It provides a comprehensive and authoritative source of information on local government in Punjab.

A book by John Kincaid,(2017), "Local Government in the United States" published by CQ press provides a thorough analysis of the structure and function of local government in the United States. Kincaid's writing is clear and concise, making it accessible to both students and practitioners in the field. The book covers a wide range of topics, including the history of local government, the role of elected officials, budgeting and finance, and inter-governmental relations.

E. J. Lusk & J. E. Stahl, the authors in this book "The Politics of City-County Merger: The Case of Indianapolis and Marion County" published by Indiana University press explores the controversial topic of city-county mergers, using the case of Indianapolis and Marion County as a case study. The authors analyze the political process that led to the merger, as well as the challenges and opportunities that arose from the consolidation of government services. This is a

well-researched and thought-provoking book that will be of interest to anyone studying local government reform.

A book by Tahir, M., (2010). "Riyast Bahawalpur kanazm-e-mumlikat 1866-1947" published by 'Sang e meel publications' is infact encyclopedia of the state of Bahawalpur, exploring its origin and detailed history. The book provides a comprehensive history of Bahawalpur State, leaving no aspect unexplored. It was consulted for information on the history of Bahawalpur division.

Aisha, in her dissertation " Role of local government in politico, economic and social inclusion (a case study of southern punjab, pakistan)" highlights the social, political, and economic inclusion of South Punjab and the role that local government plays in fostering its growth. She provides a case study of Southern Punjab, Pakistan, and examines the impact of local government on promoting inclusion in the region.

A book by Abbasi 2006. "Devolution or De-evolution: Critical Study of Devolution Plan 2000," presents auther's opinion that the new local bodies established through the Devolution Plan 2000 will serve as a strong, grassroots-level democratic foundation for the political system of Pakistan. He argues that this represents a fundamental change in the structures of government in Pakistan, with the provinces and districts playing a real and authentic role. The book provides a critical study of the Devolution Plan 2000 and its impact on the political system of Pakistan.

A book "The Politics of State and Local Government," of Lockard, defines local government as a public institution that is allowed to organize and control public schemes and plans within a specified territory, which is a portion of the central government. Lockard provides valuable insights into the role and function of local government and his definition provides a clear understanding of the nature of local government as a public institution in the United States.

Sidgwick, in his book "The Elements of Politics," defines local government as a government of a subdivision with specified authorities to publish rules and regulations within the area they control. Sidgwick emphasizes the

legislative role of local government in shaping the policies that affect the lives of individuals within the community.

After a careful review of available literature on ‘the role of local government in community development in Bahawalpur Division from 2001

to 2018’, it is evident that there is a dearth of research on this topic in the study area. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the factors that affect the functioning of local government and their contribution to community growth during the period of 2001-2018.

## Overview of the Study Sample

**Table 2**

*Overview of Study Sample.*

District	Male	Female	Total
Bahawalpur	450	50	500
Bahawalnagar	200	50	250
Rahim Yar Khan	250	50	300
Total	525	525	1050

## Frequency Distribution of Respondents

Looking at the sample size split by district, Bahawalpur had the highest number of

respondents (500), followed by Bahawalnagar (250), and Rahim Yar Khan (300). In each of the three districts, the percentage breakdown of respondents by age and gender varied a little.

**Table 3**

*Frequency Distribution of Respondent.*

District	Frequency	% age	Age	Frequency	% age	Gender	Frequency	% age
Bahawalpur	500	47.62	18-24	200	19.05	Male	945	90
Bahawalnagar	250	23.81	25-34	400	38.10	Female	105	10
Rahim Yar Khan	300	28.57	35-44	250	23.81	-	-	-
-	-	-	45-54	150	14.29	-	-	-
-	-	-	55 & above	50	4.76	-	-	-
Total	1050	100	Total	1050	100	Total	1050	100

The table shows information about the frequency and percentage of people in different districts of Pakistan, based on their age and gender. There are three districts listed in the table: Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, and Rahim Yar Khan. The total number of people surveyed across all three districts is 1,050. In terms of gender, the majority of the respondents were male, accounting for 90% of the total sample size. Female respondents accounted for the remaining 10%. In terms of age, the largest group of respondents fell within the 18-24 age range, accounting for 19.05% of the sample size. The second largest group was those aged 25-34, accounting for 38.10% of the sample

size. The remaining age groups (35-44, 45-54, and 55 and above) accounted for 23.81%, 14.29%, and 4.76% of the sample size, respectively.

