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Gender and Decentralized Governance: Impact On Women's Empowerment Through Improvement In Education Sector

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Declaration

I, Babra Syed, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature.....

Date.....

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Abstract

Divergent ideologies, political predilections conjoined with unforeseen economic turmoil, elevated discontentment with the federally administered governance in Pakistan. Globally decentralized governance surged during the 1970s and early 1980s. However, its outcomes have been mixed. Pakistan's government opted for decentralized governance in 2010 via 18th constitutional amendment. One of the factors behind this decision had been the growing unrest in the most marginalized provinces of the country, due to the belief in discriminatory treatment of some provinces by the federal government. This study was undertaken in the least developed province Balochistan of Pakistan, a region known for its tribal culture, and its perseverance in keeping its centuries old values alive. The aim was to explore, that after the devolution of power bestowed to a tribal mentality, marginalized region, what measures have been adopted by the Ministry of Education Balochistan, to ensure that gender biases are removed, and that girls/women are empowered through education. Did the region genuinely take ownership for its women's empowerment pre decentralization or the rigid gender stereotyping prevailed? For this purpose, literature review was carried out and semi structured interviews were conducted with a group of professionals working in the government sector and the humanitarian sector. The study found that whatever the governance mechanism be, education sector is still facing the same problems that its confronted way back during its first education initiatives after the establishment of Pakistan. Hence, it will not be incorrect to say that it is the same old story, camouflaged under a different guise in this current millennium. The shortage of number of schools in districts, deficiency of better school buildings, and limited access to basic facilities such as drinking water and toilets in schools, and the deficit of trained teachers, and above all poverty, all these factors are still casting the shadow over the provincial education sector's efforts, as it was effecting centralized governance for almost six decades. Though to an extent decentralized governance is playing an effective role in the provincial education sector, through initiatives like gender free schools, ALP (Accelerated Learning Programme), school transportation pilot project for girls schools, but it is still a very long journey; to make the education system gender sensitive, and to empower women through education diligently as a nation.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Authority, decision making, and accountability are considered to be the major focus of régimes when it comes to governance. To realize its goals of governance, the government institutions either follow a centralized approach, where the power to exercise authority is either held by an individual or a group of people working at the federal/central level; or decentralized where the authority is structured in a way that it establishes a system of co-responsibility amongst the central, regional and local spheres of institutions of governance. Most of the time adhering to the principle of subsidiarity. These governance terminologies formally came into notice in 1794 and 1820s respectively; the term centralization was added in the French directory post French revolution and the term decentralization, as political governing term was an implausible idea and unknown until 1820s (Schmidt, 2007) . However, as stated by Henry Cabot Lodge in his book the History Of Nations (Lodge, 1916) both of these governing concepts can be linked as a political model way back in history; the Persian King Darius (550-486 BC), was considered the master of centralized governance, whereas ancient Greece was known for its decentralized government methodology. Political decentralization emphasizes on minimization of power at national level, by delegating a certain degree of autonomy in authority, decision making and accountability to the sub-national level. However, to attain such autonomy at the subnational and local level requires constitutional or statutory changes. If we are to assess the governance mechanism of developing countries, especially past colonies in particular; the evaluation of historical genealogies of such developing countries, exhibit a strong correlation between the country's existing governance structure and its colonial legacy (Conrad & Stange, 2011). Pakistan, founded on 14th August 1947 after a century of colonial rule, it received most of its governance structure in legacy. When created, Pakistan had a distinctive topography, having thousands miles of Indian territory, between its two parts, East Pakistan (current Bangladesh), and West Pakistan (Current Pakistan), till formation of Bangladesh in 1971. The constitution of India was adopted by

Pakistan for approximately 9 years after its creation, and the country's charge was given to its elite Muslim bureaucrats, who were transferred from the Indian Civil Services along with British nationals who were retained till 1957 (Hull, 2012). Since its establishment Pakistan's constitution has gone through three pivotal reformations, either due to military coup d'état; or when at that particular point in time, the need for presidential or the prime minister executive power was imperious; and sustaining of unicameral or championing bicameral legislature supervened the agenda. It is relevant to note that, the country exhibited a gradual shift from secular traditions that it followed till 1950, by adopting The Government of India, Act 1935, towards the constitution of 1956 and 1962, that had imperceptible Islamic provisions. Ultimately the 1973 constitution when passed, not only it had a more defined role of religion in the state, but it interestingly acknowledged and addressed the fundamental human rights as well. However, the recognition of fundamental human rights, could be superseded by the superior court under Article 199 considering that the exercised right, in anyway violates Article 19 pertaining to supremacy of religion, law and order or national security (Pakistan, 2012). Fundamental human rights encompass, but are not limited to, human freedom, dignity, equality, individual rights, right to life, freedom of thought, right to healthcare, work and education etc. (UN, 1948). The right to Education (Article 26) as basic human right is part of the UDHR (Universal Declaration Of Human Rights). Education is considered a fundamental human right, to not only develop peace and harmony in the world but also to strengthen full development of human personality. Education is mandatory element of a society, it aids in acknowledging and respecting fundamental right and freedom of all humans, without any prejudice owing to their race, language or religion (Tarrow, 2014). Pakistan ratified the UDHR and as mentioned earlier, it was added it to its constitution in 1973 as well. Pakistan is a patriarchal society, conventionally women are postulated as homemakers and men are presumed to be the income producer or provider for the family. This mindset has played a significant role in society, giving a preferential treatment to boys over girls concerning education, or any other vocational skills learning. As per UNICEF's State Of The World's Children report; In Pakistan, gender, domicile, and financial status play a substantial role in attainment of education ((UNICEF, 2016). There has always been a debate, concerning presumption of the federal government, on

lack of interest in girl's education, by different ethnic groups of the country. It is assumed that the backward geographical areas are the least interested in empowerment of women, be it socially in the guise of economic independence or attaining empowerment and independence through education (Kim, Alderman, & Orazem, 1998). After the passing of the 18th amendment and granting autonomy to the provinces, did this assumption prevailed and hindered women rights to education? Or her access to social and economic empowerment? The change after the enactment of the 18th constitutional amendment, specific to education and women welfare aspect, has been assessed in this study, to learn if there is any progress. For this purpose, the province of Balochistan due to its patriarchal tribal setting and the most marginalized province status has been selected for study.

1.2 Problem Statement

Balochistan a province of Pakistan is well recognized for few of its contrasting features; its huge geographical but sparsely populated and arid presence, its feudal tribal culture, its abundance of rich natural resources and finally, bearing the status of being the most marginalized province of Pakistan from its conception till date. In 2010 the government of Pakistan decided to shift towards decentralized governance mechanism from its federal system approach. The decision took long in coming, as various marginalized regions of Pakistan had been very clamorous regarding the central government's approach in managing the country. Balochistan's protest for more autonomy and its view of not being treated fairly by the federal government has a long history. During the establishment of Pakistan, Balochistan was coaxed into becoming part of the country via quite zealous political tactics. In fact, within a year of its inclusion into the country the very first Baloch insurgency took place. Balochistan's sociocultural system is very different, though we might find some similarities with Pakistan's province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to its Pashtun culture there, however the uniqueness cannot be totally matched. Within the clan's system in Balochistan the surprising command an older woman has is very distinctive, but the dichotomy is when a young girl's/woman's self-empowerment is assessed, we observe a 360-degree change. In Balochistan, if a family is at the two extremes points socioeconomically (very poor, or very

rich), the more oppressed the circumstances of the women would be. However, the inquisitiveness behind this particular study is that post 18th constitutional amendment, when the power went to the people of the region, how women fared in it? Did decentralization bring ownership to the cause of women empowerment through education or it remained the same? Specifically, pertaining to the devolution of the education system. What measures did the ministry of education take to incorporate access to education for girls. A gender, if given right opportunities may become a successful, empowered woman tomorrow. After centrally governing the country for 62 years, in 2010 the government of Pakistan shifted from, federal system of government to decentralized governance. Though multiple standpoint emerges in literature review, while studying the effect of decentralization on a region. The purpose of this research is to explore, that post 18th Constitutional Amendment, what measures have been taken for the social empowerment particularly via education for the women of Balochistan. What mechanisms the Balochistan departments of Education and Directorate of Women Development adopted to attain girl's empowerment in their region, and what are the challenges it faced and the milestones it achieved, if any.

1.3 Objective and Research Question

The purpose of this research is:

To review how decentralization has empowered the Education sector at provincial level in Balochistan, after the enactment of Pakistan's 18th constitutional amendment. What measures the Balochistan education sector has taken regarding women's empowerment through education. To assess what measures have been taken to reduce gender gap in access to quality education, by the provincially empowered government, that was considered marginalized before, and had the general complain of being discriminated against, during federal ruling. So, after getting local empowerment for approximately 10 years now, has this freedom to self-govern, and bring positive change in the future of Balochistan, has helped women in any way? Specifically, in establishing strong foundational base through access to quality education and be ready and empowered tomorrow.

Main Research Question 1:

Post 18th constitutional amendment, how decentralized governance has strengthened Balochistan's provincial autonomy, specifically regarding empowerment of women through education?

Main Research Question 2:

What measures have been taken and what gender sensitive reforms have been made in the existing Balochistan education sector policy, subsequent to decentralized governance?

1.4 Structure Of The Thesis

This thesis consists of 5 chapters. Chapter 1 provides background information, problem statement, objective and research questions, Chapter 2 covers literature review, and deliberates over Pakistan's constitutional journey that led to the decentralized governance system, resulting in the wake of the 18th constitutional amendment . In chapter 2, while discussing decentralization, the topic gradually narrows down towards the existing gender dynamics, in a multiethnic, patriarchal culture, and assesses situation of women, overall, in Pakistan and then specifically in Balochistan. The chapter especially assesses the government's measures to empower women through education, and then the education sector's state of affairs, pre 18th constitutional amendment is described. Chapter 2 ends with the discussion of selected theoretical frameworks. Chapter 3 of this thesis narrates the research methodology of this thesis. In this chapter the research design, sampling, sampling limitations, data collection method, research questionnaire, interview protocols, data analysis methodology, research limitations and research trustworthiness are discussed. Chapter 4 is pertinent to findings gleaned from the collected data. In this chapter the findings, enabling, and disabling factors, are discussed under the relevant framework. And finally, chapter 5, has the references and the appendix.