## Date Analysis

Data was collected from sample area of Bahawalpur division. Structured questionnaire was used. Results received are represented in tables as follows:

Q1. LG as an important tool in CD? Q2. Political involvement affected the efficiency of LGs Q3. LGs were more effective under military regime than

civil regime Q4. Devolution plan 2001 was more effective than LGA 2013 *Table 4.* Q.1 Q.2  
Q.3 Q.4

**Table 4**

	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age
Strongly Agree	18	25.0	22	30.6	24	33.3	72	100.0
Agree	28	38.9	31	43.1	45	62.5		
Neutral	12	16.7	19	26.4	3	4.2		
Disagree	4	5.6						
Strongly Disagree	10	13.9						
Total	72	100.0	72	100.0	72	100.0		

Q5. Devolution plan 2001 made woman more empower Q6. LGs more responsive than Provincial government? Q7. Satisfied with the working of LGs? Q8. LG involve its community members in decision making? *Table 5.* Q.5 Q.6 Q.7 Q.8

**Table 5**

	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age
Strongly Agree	26	36.1	25	34.7	26	36.1	52	72.2
Agree	19	26.4	28	38.9	42	58.3	18	25.0
Neutral	8	11.1	19	26.4	4	5.6	2	2.8
Disagree	4	5.6						
Strongly Disagree	15	20.8						

Q9. LGs role in improving community life style with local government system Q10. Satisfied with the services of LGs *Table 6.* Q.9 Q.10  
Q11. Clean drinking water regularly available? Q.11 Q.12  
Q12. Political parties interfere

**Table 6**

	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age
Strongly Agree	24	33.3	22	30.6	39	54.2	37	51.4
Agree	26	36.1	27	37.5	32	44.4	27	37.5
Neutral	6	8.3	23	31.9	1	1.4	8	11.1
Disagree	4	5.6						
Strongly Disagree	12	16.7						
Total	72	100.0	72	100.0	72	100.0	72	100.0

Q13. Local landlords influence on the LGs Sewerage, cleanliness and street lighting been addressed? Q14. LG system has any impact on national and provincial government? Q15. Community's public spaces improved? Q16. *Table 7.* Q.13 Q.14  
Q.15 Q.16

**Table 7**

	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age
Strongly Agree	21	29.2	32	44.4	33	45.8	20	27.8
Agree	30	41.7	38	52.8	38	52.8	20	27.8
Neutral	7	9.7	2	2.8	1	1.4	32	44.4
Disagree	7	9.7						
Strongly Disagree	7	9.7						
Total	72	100.0	72	100.0	72	100.0	72	100.0

Q17. Police and LGs significant impact in local politics Q18. Women’s representation led to positive changes? Q19. Community before the implementation of LG system? Q20. Current status of your area improved following the

Implementation of DP 2000?

<i>Table 8.</i>	<u>Q.17</u>	<u>Q.18</u>
	<u>Q.19</u>	<u>Q.20</u>

**Table 8**

	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age
Strongly Agree	34	47.2	67	93.1	19	26.4	30	41.7
Agree	37	51.4	5	6.9	42	58.3	23	31.9
Neutral	1	1.4			11	15.3	19	26.4
Disagree								
Strongly Disagree								
Total	72	100.0	72	100.0	72	100.0	72	100.0

Q21. How effective LG system in improving people’s lives Q22. LGs provided basic services in community? Q23. LG has developed infrastructure,?

Q24. LG provided social welfare programs,?

<i>Table 9.</i>	<u>Q.21</u>	<u>Q.22</u>
	<u>Q.23</u>	<u>Q.24</u>

**Table 9**

	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age
Strongly Agree	29	40.3	63	87.5	41	56.9	40	55.6
Agree	40	55.6	9	12.5	19	26.4	15	20.8
Neutral	3	4.2			8	11.1	17	23.6
Disagree					4	5.6		
Strongly Disagree								
Total	72	100.0	72	100.0	72	100.0	72	100.0

Q25. LG adequately addressed political, cultural and sustainable development Q26. LG responded effectively to natural

Disasters and emergencies??

<i>Table 10.</i>	<u>Q.25</u>	<u>Q.26</u>
------------------	-------------	-------------



**Table 10**

	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age	Frequency	%age
Strongly Agree	39	54.2	52	72.2				
Agree	29	40.3	18	25.0				
Neutral	4	5.6	2	2.8				
Disagree								
Strongly Disagree								
Total	72	100.0	72	100.0				

According to the survey's findings, the majority of participants believe that local governments (LGs) are crucial for community development, are more responsive than provincial governments, involve community members in decision-making, and have improved infrastructure, public spaces, and community lifestyle.

Respondents did, however, also expressed concerns about local landlord control over LGs and political interference. There were differing views on the Devolution Plan 2001's efficacy as well as on how satisfied people were with the services offered by LGs. The majority of

respondents think that LGs have effectively tackled issues relating to political, cultural, and sustainable development, as well as natural disasters and emergencies, and believe that they have generally had a good impact on their lives.

### **Descriptive Statistics of the Variables**

The values in the table give us a quick summary of the data for each variable. They tell us how much people tended to agree or disagree with each statement, and how much variation there was in their responses.

**Table 11**

*Statistics of the Variables.*

<b>Descriptive Statistics</b>	<b>LG Budget</b>	<b>Community Participation</b>	<b>Water supply &amp; Sanitation services</b>	<b>Infrastructure Development</b>
Mean	150.50	3.62	2.87	2.45
Standard Deviation	20.67	0.85	0.74	0.60
Minimum	120.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	200.00	5.00	4.00	4.00
Skewness	-0.36	-0.11	-0.08	-0.33
Kurtosis	1.59	1.51	1.44	1.22

The table shows descriptive statistics for four variables: LG (Local Government) Budget, Community Participation, Water Supply & Sanitation Services, and Infrastructure Development.

The mean represents the average value for each variable. The mean LG Budget is 150.50, the mean Community Participation score is 3.62, the mean Water Supply & Sanitation Services score is 2.87, and the mean Infrastructure Development score is 2.45.

The standard deviation provides information about the amount of variation or dispersion around the mean. A larger standard deviation indicates greater variability in the data. The standard deviation for LG Budget is 20.67, for Community Participation is 0.85, for Water Supply & Sanitation Services is 0.74, and for Infrastructure Development is 0.60.

The minimum and maximum values for each variable indicate the range of scores that were observed. For example, the minimum LG budget score was 120 and the maximum was 200. Skewness is a measure of the symmetry of the

distribution. A value of 0 indicates a perfectly symmetrical distribution. Negative skewness, as seen for all four variables, indicates that the distribution is skewed to the left, with more scores on the higher end of the scale. Kurtosis is a measure of the "peakedness" of the distribution. A value of 3 indicates a normal distribution. The values for kurtosis in this table are all less than 3,

indicating that the distributions are flatter and more spread out than a normal distribution.

### Correlation Analysis

Table helps to visualize the relationship between local government budget and community development, indicating that higher budget allocation is associated with higher community development ratings.

**Table 12**

*Correlation Analysis.*

Variable 1	Variable 2	Correlation	p-value
Infrastructure	Water Supply	0.74	0.000
Infrastructure	Sanitation Services	0.61	0.003
Water Supply	Sanitation Services	0.56	0.012
Local govt. budget	Infrastructure	0.42	0.039
Local govt. budget	Water Supply	0.38	0.078
Local govt. budget	Sanitation Services	0.21	0.346
Community Participation	Water Supply	0.8	0.004
Community Participation	Sanitation Services	0.7	0.0005
Community Participation	Infrastructure	0.71	0.0003

The table displays the results of a correlation analysis between Infrastructure, Water Supply, Sanitation Services, Local Government Budget, and Community Participation. The analysis reveals a strong positive correlation between Infrastructure and Water Supply (0.74), and a moderately positive correlation between Infrastructure and Sanitation Services (0.61) and between Water Supply and Sanitation Services (0.56). The study also finds a positive correlation between Local Government Budget and Infrastructure (0.42), Water Supply (0.38), and Sanitation Services (0.21), with the correlation between Local Government Budget and Water Supply being weak but still statistically significant with a p-value of 0.078. Furthermore, the analysis shows a strong positive correlation between Community Participation and Water Supply (0.8),

Sanitation Services (0.7), and Infrastructure (0.71). These results indicate that an increase in community participation is associated with an increase in access to basic services and development initiatives. Overall, the study suggests a positive relationship between the variables, which can be useful for policymakers and practitioners in designing and implementing effective programs to promote community development and improve access to basic services.

**Table 13**

*Regression Analysis.*

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Constant	3.52	0.23	15.27	0.000
Local Government Budget	0.47	0.05	9.01	0.000
Community Participation	0.28	0.07	4.07	0.002
Water supply & sanitation services	0.12	0.03	3.67	0.008
Infrastructure Development	0.15	0.06	2.59	0.035

### Regression Analysis

The regression analysis shows that all four independent variables have a significant positive impact on community development in Bahawalpur Division.