CHAPTER 2: THE CONSTITUTIONAL JOURNEY TOWARDS DECENTRALIZATION, IN A MULTICULTURAL ENVIRONMENT AND ITS INFLUENCE ON WOMEN AND EDUCATION: LITERATURE REVIEW, AND REFLECTION

2.1 Overview Of The Chapter

This chapter narrates the literature review, and in addition to that, it illustrates Pakistan's constitutional development journey, and its various amendments. The chapter recounts, how divergent ethnic ideologies, played a pivotal role in 18th constitutional amendment, that led to the decentralized governance system in Pakistan. The discussion is further built pertinent to the prevailing tribal, and patriarchal culture, generally considering Pakistan, and specifically regarding Balochistan, its most underdeveloped province. In light of the tribal, predominantly patriarchal culture, and selective religious dynamics, the focus is narrowed upon women in such a society, and their role in it. Subsequently, women's education and empowerment is discussed, taking into account the existing political, religious, and cultural dynamics. Gradually, the link is established evaluating women empowerment through education pre decentralization, and an explanation of Pakistan's education system, policies, and programmes are taken into account. To give an in-depth review to the readers, government's measures regarding women empowerment pre 18th constitutional amendment, are also discussed, with the aim to facilitate data analysis once findings in chapter 4 are examined. The chapter ends at a discourse concerning relevant theoretical frameworks. Four theoretical frameworks have been selected with regard to this topic under study; 1. Theory Of Decentralization, 2. Good Governance Theory, 3. Gender Socialization Theory, and 4. Social Cognitive Theory Of Gender And Development. In order to carry out a coherent analysis, and reach conclusion, all theories would be referred to as schema, while discussing "findings" in chapter 4, that was gathered through field study data collection.

2.2 Constitution

Oxford dictionary defines constitution as, “a body of fundamental principles or established precedents according to which a state or other organization is acknowledged to be governed” (OUP, 2019). Constitutions can relate to various genres of organizations; it can pertain to a sovereign state, consortiums, or even collaborations that is deficit of a corporate status. Here the aim is to explore this lexicon concerning a sovereign country. Constitutions are created via discussions amongst multiple groups, that may include but is not limited to politicians in power, its opposition group, groups representing the marginalized, it may include representatives from the assembly, or a parliamentary committee or even a special task force group. Constitution making involves intensive dialogues and negotiations; keeping in view the identity of the state, the shared values of its citizens, the historical context, and the political struggles the country encountered to attain its sovereignty (Hedling, 2011) . A constitution can be considered as a legal layout, or framework of the ground rules of a country’s political system. It outlines the purpose of government institutions, defines the authority of each, and details the power and necessary actions required by the major officeholders, to meet the purpose their public office is intended to accomplish. However, it does not furnish laws and regulations for every facet of an operational society, but covers the respective area in a broader term, which is further analyzed in depth and acted upon via creation of ordinary laws and regulations, so as to ensure that the vision emphasized in the constitution is complied with. In horizontal dimension it commentates the founding aim of the country and dictates how a country is to be governed, legally, politically, and socially. The constitution ordains matters such as, will the country have a president, prime minister, monarchy, the type of parliament, power of public institutions, and it provides fortification of fundamental human rights to its residents. The constitution emphasizes, the extent of power each of the governing body has, and how these statuses are to function with each other, and the nature of relation each has with the other. A country’s constitution can be either codified, where the essence of a constitution is composed conclusively on a distinctive document for example the Constitution Of The United States, and majority of the other nations of the

world, or it can be uncodified and transcribed as ordinances by legislative bodies, court proceedings or treaties such as the Constitution of The United Kingdom, New Zealand or Israel. Codified constitutions are specifically considered as an enactment, that limits state's power, establishing restrictions on the sovereign, so it cannot be overstepped, hence it is considered to provide protection of basic human rights. Codified constitution is entrenched, and it is colossally arduous to either amend or obliterate, which protects it from being violated, and ensures stability of the legal framework, and safeguards the fundamental rights of the people . Nevertheless, the rigidity it presents makes any essential amendment in the obsolete provisions a gruesome endeavor, involving lengthy procedures and multiple stakeholders, for example any modification to the constitution may need a referendum, or approval of majority in the legislature, and at times approval of majority in two different sessions is mandatory, it may even involve public input thus taking aeon to change and come into effect.

From the standpoint of a vertical perspective, the constitution can facilitate the provision of regional autonomy, through decentralization of provincial/states power (Hedling, 2017). How effective this vertical approach is will be explored later in this document.

2.2.1 Constitutional Principles

Presence of a set of basic standard principles, while drafting or modifying the constitution provides clarity of mission. These set of principles can be regarding constitutional status of identity, shared ideals, or serve as a base, for a common ground to agree and further work on. The principles concretely defines the prerequisites and the limitations, henceforth not only ensuring that the reforms made serve the purpose but safeguards the group(s) that are either vulnerable or have some reservations regarding the amendment. For example, ensuring adherence to an international obligation, by integrating it into the local laws to make it binding, can be added into the general framework of the constitutional principles. Adding a firm resolution to matters concerning nondiscrimination, towards any gender or group may assist in development of a positive policy towards inclusion of those identities, and discourage any discrimination based on identity. Inclination towards gender neutral constitutional language may

embody the state's commitment towards gender equality. Deliberating over fundamental human rights, it would be valuable to ensure that under equal rights, minorities are protected by the state, and are not discriminated in any way due to the relationship that exists between the state and its dominant religion. In case the state's constitution is closely synchronized with a particular religion, the constitutional principles must have a stipulation to safeguard its minorities. Establishing such constitutional principles, provide a foundation against which the reforms can be assessed, revised, and ratified (Böckenförde, 2011).

2.2.2 Amendment

The term amendment refers to any change that is made to the written work with the intention to either improve it or correct it (Merriam-Webster, n.d). Theorist depending on their school of thought, have varied stance regarding constitutional amendments, as per Dixon and Landau, constitutional amendments are made using democratic protocols, that disguises more often undemocratic, corrupt, and autocratic intentions. They suggest that to avoid such occurrences, there must be limited scope in the constitution for amendments. However, some constitutional theorists acknowledge that the amendment SOPs secures democratic legitimacy of the constitutional text (Dixon & Landau, 2015) .

2.2.3 Constitution Of Pakistan

Upon its creation on 14th August , 1947 Pakistan adopted the Constitution Of India, “The Government of India Act, 1935”, as an interim constitution. In 1950 Pakistani lawmakers, the political office holders, and the officials of the opposition party, initiated the formulation of a constitution for Pakistan. However, when this very first constituent assembly, was near completion it was dissolved On October 1954, on the grounds that it has lost the faith of the people, and needs to be recreated, resulting in exasperation felt by many. The second constituent assembly formulated Pakistan's very first constitution on February 29, 1956 (G. Choudhury, 1956).

2.2.4 Constitution Of 1956

Government of Pakistan formed its first constitution in 1956 and changed from Republic of Pakistan to Islamic Republic of Pakistan. It was a lengthy, stringent legal document, containing 234 articles, that were divided into 13 parts and 6 schedules. The architects of the constitution faced dilemma, when considering the exact nature or character of the constitution. The demand for Pakistan was based on the ideology of having an Islamic state, hence, there was a unanimous consensus to have Islamic principles incorporated into it. However, disaccord emerged between the *ulema's* (religious teachers) interested in having 7th century early caliphate governing system, and the liberal Muslims, as well as the groups representing minorities, who wished having a fusion of legal constitutional framework that met both the Islamic principles, and the modern democratic needs of a state. To the consternation of the *ulema*, the final document that emerged had general Islamic provisions, and a collection of secular laws, required for the management of a democratic country. It was a federal constitution, which endorsed parliamentary structure, with the Prime Minister as the head of the government, it had unicameral legislature, and had president as a ceremonial head. Due to the atypical geographical situation, and constant controversy over power, between East Pakistan and West Pakistan, specific attention was given to strengthen provincial power. In this instance, while drafting the federal constitution, there was a contradiction, and that was the absence of the usual mindset, that solely focused on amplifying the authority of the central government, (G. Choudhury, 1956). However, the constitution became void in 1958, ensuing a military coup d'état.

2.2.5 Constitution Of 1962

The country's second constitution was also federal and of unicameral legislature, it was approved in 1962, and supported presidential form of government, some of its prominent characteristics being, for the first time 6 seats out of 156 seats of the National Assembly were reserved for women, and rest were squarely divided between East and West Pakistan. Additionally, it provided for a provincial legislature, having two provincial governments headed by governors, commanding powers similar to that of the

president at the federal level. However, the national assembly had the power to legislate on matters falling in provincial jurisdiction, and the constitution guaranteed, that no law that went against the teachings of Islam is enacted (Singhal, 1962).

2.2.6 Constitution Of 1973

The 1962 Constitution was abrogated in 1969 with a second military coup d'état. The existing constitution of Pakistan also known as the 1973 constitution, was ratified on August 14, 1973. This constitution concentrates on separation of powers, disseminated into three branches of governance, it provided for bicameral legislature, an executive branch governed by the Prime Minister, and an apex federal judiciary headed by the Supreme Court. Since its formulation, it got amended by its framers 6 times in 4 years. The 7th amendment was a temporary measure following the controversial election of 1977, made with the purpose to get a vote of confidence for Prime Minister, or conduct referendum, in case he fails to secure the vote. The 8th amendment was made in 1985, following yet another coup d'état, it was to increase the presidential power, of the military leader General Zia Ul Haq, over the Prime Minister. Subsequently, several other amendments were made after that to the constitution by the democratic governments that came to power after General Zia's martial law. Another significant amendment termed the 17th amendment to the constitution, was made during the reign of another military leader General Pervez Musharraf, one of its salient feature was to get the vote of confidence by the parliament and the provincial assemblies, within 30 days of the passing of the amendment, in order to be considered an elected President of the country (Hussain & Kokab, 2012). As we can observe, Pakistan's constitution makers have always faced the predicament of power struggle between the office holders, the central and the regional government. There were constant controversies, over the relation that must exist between the state and its main religion, as well as a regular commotion, concerning the details of an ideal Islamic constitution. However, this was the very first time that Islam was mentioned as the religion of the state. Furthermore, as stated, the dissemination of authority between the federal government and the provinces has been a continuous battle. Disagreement over this subject took intense turn in 1972, due to

the great measure of authority, the central government held over the provinces in this constitution. It was presumed that after the partition of East Pakistan (Bangladesh) the demands for regional autonomy would subside. However, the trepidation, that existed over the potential hegemony by Punjab, the most developed province till date, constituting 60% of the total population of Pakistan did not vanish. In fact, the derive to secure regional autonomy, intensified by provinces of Norther West Frontier (current Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) and Balochistan, both considered the wild west of Pakistan, and being the least developed regions of the country. Nevertheless, the demands for regional autonomy could not be granted back then, pertaining to the recent separation of East Pakistan and the emerging inclination indicating separatist movement, taking roots both in North West Frontier Province and Balochistan. As per the federal government, the need for strong central power, to curtail such transgressions was needed (G. W. Choudhury, 1974). With reference to the 18th constitutional amendment, it is considered a major step towards resolution of many challenges, that were disregarded in the past, and one of it being the provincial autonomy.

2.2.7 The 18th Amendment In The Constitution Of Pakistan

Termed the most important amendment to the constitution of Pakistan. The functionaries involved in the amendment process claimed, that the project had representation from all political parties, who deliberated over the task in depth for months, to expunge any undemocratic incorporation in the document. With the main intent to revive the constitution to the original 1973 document. Furthermore, the process demonstrated some noteworthy measures; all politicians unanimously supported the amendment, the president first time ever, willingly relinquished authority to the Prime Minister, and the country's media held a supportive stance towards this amendment (Hussain & Kokab, 2012). The salient features of the amendment are:

1. To revive true spirit of democracy in its exact essence, and curb any future efforts of coup d'état ; moreover, any entity be independent or in collaboration, attempting to put hold on constitution,

abolishing it, or performing act of mutiny, is to be considered a traitor(s), and their action an act of treason, that even the supreme court is not qualified to substantiate.

2. Role of parliament and senate augmented.
3. The Prime Minister has been given the same power as in the original constitution, and the authority of the President has been truncated.
4. In addition to reducing the number of cabinet members, ensuring impartiality in the election, by absolving the caretaker government from taking part in the elections. Amendment to the gender pronoun “he” for the women seats has also been made.
5. Recognition of fundamental rights, mentioned in the original constitution, and acknowledging unprejudiced management of those fundamental rights. **Rights to education** and right to a just trial added into the fundamental rights.
6. **State has become responsible for education of children aged between 5 – 16** (A. B. Malik, 2011).
7. **This amendment recompenses the previously neglected provinces.** To safeguard entitled share of each province a sub-clause (Article 38) has been added to the constitution. Additionally, assurance to remedy any lapse made by the federal services have also been added.

The thesis key dimension is focused partially on amendment concerning point 5, “Right to Education”, and mostly on point 6.

As stated above since the very beginning, Pakistan’s political system has constantly worked in a centralized governance environment. To fulfill the commitment, made in this amendment to the letter seemed to be quite a formidable endeavor. There was apprehension, regarding devolution of power and granting autonomy to provinces (Nuri, Hanif, & Khan, 2011). The aim of this document is to assess that, since the attainment of provincial autonomy post 18th amendment and introduction of decentralized governance; what actions have been taken by the government of Balochistan regarding girls/women empowerment through education.

2.3 Federal Systems, Decentralization, Autonomy, and Provincial Autonomy

Craig Baxter broadly describes a successful federal systems, as two-tier government, in which the independent units federate voluntarily, and the powers granted, to the federal, and the provincial, or state levels are clearly demarcated in a constitutional document, for example USA, Switzerland, or Australia. While discussing the same concept regarding the British India, he refers to it is the contrary opposite of it. He explains, that instead of the independent units, willingly conceding power to the central government, the dominant central government passes on powers to its subordinate provinces, gradually and in successive stages. Whether we talk about the British India reign 1919, 1935, or 1950 for India, or 1956 and 1973 for Pakistan, in none of the scenario did the provincial units willingly conceded power to the federal unit, it has always been the other way round. If there is a situation, where province had the opportunity to legislate, federal law can always supersede it, if it is in conflict with it (Baxter, 1974).

In his article on Comparative Federalism and Decentralization, Jonathan Rodden describes Decentralization as, *“Decentralization is often viewed as a shift of authority towards local governments and away from the central governments, with total government authority over society and economy imagined as fixed. Attempts to define and measure decentralization have focused primarily on fiscal and to a lesser extent policy and political authority”* (Rodden, 2004 p. 482).

Developing countries have taken up decentralization approach in multiple forms, such as through semi-privatization or delegation of quasi-public corporation, devolution of tasks amongst federal bureaucracy, or by decentralizing local governments, and granting them fiscal, developmental and management responsibilities of important government endeavors (Rondinelli, 1981).

According to Merriam-Webster the use of autonomy can be traced back to circa 1623. It originated from Greek word auto means self and nomos means law. So autonomous means having its own laws, and the dictionary meaning of autonomy is the quality or state of being self-governing (Merriam-Webster, 2020). As Tulia Falleti highlighted, while discussing about Alexis de Tocqueville’s work, when

decades pass, utilizing centralization approach, later, even if the central autonomy wants to destroy it and bring about change i.e. decentralization, it seldom succeeds (Falleti, 2004).

2.3.1 Balochistan & Its Provincial Autonomy

Balochistan geographically the largest but sparsely populated province of Pakistan, is situated in the southwest region of Pakistan, and has an arid mountainous terrain. Balochistan shares its external borders with Afghanistan to the north and northwest, its western side borders with Iran, and Balochistan connects to the Arabian sea to its South, where currently the famous Pakistan and China's, CPEC (China Pakistan Economic Corridor) project is underway. The population of Pakistan as per 2017 census, was 212.2 million, out of which Balochistan has the population of 12.34 million. The ethnic diversity of Balochistan comprises of 52% Baloch, 36% Pashtuns, and the remaining 12% comprises of Brahui, Hazaras, Punjabis, Sindhi and Uzbek (PBS, 2017). Termed as the most neglected region of Pakistan; Balochistan is rich in natural mineral resources, few being copper, coal, chromite, barite, gold, marble, and zinc etc. (Malkani, Mahmood, Shaikh, Arif, & Alyani, 2017), Balochistan also meets the natural gas demand of most of Pakistan. Prior to the founding of Pakistan, most of the province of Balochistan was part of the princely state of Kalat, that acceded to Pakistan, after considerable political maneuvers, that in fact resulted in the very first Baloch insurgencies in July 1948 (Long, Singh, Samad, & Talbot, 2015). The constant struggle for autonomy, and socioeconomic rights from the central government, has always been a tender spot of Balochistan. The controversies regarding social, and economic discriminations, amongst the different provinces, has resulted in creating political unrest in the past, and is considered the root cause of the Baloch insurgencies (Akhtar, 2007), (Kupecz, 2012), (Grare, 2013).

Both in the constitution of 1956 and 1973, the most notable strife, was over the jurisdiction and demarcation of power between the federal government and the regions/ provinces. Even the separation of East Pakistan (Bangladesh), did not curtail other region's efforts to demand their provincial autonomy, causing a flicker of worry amongst the head of the state and his cohorts. In fact, as per Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, (Former President 1971 – 1973 and Former Prime Minister of Pakistan 1973 – 1977), this issue

was as attention worthy as Pakistan's classification as an Islamic state or stabilizing the core SOPs of parliamentary system. Opposition parties of that time demanded that, central government be custodian of currency, defense, and foreign affairs. Whereas government's coalition parties observed a very vague and quite a confused stance; of not only having a strong federal government, but also granting full authority to the provinces as well. The constitutions committee of 1973 tried to aim for utmost autarky of the provinces, the federal and provincial powers were narrated in the schedule 4 of the document. Where Article 142 (C) mentioned that in case an issue is not mentioned in the schedule 4, then the provincial assembly will have the authority to make law. However, Article 143 in the same document overturns it, stating that federal law shall take priority over provincial legislative assembly in the event of a conflict (Baxter, 1974), (Abbasi, 2010), (Ahmad & Khan, 2017). Notwithstanding, the alliance the opposition had with the ruling government pertaining the constitution; violent incidents ensued in the streets of Rawalpindi, between the government and the opposition parties, regarding the magnitude of power the Prime Minister and the federal government had in this new constitution over rest of the regions (G. W. Choudhury, 1974).

Balochistan, is conventionally perceived to be an insecure province by the central government. The province is reputed to have a constant grievance with the ruling governments, due to its dismissive ministrations over Balochistan's crucial provincial development, compared to other most densely populated regions of Pakistan. The unfair remuneration on the price of gas extracted from the southwest part of the province, the gains bestowed from the initiation of Gwadar Port (CPEC) in Balochistan, to already thriving provinces, deprioritizing development of the region, and lack of provincial sovereignty are considered amongst the top few atrocities of the federal government. During the Pakistan's Peoples Party (PPP) government in 2009, an effort was made to introduce the Balochistan package that most importantly covered more freedom and autonomy, more job opportunities and remodeling of resource distribution, by the central government. However, the package was refused by the key stakeholders, perceiving it to be inadequate. In another effort, the overdue gas revenue of \$140 million was paid by the

federal government in 2010. However, the budget utilization for any significant provincial development was negligible (Grare, 2013).

Additionally, subsequent to partition of East Pakistan (Bangladesh), and continuous demands by all provinces for more provincial power, activated the Islamization efforts, notably by the government of General Zia, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, and later General Pervez Musharraf. In order to indoctrinate one ideology amongst the population, in lieu of establishing solidarity on diverse ethnicity. These points are worth exploring independently, however, to sum it up, relentless efforts were made, to unify the mass under one ideology, “Islam” instead of clinging to diverse ethnicities. This endeavor played a vital role, in burgeoning of madrasas (religious schools), compared to strengthening of a more secular school system. Expansion of madrasas led to a rigid curriculum of education, hence, curtailing any prospects of progressive education opportunities, especially for girls from middle income and lower income background (Ashraf, 2018). So, in all this politics and struggle for power, where do women/girls and their empowerment, specifically regarding access to quality education stand? Were there more efforts when the central government had the command, or now with the decentralization of government, and devolution of Education Ministry? Is the local government more resolved to take initiatives towards the education, and empowerment of their women, compared to the central government, which was perceived to be impassive towards the marginalized province. Let us explore and assess.