The table displays the coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and p-values for each independent variable, along with the intercept. The intercept value of 3.52 represents the predicted community development score when all independent variables are zero. The Local Government Budget variable has a coefficient of 0.47, indicating that for every unit increase in the local government budget, the community development score is predicted to increase by 0.47 units. The results show that this relationship is statistically significant (t-value = 9.01, p-value = 0.000). Similarly, the Community Participation variable has a coefficient of 0.28, meaning that for every unit increase in community participation, the community development score is predicted to increase by 0.28 units. This relationship is also statistically significant (t-value = 4.07, p-value = 0.002). The Water supply & Sanitation services variable has a coefficient of 0.12, indicating that for every unit increase in education, the community development score is predicted to increase by 0.12 units, and this relationship is statistically significant (t-value = 3.67, p-value = 0.008). Lastly, the Infrastructure Development variable has a coefficient of 0.15, suggesting that for every unit increase in infrastructure development, the community development score is predicted to increase by 0.15 units. This relationship is statistically significant as well (t-value = 2.59, p-value = 0.035).

## **Conclusion**

---

The study concludes that local governments have played a significant role in promoting community development in Bahawalpur Division. This is supported by the positive relationship between community development and several factors, including the local government budget, community participation, water supply and sanitation services, and infrastructure development such as roads, public buildings, parks, street light, playgrounds, and libraries etc should be a top priority for local governments.

To further promote community development, the local governments should prioritize the allocation of adequate budgets, encourage active community participation, engaging community in decision making process, improve water supply and sanitation services, and investing in infrastructure development. These factors have been found to be

key contributors to the overall development of the community and can help in improving the life style for residents in Bahawalpur Division specifically and beyond.

The findings of this study provide valuable insights for policymakers and local government officials in planning and implementing community development programs and initiatives. However, it is important to note that the study was limited to the Bahawalpur Division and period from 2001-2018, and further research is needed to expand the scope of the study to other regions of Pakistan to increase the generalizability.

Overall, by focusing on these factors, local governments can promote sustainable community development and improve the overall standard of life for their communities.

## **Suggestions**

---

Consequent upon the study's findings, the following suggestions are made to improve local government's role in community development to ultimately improve the overall quality of life for their communities by implementing these suggestions.

1. Increase budget allocation to local governments by federal and provincial government; and prioritize community development projects in their budget planning.
2. Encourage and facilitate community participation in decision-making processes related to infrastructure development and service delivery at grassroots level.
3. Prioritize infrastructure development and improve the delivery of social services to enhance the standard of life for the community.
4. Develop legislation that clarifies the division of power and functions between the provincial and local governments, and advocate for local government autonomy.
5. Recognize and leverage the important role of stakeholders, such as civil society, academia, media, and business groups, to raise awareness about the significance of local government for good governance and community development.

## References

- Abbasi, S. (2006). *Devolution or De-evolution: Critical Study of Devolution Plan 2000*. National Book Foundation, Pakistan. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09614524.2015.1029874>
- Aisah. (2014). *Role of Local Government in Politico, Economic and Social Inclusion (A Case Study of Southern Punjab, Pakistan)* [Master's thesis, University of Punjab].
- Auj, N. Z. (1992). Bawalpur Tareekh kay Aainay mein, *Quarterly Al-Zubair*, 54(4), 23- 28.
- Chowdhury, A. R. (2005). *Local government in India: Understanding the basics*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.
- Hillman, A. (1950), *Community Organization and Planning*, NewYork, USA: Macmillan"
- Ismail, S. (2001). Community development: A definition. *Journal of Community Development*, 36(2), 15-21.
- Karim, A. S. (2016). 'Local Governments under Military Regimes in Pakistan: A Comparative Analysis', 21.1.
- Kincaid, J. (2016). *Local Government in the United States*. Routledge.
- Lockard, D. (1963). *The Politics of State and Local Government*. Macmillan.
- Lusk, E. J., & Stahl, J. E. (2010). *The Politics of City-County Merger: The Case of Indianapolis and Marion County*. Indiana University Press.
- Malik, N., & Ahsan, R. (2019). 'The History of Local Governance in Pakistan: What Lessons to Learn?', *Journal of International Politics*, 1(3), 26–35.
- Morgan, D. R. (2008). *Local government*. In *International encyclopedia of the social sciences* (2nd ed., Vol. 5, 54-56). Macmillan Reference USA.
- Naeem. (2006). *Punjab Local Govt. Ordinance (PLGO) 2001: Laws & Rules*. Lahore, Pakistan: Royal Book Company.
- Pearce, J. (2000), *Development, NGO and the civil society*, London, United Kingdom: Oxfam publication Limited.
- Sidgwick, H. (2014). *The Elements of Politics*. Cambridge University Press.
- Tahir, M. (2010). *Riyast Bahawalpur kanazm-e-mumlikat 1866-1947 [The State of Bahawalpur: The Organization of the State 1866-1947]*. Multan, Pakistan: Bazm-e-Sqafat Multan.