2.4 Pakistan’s Cultural Dynamics And The Role Of Women

Pakistan has a patriarchal culture, where men are mostly purported as the head of the family. They are considered the breadwinner, financial caretaker, and women’s most significant role is deemed to be that of a homemaker. Even if a women has a career, it is viewed as less significant, compared to her ultimate responsibility, as a wife and a mother. Women who are raised in a patriarchal sociocultural environment, most often directly experience the constraints arising from its ethnic, religious, economic, and political undercurrents, that are an integral part of such dynamics. Majority of the girls in such societies are indoctrinated to believe, being inferior, and a liability compared to their male siblings. Such

indoctrination since birth, and the first-hand experience of privileged treatment awarded to the males in the family, not only leads to the development of a dependency mindset, but psychologically affects the women in almost every sphere of life (Bari, 2000). Pakistani government's last-minute ratification, to the convention concerning fourth world conference on women, held in Beijing in 1995 cannot be overlooked. It illustrates, the preposterous patriarchal stance the government had, when it somewhat agreed to the convention under international pressure. Even then the government held a rigid stance and remained steadfast, concerning clause 29, article 2(f) which required the government to either modify, or revoke any law, that was biased against women be expunged (Mullally, 2005), (Bhattacharya, 2014). Though the journey is full of predicaments, Pakistan is trying its utmost to amalgamate the convention, rather than be subjected to international embarrassment (Weiss, 2003). In retrospect, while addressing the ratification of Universal Declaration Of Human Rights (UDHR), many countries, even if they were not involved in the drafting of Universal Declaration Of Human Rights, ratified it, in the United Nations General Assembly as Resolution 217, on December 10th, 1948; including Pakistan. In fact Pakistan not only voted in favor of it, but censured Saudi Arabia's viewpoint, that it violated Islamic laws and principles, and its refusal to sign the declaration (Price, 1999). Pakistan's varying viewpoint pertaining, Beijing convention, and ratifying UDHR reflects a contrasting and sadly a regressing attitude.

In global landscape women of the patriarchal societies of South Asia, India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh have had the advantage of holding very important positions in society, both politically, socially, and economically. However, such instances have been linked, as a result of having the benefit of being related, to an important male member at an esteemed position. Those historically famous women are mostly an exception to the rule, as majority of the females in such a society bear the brunt of every harsh reality, that is part and parcel of a patriarchal environment. Be it right to education, freedom to choose or continue a career, or select a life partner, all those essential privileges of life, are rarely granted to these women (Sharma, 2014).

The essence of equality provided in Islam to a woman, has been heavily influenced and compromised by culture and customs, serving a very confined agenda, and insular political ideology, that hegemonized

49.2% of the population of Pakistan (Countrymeters, 2019), comprising women (Bhattacharya, 2014). As stated earlier, parochialism in utilizing the self-serving aspect of religion, by various Pakistani regimes, has played a pivotal role in strengthening the patriarchal thinking of society (Weiss, 2012). This agenda of trying to usher the mass towards one ideology with selective teachings, has ensued linking women morality to family's honor (Shaheed & Mumtaz, 1990). Some scholars theorize that the cessation of *Ijtihad*; an independent reasoning to explore resolution of a legal problem, at the beginning of 10th century has confined the teachings of Islam. It has resulted in preserving the teachings and inhibiting the opportunity, to evaluate them in current times; except only through *Ijma*, in which answers are found via scholarly consensus. So, whatsoever the reason of the *Ijma* be, customs and culture, and the regime's political intention behind it, *may* impact the consensus. Which brings us back to subject, concerning the influence of a civic culture on various aspects of a society.

As Almond and Verba discussed in their book, "The Civic Culture"; traditions play a vital role, in building cohesion in a democratic society, which consequently, establishes faith and solidarity amongst people and forms an assertive political culture. Nevertheless, these traditional culture vary across the globe. As culture and traditions play a pivotal role in the democratic aspect of a society. Hence, it has a strong influence, on the political ideological basis of democratic society, notwithstanding, whichever part of the world it is. Therefore, based on that assessment, an Islamic democracy would very much vary, if compared to that of a western liberal one (Verba & Almond, 1963). Liberal theorists have also forewarned, that traditions can never be eradicated completely from the radius of either politics or economics (Price, 1999).

The modifications that were made earlier in the family laws in 1961, by the hard-earned efforts of Pakistan's first women organization, "All Pakistan Women Association", to safeguard women rights, crumbled away, during general Zia's regime in 1979. As General Zia, introduced antiwomen laws, that were in alignment with the most conservative teachings of Islam (Weiss, 2003), (Critelli, 2010). This orientation has also resulted in restriction of women empowerment and development in the arena of education, economic, and personal freedom (Weiss, 2012). The sad quagmire that this has become, is the

total opposite of Mohammad Ali Jinnah's (founder of Pakistan), viewpoint, of women being a comrade to her partner (Critelli, 2010). The existing status quo has curbed women development avenues, be it in education, or any other economic opportunity, as lower middle, and middle income families, are less willing to financially invest in girls educational and economic development, as opposed to the male members of the family (Bari, 2000). Additionally, as the family-centered environment of a patriarchal society has male dominancy, hence, it is strongly inclined towards the interest of males as opposed to females (Gill, 2004).

Nevertheless, it cannot be argued that multiple factors contribute to the status of a woman in Pakistani society. A woman's role in a Pakistani society may vary, depending on the influence of various variables, such as economic, and social status, family's affiliation to the different religious school of thought and sect, tribal, feudal, rural, or urban background (I. H. Malik, 1997). In a cosmopolitan city, a woman from an elite, upper middle, and middle class, might have more liberal upbringing, whereas the same social status in a feudal province like Balochistan or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, may subject her to a more restricted upbringing, and limited educational and economic empowerment options (Bukhari & Asim, 2013).

2.4.1 Women Empowerment in Pakistan

"No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you; we are victims of evil customs. It is a crime against humanity that our women are shut up within the four walls of the houses as prisoners. There is no sanction anywhere for the deplorable condition in which our women have to live" **Quaid-i-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah** (Founder of Pakistan), (Bustamante-Gavino, Rattani, & Khan, 2011), (Bhattacharya, 2014)

So, what does women empowerment exactly encompasses? According to a four-country study (India, Ecuador, Bangladesh, and Yemen) conducted by CARE; the critical points that the participants believed established the foundation of women's empowerment can be summarized as; being acknowledged as a source of authority in the society, having command over earnings, having the power to

make decisions for self, and the household, enjoying dignity and self-worth, liberation from being treated solely as a body, or commodity to control, and finally, as women, collectively acknowledging the feeling of solidarity, and camaraderie associated to the unanimous struggles for their recognition (Bustamante-Gavino et al., 2011). Whereas, Batliwala elucidates empowerment as, not barely a reform in the mentality, but a concrete illustration of the change in psychology, that compels society to recognize the mindset change, reciprocate to it, and support it to the best maximum (Batliwala, 1993), (Paterson, 2008)

The ground reality of the women empowerment concept totally differs from how it is coveted to be . As per World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report 2018, Pakistan stands at 148th rank, holding second last position in the list just above Yemen (WorldEconomicForum, 2018). Though the 2020 report reflects slight improvement of 5%, in senior and leadership roles held by women, it is the double of 2016 report. The World Economic Forum assesses a country's gender parity in 4 categories; 1. Economic participation and opportunity, 2. Educational Attainment, 3. Health and Survival and 4. Political Empowerment, and Pakistan stands at the bottom 10 in 3 of these four categories. According to the latest findings, it is estimated that only 18% labor income goes to the women, which is the lowest share.

Concerning Education, even the developing countries have shown promising performance, by almost reducing the gap to a minuscule level. However, Pakistan is still at 20%, with women's literacy rate being 46% compared to 71% of men, the country's less than half of the women are literate. The political gender gap index has very slightly improved, however, it is not sufficient as per global standard. Whereas, there is no promising improvement in the health and survival category (WorldEconomicForum, 2020).

The most important challenges that the women of Pakistan have been facing for decades, in addition to freedom of speech, both politically and socially, it has been access to quality education, employment opportunities to have individual economic freedom, advocating change in the role of a woman, and eradicating parochial comprehension of women's status in the society (Bustamante-Gavino et al., 2011).

2.4.2 Women Empowerment in Balochistan

Balochistan's tribal and conservative culture strongly advocates women's traditional roles, to not only prevent them from contemplating about their individual autonomy, but to create trepidation toward contemporary lifestyle. Moreover, it serves the purpose of encouraging Islamist traditions, strengthens the patriarchal control of the society, and also provides the opportunity to males to establish their identity in cosmopolitan cities without any serious competition from the opposite gender (Paterson, 2008). Multiple variables such as societal mindset, cultural restraints, and vulnerable security situation, contribute towards the critical discrepancy, that exists when assessing gender equity statistics of Balochistan. If we consider literacy rate data; Balochistan's gender parity ratio stands at 56% male to 25% that of female in comparison to other provinces, it is the lowest. Examining literacy gender parity ratio in other major provinces of Pakistan shows, Punjab at 72% male to 54% female, Sindh 67% male to 44% female, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 72% to 36% male to female gender parity, that accumulates to 70% male to 48% female national gender disparity ratio respectively. Balochistan's Gender Equality policy addresses crosscutting themes, encompassing social, economic, and political empowerment, nonetheless, due to absence of a budgeted execution plan, the document is still in zero draft (Balochistan-UNDP, 2018).

2.4.3 Prominent Measures For Women Empowerment Pre-Decentralization

Under the rule of Field Marshal Ayyub Khan (1958-69) Pakistan's Muslim Family Laws Ordinance (MFLO) was drafted. The task undertaken had a twofold purpose, first it was a measure to safeguard women's rights within the family, by giving her economic, and legal protection, and the second purpose was to rejuvenate the country's image. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's regime (1971-77), promoted women's legal rights at multiple fronts via 1973's constitution. The articles in the constitution, safeguards women against any type of discrimination based on gender, it also shields them from any gender or identity-based prejudice during government recruitment. Additionally, it guarantees reforms in policy, to

ensure economic opportunities for women. Pakistan social environment faced a very strong setback, pertaining to women's rights during General Zia Ul Haq's regime (1977-88). It created a significant gender disparity in the arenas of education, economic, and political empowerment. Some measures to reverse the damage caused by General Zia, were initiated during General Pervez Musharraf's regime (1999-2008). Women seats in the parliament was reversed, Hudood Laws (punishment for crimes as per sharia law) were revised, which instigated the creation of Protection Of Women Act, 2006. As an effort to improve Pakistan's international image, General Pervez Musharraf's government made women empowerment a priority issue, while drafting policies (Reyes & Azizah, 2002). President Musharraf's initiative on the "Prevention of Anti-Women Practices", to protect them from social, political, and religious profligacy, near the end of his tenure was put on hold by the National Assembly, and later in 2009, it did not pass, due to objections raised by religious political parties, expressing that the Bill was inarticulate. Later during President Asif Ali Zardari's term (2008-12), Protection Against Harassment for Women at the Workplace Act 2009, and The Domestic Violence Act 2012 were passed. When Benazir Bhutto became the very first woman Prime Minister Of Pakistan first term (1988-90), numerous hoped for remarkable reforms pertaining women's empowerment. However, not much was done except for releasing women already sentenced for punishment under Hudood Ordinance (Weiss, 2003), (Weiss, 2012). Benazir Bhutto did take steps to increase girl's education in the country, and with the help of Washington, USAID launched a project to increase girls school enrollment by 70% . However, the project had to be halted after 6 years, as the aid discontinued due to Pressler Amendment because of Pakistan nuclear weapon program (Simone, n.d).

2.5 Education System

Education system in Pakistan can be divided into 6 levels; starting from pre-school for children between the age of 3 – 5, then comes the Primary level comprising grade 1 to grade 5 education, after Primary level is the Middle consisting grade 6 – 8, which extends to high school level grade 9 – 10,

following higher secondary school called intermediate comprising grade 11 – 12, after intermediate students can further study in undergraduate and graduate programs.

2.5.1 Education Policies And Programmes

Since its establishment, Pakistan had 7 National Education Policies, approximately 8 national 5-year plans, and several government education projects, few being Iqra pilot project, *Nai Roshni* Schools, Nationwide Literacy Programme, Drop-In Schools etc. While evaluating Nation's Education Development journey, the stark features that stand out from 1947 to date can be summarized as, having ambitious targets, huge investments, poor governance and management, untrained human resource, always admitting failure, as well as blaming the preceding government, and yet again refurbishing decades old targets, thus continuously being thrust in a vicious cycle, and never reaching anywhere. Concerning education policy, the zeal and enthusiasm at founding Pakistan, emphasized the notion, that to have a strong, prospering nation, an educated, well learned, and skilled nation is essential. The first education conference was held in 1947, where the government aimed at universalization of elementary education within 20 years. This proposal was later on adopted by all the succeeding governments. However, since 1947 to date, no remarkable change has been observed as such (Hameed-ur-Rehman & Sewani, 2013). Currently, Pakistan's literacy rate is the lowest in the world after Nigeria (WENR, 2020). During 1951 – 1957, a 6 years National Programme for Educational Development was adopted, with the aim to enroll two thirds of the children aged 6 – 11 and establish new primary schools to meet the need. Additionally, the objective was to educate 2.8 million adults annually, via Village Agriculture And Industrial Development Programme (V-AID). However, the plan could not achieve desired results. In fact, within a decade the country's literacy rate went down by .1% from 16.4% to 16.3%. The major disabling factors were considered to be, lack of trained teachers, and precarious planning and management of the project. In the period 1955 – 60 the government's first 5 years Education Plan was instigated. This plan did not have any specific targets, except for an aim to ensure that universal system of free and compulsory primary education, that included girls is in place, during the span of 20 years.

Additionally, it aimed at involving elected community members, in school management committee, and district advisory board to create ownership and accountability, regarding school premises, supplies and teacher hiring process. However, there were not any outstanding accomplishments, and the plan was not able to meet any expectations, neither in increasing enrollment nor in meeting establishing number of additional schools. The second 5 years plan, following the 1959 Education policy, aimed at increasing elementary school enrollment to 50%, and increase number of schools to meet the required induction. Moreover, it intended at improving the curriculum, providing teachers training, and teachers teaching aid. Bestowing special focus to girl's education was a priority of this plan, as out of 4.7 million children attending school only 1.1 million were girls. The budget was increased fivefold, compared to the first plan. The second plan acknowledged the definite connection between efforts made in educating the country, and progress of the nation. This plan showed clear achievement as 2 million children were enrolled in that duration against the target of 1.2 million. The third 5 years education plan vision was to not only to increase primary school enrolment from 45% to 70% by 1970, but focus on student retention, and increase teachers training and their salaries. Increasing numbers of schools was the consistent part of all the plans including this one, however, this third plan also had an agenda of improving infrastructure of the existing schools. Yet, the plan was not able to reap any noteworthy result. During 1970 new Education policy was introduced, and had high aims, however, on account of separation of East Pakistan, war with India, and collapse of the military government it was not implemented. 1975 reign also stressed on the importance of universal elementary education and focused on achieving compulsory enrollment in 15 years. The 1972 – 80 Education policy concentrated on attainment of free universal education till grade 10th for children, both in government and private schools. It had a plan to compensate the private schools any loss in this regard. The policy also had special learning programs for adults specifically women, marginalized groups, and people with special educational needs, both in urban a particularly in rural areas, where the literacy rate was the lowest. This time reforms in the curriculum were also made to incorporate basic reading, writing, and arithmetic development skills, there was stress on patriotism, and religious education was made compulsory. This time also, no target was set for literacy rate. The out of

the box approach this regime took was to encourage children to teach their parents at home as teachers, undergraduates were encouraged to volunteer as teachers for adult learning programmes and teaching one another approach was encouraged. The policy was designed to eliminate illiteracy in short order; however, the vision was stopped midway due to another military coup. By the time, the fifth 5-year plan was set in motion, the illiteracy rate of population above aged 5 was 78%. Illiteracy was detected to be a major factor of economic, and social underdevelopment. Thus, of every 5-year Education Plan, few salient features were amplification of girl's education, improving physical infrastructure of girl's schools, and increasing girls school enrollment etc. The endeavors all governments made in this regard have been numerous. However, except for the second 5-year plan, none of them made remarkable achievements. The major disabling factors in all of them, being mismanagement in supervision of the projects, ambitious aims, and limited resources, especially pertaining shortage of well-trained teachers, limited teaching aids, and deficiency of number of schools to meet the growing population need (Bengali, 1999). In 2009 the government decided to increase the budget allocation for Education from 2% of the GDP to 7%. The central government to facilitate in policy matters, whereas provincial governments was to be major custodian of educational issues. Since the 18th amendment, education is one of the arena where the provinces have been granted extra autonomy. Still, the salient feature is to increase school enrollment. Additionally, efforts have been made to improve government school syllabus, so that they are in alignment with private sector schools. Free education to poor students and honoring bright students with rewards is also on the agenda (Ghumman, 2009), (A. B. Malik, 2011)

2.5.2 Education and Pakistani Women

“You know that importance of education and the right type of education, cannot be over-emphasized... If we are to make real, speedy, and substantial progress, we must earnestly tackle this question... having regard to the modern conditions and vast developments that have taken place all over the world”, Quaid-i-Azam, Mohammad Ali Jinnah (Khan & Mahmood, 1997).

Universal Declaration Of Human Rights, pronounces access to education as one of the fundamental human right. Education is an instrument, that can positively enable a society, to achieve social, and economic empowerment, and contribute effectively to the socio-economic climate of a society. It helps in bringing a positive change, not only in the cultural dynamics of a society, but can also play a vital role in acknowledging gender disparity and assist society, in taking constructive actions in attaining gender equality. The importance of education and the freedom it grants an individual, be it any gender, cannot be denied. However, when it comes to developing countries, especially South Asian countries; the priority that is given to boys, to have access to quality education as compared to girls cannot be overlooked. The role a women plays in raising the future generation of a country, and the crucial importance it holds, is not taken seriously. There is no argument that an educated women will have more opportunities to be financially independent, be assertive, and have the power to make conscious decisions for self, and society. It also strengthens them, and cures them from the reliance, and dependency on the society, and question its dogmas. The vision of Jinnah did not materialize, even decades after founding of Pakistan. Currently, Pakistan has the second highest number of out of school children after Nigeria. In fact, approximately 22.7 million Pakistani children, aged between 5 to 16, were not able to partake in schools in 2017. Which comprises, 44% of the children in this age bracket (WENR, 2020). As per UNICEF, 5 million children, between the age of 5 – 9 drop out of school after primary school level, and the number doubles to 11.4 million of children, and adolescents, aged between 10 – 14 years, who are not attending any formal education. The picture gets bleaker, and the disparities more pronounced, when we add gender, socio-economic status, and geographical location into the composition. At provincial level in Sindh, where 52% of the poorest children, out of which 58% comprises of girls, are unable to go to school. Balochistan reflects even a more despondent picture of 78% of girls being out of school (UNICEF, 2020). While assessing the ground realities of the education landscape of Pakistan. One comes across a dichotomic crossroad; the situation and access to education for both of the gender is way so bleak that it confuses a person internally, what to highlight, and whom to side with. Both boys and girls make up the future of the country, and being denied access to education, handicaps both, from contributing

effectively to the society. Education is a device that can promise social, cultural, and religious advancement of a nation.

Yes, preferential treatment is given to boys, being considered the future income earners of the family, where ideally both genders should have opportunity to this fundamental right. Evaluating the statistics reflects that, it is mostly the poorest who are being denied access to this fundamental right. Poverty is a very crucial component, that is hindering the advancement of this progress, and in such a dilemma if a parent has to opt educating a child, they would deem it more preferable to educate a male child (Noureen, 2011). If we discuss about promoting education in a tribal culture environment, even if attempts to better the learning situation are made, it is faced with internal radical resistance, the terrorist attack on girls' school where Malala studied is one such example (Weiss, 2012), or bombardments on school establishments in security sensitive areas, as an attempt to weaken the education system by hitting the core, cannot be disregarded. The middle, upper middle, and the elite who are the part of the decision-making process, mostly are not affected by it. Their children have the privilege of studying in elite English medium private schools, which aids in creating a ruling class, thus dividing the population into two categories (Mahboob, 2007). Socioeconomic status plays a significant role with reference to women empowerment, and access to quality education in Pakistan (Bukhari & Asim, 2013). Poverty stands out as one of the most leading cause of illiteracy, especially amongst girls in Pakistan. Additionally, factors such as lack of qualified teachers, absence of school in near vicinity, gender disparity, and parents illiteracy contribute to the predicament (Latif, 2009).

However, post 18th amendment, if we observe after an initial setback, an overall increase is observed in girls school enrollment (See Figure 1)

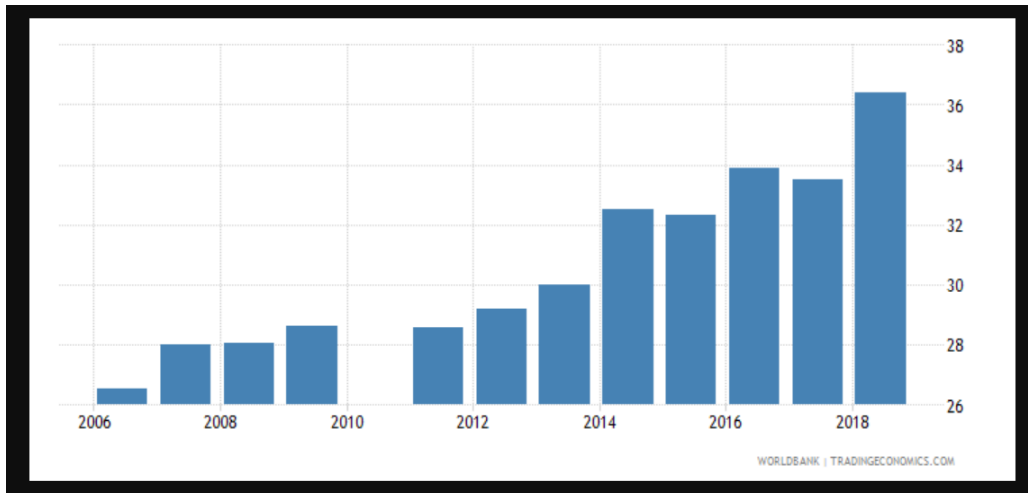


Figure 1: Girls School Enrollment Pakistan

Source: WORLDBANK: (TradingEconomics, 2020).

2.5.3 Education and Women Of Balochistan

“Our tribal system is based on our cultural norms, which are made by our forefathers, tribal setup is the best way of survival of the people. In our tribe our lives and status is dependent on our prestige, which is directly linked with our women so, we cannot allow our girls to go to cities to get an education or do any job, in the case of any mishap whole tribe cannot face the rest of the society. As people will laugh at them and do not want to make relation with our tribe. The culturally accepted principle is that women must first fulfill their responsibility at home. Women have primary responsibility given by culture as wives and mothers” (Shumaila Umer, Zaheruddin Othman, & Hassan, 2016 ,p.27).

Area wise the largest province, Balochistan is the least populated region of Pakistan, and the population is sparsely and widely dispersed. Eons of feudal culture domination, and during Gen. Zia’s regime (1977-88) intensive religious indoctrination, has confined the society in a rigid capsule. Additionally, due to the distrust concerning the federal regime, central government’s constructive development actions could not bear promising result. Being the most marginalized of the four provinces, it always had to struggle coping with the other provinces, in connection to education, economic opportunities and other fundamental facilities that are viewed as basic right. In such a cultural dynamic,

parent illiteracy level and devaluing the importance of education has significantly hampered children access to education. Remarkable increase in school enrollments, have been mainly observed only when incentives, such as school feeding programmes have been introduced. In both Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, considered the marginalized provinces, school enrollment of girls increased by 197% and 247% respectively, when monthly 5 liter vegetable oil was issued to girls students, on meeting the monthly minimum 20 days attendance (Birdsall, Levine, & Ibrahim, 2005). Furthermore, government schoolteacher hiring has been politically influenced for quite a while. This phenomenon has resulted in the recruitment of quite a few unqualified, unprofessional ghost teachers, who have been receiving salaries for years, but they never attended a day to teach at appointed schools, adding to the serious dearth of teachers in rural areas.

Studies reflect that Balochistan's cultural dynamics, strongly direct towards salient components that can aid in increasing girls' enrollment in school. The most common and recurring are availability of qualified female teachers, having a school in vicinity, access to washrooms in schools (Kim et al., 1998; Latif, 2009). Has decentralization aided to this cause or hampered it? It would be explored via analysis of data collected from Education secretariat, Women Development department, Teachers and Humanitarian Professionals.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

As highlighted the purpose of this study was to examine, what actions have been taken by the provincial Education Ministry, and the Women Development Department, to ensure empowerment of women through education, post initiation of decentralized governing systems. The thesis explores two concepts, 1. Decentralized Governance, and 2. Women Empowerment. In view of these concepts, two theories, pertaining each concept has been taken as a framework, to learn how effective post decentralized measures have been, for women empowerment through education. For the first concept of decentralized governance, following theoretical frameworks, 1. Theory Of Decentralization, 2. Good Governance

Theory has been explored, and for women empowerment, 1. Gender Socialization Theory, and 2. Social Cognitive Theory Of Gender And Development has been studied. Later in chapter 4, the study findings have been explored under selected frameworks, to learn, understand, and reach conclusion of the study.

2.6.1 Theory Of Decentralization

When the government aims to transfer its responsibilities at sub-national, local, or provincial level, its considered decentralization of autonomy. It is not necessary that a country has to be either totally centralized or decentralized. At times governments try to find an equilibrium between both centralization and decentralization and opt for a methodology that works best for development. Through the decentralization process the government shifts some of its power from federal level to provincial level. These devolution powers can be political, administrative, fiscal, or economic; most often all these powers are transferred concurrently (Boko, 2002). The concept of Decentralization, if carried out competently by the responsible administrators, unfolds as an efficient approach, of managing objectives of the country. It establish a sense of ownership, and accountability, especially amongst the marginalized group of the nation. Decentralization is deemed to create an effective link of communication, between the federal government and the community by the local government, who are the devolution administrators. Decentralization is observed to help, in creating national unity, as empowering local governments, in planning and decision making, leading to sense of ownership in the country's overall objectives, and ultimately strengthens the political fabric of the nation. Some theorist believe that decentralization by federal government creates future administrators. However, others argue, that it seldom creates local leaders, because the central government is most often more focused on financial devolution. It is also argued that constitutional structure, and the ethnic composition of the nation, has an inconsequential correlation to devolution. In developing countries, decentralization is usually a political decision, and its execution indicates it is a country's political process (Rondinelli, Nellis, & Cheema, 1983). JD Montgomery's study in land reform indicates, that if decentralization is effectively carried out, it can result in increasing local leader's knowledgebase, strengthen communication between the regional

communities and the central government, and may create a harmonized national environment (Montgomery, 1972) . The process of decentralization can be divided in to four categories namely, 1. Deconcentration, 2. Delegation, 3, Devolution, and 4. Privatization. A government based on its ultimate objective may use it in combination, or each category intermittently. Deconcentration: it is normally division of tasks between the federal and the provincial government, accompanied by financial grants. Under this concept, some small measure of autonomy is also given to the local government, or ministries to successfully carry out the project. Delegation: In such a decentralization process, managerial responsibilities or some important function is shifted to an organization, external to the regular bureaucracy, normally when performance efficiency is required. Delegation is indirectly controlled by the federal government. Devolution: The main theme of this thesis, is a procedure that is carried out when the aim is to either establish or reinforce the local government, both financially, or legally, to make them self-sufficient and independent. The responsibilities given to the local government under devolution, is normally outside the direct control of the federal government, though it constitutes an indirect supervision by the central government. Devolution is considered to build a complementary and mutually advantageous relation, between the provincial and the federal government. It has shown a mixed review in different projects, it has believed to have provided administrators empowerment, and freedom in decision making, planning and management in their projects. On the other hand decentralization has been less successful, in eradicating the provincial inequalities that already existed (Axline, 1988). Theorists believe that devolution normally fulfills two aims; either when the central governments desires to increase community involvement and productivity in developmental activities, or when it is believed that interventions by the local administrators may reap better results compared to being federally administered. Privatization: It happens where the government transfers part of its functions or responsibilities, either to a voluntary organization or a private enterprise (Rondinelli et al., 1983). All these categories can be catered to with one or all of the three decentralization dimensions, being political, financial, or administrative. It is argued that, through decentralization the federal government can give more freedom to its region, that may subdue the demand for separation (Usaid, 2000). Federal

government may agree to devolution, if there has been a constant demand either by the regional or ethnic groups, for more autonomy or greater power for self-governance, or if the central government itself wants to minimize the estrangement with its different regions. Decentralization seems to enjoy moderate success, compared to the advocacy that it receives from both the government and the development sector, due to the political effect it has. The philosophy, that it incorporates political stability, and serves community interest, are two of its major influencing factors that encourages governments to venture into it (Rondinelli, 1981). Decentralization policies have the ability to inverse intergovernmental relations. The sequence in which devolution process is initiated, plays a vital role in its success or failure. If political will comes first, and is followed by fiscal and administrative decentralization, there is a stronger possibility of observing a noteworthy change, in the magnitude of provincial autonomy, and its overall impact on the local political environment, facilitating desired political effect (Falleti, 2004). As stated earlier, one of the major changes 18th constitutional amendment introduced was, the decentralization of Education Ministry in Pakistan. Education is now mainly a provincial matter in Pakistan, the federal ministry of Education only facilitates in creating policies, plans and programs, to ensure that access to education is possible throughout the country. Decentralization in educational governance holds some merit, with reference to yielding additional resources, and more efficient utilization of available resources. Few academics claim that decentralization in Education makes the aspirations clearer and more transparent (Weiler, 1990).

2.6.2 Good Governance Theory

As per Merriam-Webster dictionary governance is defined as “*the act or process of governing or overseeing the control and direction of something (such as a country or an organization)*” (Merriam-Webster, 2020). Though governance has quite a few definitions, however, almost all those definitions touch upon common themes with reference to, authority/decision-making, to develop policies, close monitoring of those policies during implementation, and accountability of the responsible administrators, to maintain balance of power and unprejudiced mechanism, while carrying out

their respective assignment pertaining to those policies. United Nations defines governance as; “*the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance* (ESCAP, 2006 , p.1). The same document further highlights, eight vital characteristics, that embody good governance, (See Figure 2): It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law (ESCAP, 2006).



Figure 2: Eight Vital Characteristics Of Good Governance

Source: (ESCAP, 2006)

The concept of good governance has become very popular in recent times, its importance is emphasized as a cure to various ailments of the existing societies. It is a notion, that can be incorporated at both national, and international levels, in civic as well as in corporate settings. This concept can be traced back to the 1970s and can be partnered with, theories and practice of New Public Management, and New Public Administration in the public sector. Specifically, in the wake of the global economic crisis, increase in technologies, and reconceptualization of the term international organization. Studies have observed that good governance contributes significantly to the

socioeconomic status of a country, and it strengthens the establishment of a democratic society. Good governance can be divided into three principle components; 1. Rule Of Law dimension, 2. Democracy related elements, and 3. Contemporary Institutional and Constitutional values, that are further divided into six principles (See Figure 3).

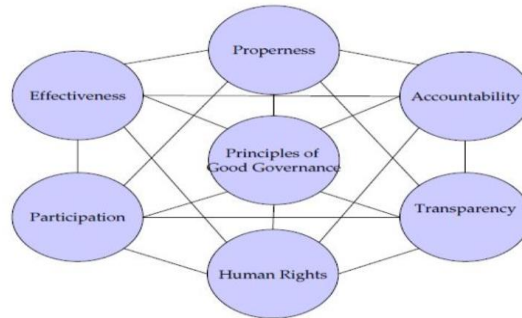


Figure 3: Principles Of Good Governance

Source: (Addink, 2018)

The idea of good governance is majorly connected with economic problems, such as poverty, corruption, and ineptitude of public sector. It serves agenda of organizations, like the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), to manage possible financial risks, utilize political power to influence national affairs, and to ensure effective and efficient management of funds invested, especially, in developing countries (Rhodes, 2000; Vymětal, 2008). Political Science theories pertaining to political systems are no longer just about vertical stratified governing. The critics of those old political theories are moving away from that age-old notion of formal government, where the central management of the government was the sole option. The trends are shifting away from “government” to “governance” (Rhodes, 2000) predominantly towards decentralization. In Decentralized governance, the decision making and the implementation, empowerment, and ownership of the programmes is being transferred to the local/provincial government or the municipalities. This concept of governance is no longer just about effectiveness, it is more about “accountability” between the state and its people (Björk & Johansson, 2001). Some scholars argue, that this movement from government to governance is not solely service delivery oriented, in fact, it is a process about how we comprehend the metamorphosis that is

resuscitating democracy, and reforming countries (Rhodes, 2000). The common language of this theory can serve as a strong prospective global learning mechanism, where across countries good practices can be shared and poor performance challenged (Carver, 2010).

2.6.3 Gender Socialization Theory

Gender Socialization Theory states, that the concept of gender socialization, emerges at birth of a child and plays a pivotal role throughout the years of one’s life. Notwithstanding, that science has proven that children come genetically prepared to exhibit certain behavioral tendencies (Stockard, 2006) . Even then societies consistently emphasize on children to form a perception of gender stereotyping that exist around them. Growing in such an environment, most often solidifies their belief, and when they touch the point of gender constancy, their credence in their gender, and the recognized gendered roles becomes fixed and most often irreversible. Such perceptions also augments the gender disparities in various spheres of life, be it education, social or economic empowerment (See Figure 4).

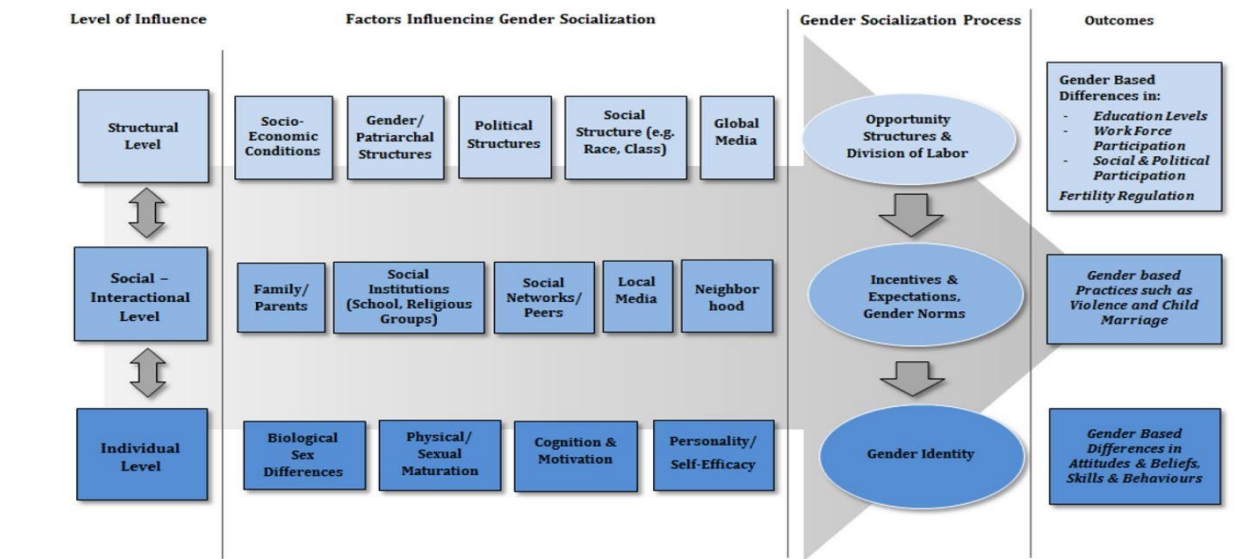


Figure 4: Factors Influencing Gender Socialization

Source: (UNICEF, 2017b)

According to Sociological theories of gender, the concept of gender is built by the society. As per sociological theories, societies play a pivotal role in shaping the gender roles. The concept of gender

stereotyping exercised in a society, shape the type of treatment the males and the females, of that particular culture encounter. However, some gender theorists disagree with the notion, they argue that putting together all males and females, in two separate silos, aids the primitive gender stereotyping, and creates dichotomy. They further argue that such practices acts as a catalyst and, casts the dye, by putting males and females on preconceived gendered paths of life, thus curtailing their growth, and ironically justifying gender inequality. Additionally, conforming to the biological sex of the child to this well ingrained social disposition, further validates the gender differentiation that exists and is subconsciously accepted by many in a society. In fact, we humans end up “doing gender” without even realizing it, as it is so well ingrained in our societies (Carter, 2014). We have become so accustomed to gender stereotyping people, that we feel socially dislocated until we successfully place an individual we meet, in a gender status. Though societies around the globe do vary, but every society uses some grade of “gendering”. The most primitive or underdeveloped societies where strong patriarchal domination prevails, mostly has gender classified into rigid compartments. As in a stratified society men are valued more than women and are placed above women, all because men are mostly the one doing it (Lorber & Farrell, 1991). Children while growing up establish an ideology, that enables them to relate roles and demands attributed to a sex group considered as, “gender roles”. While growing, they associate to one of these groups, that results in shaping their gender identity. This understanding of their expected role in a society is most often created by both biological and social factors. However, studies show that social influence tend to play more of a crucial role in developing gendered behaviors (Stockard, 2006). This influence can vary from society to society, depending on social factors, such as predominance of patriarchy in a society, clear division of roles, ethnicity, economic class, race etc. of individuals in the community (Leaper & Friedman, 2007)

“ As a process gender creates social differences that define “woman” and “man”. In social interaction throughout their lives, individuals learn what is expected, see what is expected, act and react in expected ways, and thus simultaneously construct and maintain the gender order: “The very Injunction to be given gender takes place through discursive routes: to be a good mother, to be a heterosexually

desirable object, to be a fit worker, in sum, to signify a multiplicity of guarantees in response to a variety of different demands all at once” (J. Butler 1990, p.145). Members of a social group neither make up gender as they go along nor exactly replicate in rote fashion what was done before. In almost every encounter, human beings produce gender, behaving in the way they learned were appropriate for their gender status, or resisting or rebelling against these norms. Resistance and rebellion have altered gender norms, but so far they have rarely eroded the statuses” (Lorber & Farrell, 1991 , p. 114).

2.6.4 Social Cognitive Theory Of Gender and Development

Social Cognitive Theory Of Gender and Development, defines that the conceptualization of gender, and its related roles emerges from a nexus of social influences, that transpire at various levels in a society. An individual’s professional aspirations, social life, self-confidence, sociocultural opportunities, and restraints, all are heavily influenced by gender stereotyping. Gender differentiation, especially regarding male identified roles tend to be valued more. With the exception of biologically found difference, most of the gender stereotyping arises from the cultural perception of gendered defined roles (Bussey & Bandura, 1999).

As per Lawrence Kohlberg work built on Jean Piaget’s cognitive development theory, evaluated from the perspective of gender socialization; it highlights that children’s comprehension and belief with reference to gender roles change as they grow, signaling their cognitive development, through social interaction, contact and personal observations. This theory explains, how involved a child’s role is in the socialization process, and how an individual understanding of gendered roles alters, as their cognitive skills develop, they start to stream the world via gender lens (Cooley, Mead, Piaget, Kohlberg, & Gilligan, 1986).

Social Cognitive Theory’s causal composition includes personal factors, behavior pattern, and environmental events. The environmental events that influence the theory are divided into three factions, namely imposed environment, selected environment, and constructed environment. If we explore Imposed environment it refers to situation, where the individual has little control over it, but possess a degree of

freedom on how they react to such an imposition for example; “*as when women were disenfranchised and prohibited from certain social, educational, and occupational pursuits or membership in certain social organizations*” (Bussey & Bandura, 1999 , p.15). How these prospective situations become a reality, count on how the society comports itself, because such environment is produced by the conscious endeavors of people.

These theoretical frameworks are used as an archetype knowledge base, to help and critically analyze the research findings. These already existing theories are explored for answers, in relation to data collected during field study. The catalyst factors that are highlighted in the frameworks, are noted down and assessed during the literature review, field study findings, and ultimately, for the overall data collection. The salient features that emerge during data analysis and are also an integral part of the framework, would be connected to and discussed in chapter 4 . It is assessed to reach comprehension, in what capacity those theoretical framework factors have connected with this particular study and specifically *how*. Hence, the theoretical framework is utilized as a perimeter to evaluate study findings and the challenges that are associated with them to reach a ratiocination.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview Of The Chapter

The chapter discusses about the qualitative study approach that was adopted for this research, it further elaborates on having a flexible research design, an interpretive and inductive approach. After the research design, purposive sampling strategy chosen for this particular study, and the limitations associated to it are discussed. Furthermore, data collection method is deliberated upon, specifying contents, such as developing the research questionnaire, interview protocols, data analysis methodology, the research limitations, and finally, the research trustworthiness is discussed.

3.2 Research Design

The objective of this thesis is twofold. Firstly, to learn why the government of Pakistan transitioned from a federally administered governance system to decentralized governance, and secondly to learn how this decentralized governance has influenced gender and its empowerment through education, particularly, women in the most marginalized province. Both objectives were first investigated through literature review, and situation analysis, in this regard, scholarly articles, government documents, previous researches, print media and peer reviewed journals were studied. Additionally, for the second component of thesis, qualitative study was carried out. The aim was to focus on one social component, that encourages women empowerment in the Pakistan's Women Empowerment Policy. Based on the circumstances explained later in the document the social empowerment component of education was chosen. For the second purpose, qualitative study was conducted, to explore what measures the local government has taken regarding girls' education post decentralization. The questions for the qualitative study were open-ended and semi structured. While studying for this research four theoretical frameworks were used, two for each objectives as a reference frame; For government transition to decentralized governance, theory of decentralization, and good governance theory, were used and for the difference in women empowerment post decentralization, gender socialization theory, and social cognitive theory for gender and development were utilized. Qualitative research requires a flexible attitude compared to a quantitative design. Most of the qualitative studies start with a general topic/theme that is gradually narrowed down and gets refined. During the journey, it is appealing to presume that the formulated research design would progress exactly the way planned, however, the researcher needs to be adaptable enough to give up ideas that are not supported, and adopt new ideas that are ratified during the course of study (Blaikie & Priest, 2019). The ultimate aim in a qualitative research design, is to do classification of the collected data, find linkages, and study those under a relevant theory or create a theory (Richards & Morse, 2012). Overall an interpretive approach, with a flexible design, and qualitative research

methodology, was adopted to filter down central themes from the data collected, and analyze it in view of the selected theories (Nygaard, 2017).

3.2.1 Sampling

Purposive sampling strategy with sequential approach was used for sampling. As the intention of the study was to get information from experts, working at provincial level in Education and Women Welfare Projects. A sequential approach consists of an escalating procedure, where the researcher starts with a fixed set of sample and gradually adds to the sample that benefits the research question (Bryman, 2016). In purposive sampling approach a total of 14 professionals belonging to Education Sector, Women Welfare Department, NGOs, and United Nations were interviewed. Two interviews were panel interviews, involving experts from Education Policy Planning and Implementation Unit, Education gender focal person, Curriculum experts, and Youth Development Initiative Coordinators. Six interviews were one to one with professionals from Balochistan Education Secretariat, UNICEF, and Women Development Department.

3.2.2 Sampling Limitations

Approximately 20 professionals from the field of education and women welfare organizations were requested for time. Most of them agreed verbally for the interview, however, later on owing to the consternation emerging due to COVID19, four officials had to travel out of city, and two had to prioritize working on their projects, to avoid delays that uncertain, unexpected situation may cause. Here I would like to additionally clarify that, the aim of this research, to get professional input of field experts (the sample group) is not to create generalization, but to determine what is the perception of the local administering bodies, from the Secretariat Of Education, Women Development Department and Humanitarian sector professionals, regarding progress on empowerment through education post

decentralization (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). *“Remember that, “more” does not always mean “better”. It all depends on what you were trying to do in the first place”* (Nygaard, 2017 , p.145).

3.3 Data Collection Method

3.3.1 Research Questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed after literature review of the subject under study. Prior to finalizing the interview, some technical insight was shared by a group of professionals working on girl’s education and women empowerment in Balochistan. Their input was reviewed and added as probing question, to get more in-depth insight from the interviewees. In order to get an unbiased professional feedback from the interviewee’s, development of a qualitative interview questionnaire must be taken as an interactive process. Input from major stakeholders, who are already working in the theme under study, aids in understanding the current state of affair, and may assist in steering the study in the right direction (Agee, 2009).

3.3.2 Interviews

All interviews were conducted in the offices of the interviewees. Before initiating the interview, all interviewees were briefed about the topic under study, and the purpose of research was described. I explained that my research aim is to learn how in the past decade decentralized governance has influenced gender empowerment in the province of Balochistan, specifically, with reference to, empowerment through education, and what is their insight pertaining the 18th constitutional amendment and the changes it introduced in their work dynamics. After providing a detailed account of research and its reason, the participant’s verbal consent to be interviewed, and the recording of interview was obtained (Nygaard, 2017). Due to earlier setback discussed below in “Limitations”, verbal consent to record the interview was taken from the participant. The participants were further informed that they can refrain from answering any question that they do not want to answer. Additionally, it was emphasized, that their

gender and personal identity would be kept confidential, however, almost all of them were more comfortable regarding usage of their generic job title instead of their names. Hence, all the interviewees are labelled as interviewee number 1, 2, 3 or referred to in analysis under their generic professional title to maintain the level of anonymity they preferred. The interviews were semi structured, which led to quite informative and interesting insight, regarding the topic under study. However, two participants deviated from the subject now and then telling stories, almost taking double time than rest of the sample group. Nevertheless, due to the fear of negatively influencing the interview, I waited for the queue in the interviewee’s response and lightly highlighted the subject under discussion, but I refrained from saying a lot due to my limited experience of research and interviewing, I did not want to be intrusive and end up sabotaging the interview in any way (Bryman, 2016).

3.3.3 Data Analysis

An inductive approach was utilized to iron out and analyze the initial rough data (See Figure 5). First the collected data was broken down into common recurring codes, which was further grouped into common notions, that linked the research objective and the data, and based on the derived information core categories/themes were established (Thomas, 2006). Examining the way, the information was conveyed, the emerging patterns were ascertained, and the common themes were identified . Based on the findings, thematic analysis was done (See Figure 6) to identify the pattern from the data under study (Braun, Clarke, Hayfield, & Terry, 2019). *“Thematic analysis has recently been recognised as a method in its own right. Previously it was widely used in psychology and beyond, often without acknowledgement or demarcation (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006)”* (Joffe, 2012 , p.2)

Initial read through text data	Identify specific segments of information	Label the segments of information to create categories	Reduce overlap and redundancy among the categories	Create a model incorporating most important categories
Many pages of text	Many segments of text	30-40 categories	15-20 categories	3-8 categories

Figure 5: The Coding Process In Inductive Analysis

Source: (Thomas, 2003)

Step 1: Become familiar with the data,	Step 4: Review themes,
Step 2: Generate initial codes,	Step 5: Define themes,
Step 3: Search for themes,	Step 6: Write-up.

Figure 6: Braun And Clarke’s Six-Phase Framework For Doing A Thematic Analysis

Source: (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017)

3.4 Research Limitations

1. After the administrative delay in securing Ethiopian visa, it was decided to explore the influence of decentralization in Pakistan. The main topic was to explore how gender was affected by the change in the governance system, specifically in one of the most marginalized region of the country. It was decided to explore Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s Women Empowerment Policy, as vigorous work has been undertaken regarding it, and sufficient time had passed to study its progress (The-Nation, 2017). However, the focal person who agreed to facilitate the research and introduce to key responsible officials, upon hearing of interview recording and signing of interview consent form, kept delaying the meeting and remained unavailable. *“The chief possible problem is that the requirement to sign the form may prompt rather than alleviate concerns on the part of prospective participants, so that they end up declining to be involved”* (Bryman, 2016 ,p.131). After waiting for the focal point’s unavailability for 7 working days and the emerging threat of COVID19 becoming an epidemic, it was decided to travel to the most marginalized province, Balochistan for study. However, before traveling to Balochistan the recording of the interview with the focal person in this province was discussed. It was advised to be content on obtaining verbal consent from the interviewees, as many people get apprehensive if they learn about signing a document. Due to the recent experience in same context it was decided to attain only verbal consent.

2. COVID19 also played a significant role in hindering the study's sample size, as people despite wanting to help had to excuse themselves from the interview, due to other last moment professional priorities. Furthermore, adding student's standpoint might have aided the research, however, firstly, the schools were not open/operational, and secondly the sociocultural dynamics of the geographical location of the study might have made obtaining informed consent difficult.
3. Balochistan Women Empowerment Policy could not be studied in its entirety as the document is still in zero draft. The document was supposed to be introduced this year (2020) on March 8th (Women's Day). Hence, for this research one of the policy's social competent pertaining to empowerment through education has been studied. Education was a domain where the local government had worked on untiredly. The year decentralization was set into motion, the local government declared, "Education Emergency" in the province, post 18th constitutional amendment. It is advised that for an in-depth analysis of women empowerment policy Balochistan in its entirety, whenever it is introduced and implemented, another longer duration study would be required.

3.5 Trust Worthiness

According to Bryman, the trustworthiness of the quality of a qualitative social research can be evaluated on four criteria; 1. **Credibility**, 2. **Transferability**, 3. **Dependability** and 4. **Confirmability**. These criteria emphasize that the research has been carried out in good faith, the researcher has observed the principles of a good research unbiasedly, and the data of every phase has been recorded and secured in case of a peer review. Furthermore, adequate cultural frame of reference of the chosen research sample has been presented as a "Thick Description" (Geertz, 2008) to provide a binary version of the cultural characteristics of the sample size (Bryman, 2016). The research was continuously triangulated with the previous studies on the subject and cited where applicable to strengthen its credibility. Extensive thick description has been presented to give the observers a sound base of existing cultural dynamics to assess

for themselves the research transferability factor. Though the topic under study is not peer reviewed however, all records are maintained as per protocol to cater to the dependability aspects as much as possible. Though I belong to the area under study, however due to my private schooling background, my own educational journey has had a very minimal contact with that of the government run schools. This characteristic reinforced the confirmability issue, in fact I believe it added to my curiosity about subject under study as an “external”, neutral observer, despite being from the province. I tried my utmost to ensure, that all mandatory standard required to meet the quality of social research were adhered to as accurately as possible.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview Of The Chapter

Chapter 4 elaborates upon utilization of coding method as an initial step to search data pattern, and later usage of mind mapping exercise is explained, for further sifting of coding pattern, and identify core themes and their sub themes. To clarify the idea of mind mapping also known as “drawing chain of thought” or “brainstorming web”, the thematic mapping exercise conducted for this research is drawn as an explanation. The themes that emerged from the gathered data, are explained in view of chapter two, the literature, the situation analysis, and the theoretical frameworks. In this chapter the findings are divided as core findings, influencing factors, challenges and disabling factors. Discussion pertaining every theme is supported via relevant theoretical framework, to substantiate the findings. Prior to conclusion some additional viewpoint is discussed regarding the collected data and the theoretical framework.

4.2 Findings, Influencing Factors and Challenges

During coding, various initial themes emerged, further study identified that some themes could be merged with others as subthemes. Once themes and subthemes were highlighted, and a conceptual mapping exercise was performed as an additional measure, to revisit the highlighted data, and glean the

links most relevant to the questions under study. A mind mapping exercise in qualitative research aids in treating research prejudices (Wheeldon & Ahlberg, 2017). The mapping exercise of narrowing down core themes from the raw data pointed towards a dichotomic situation pertaining certain variables (See Figure 7). It was found that while evaluating the themes under theoretical framework if a core theme played as a positive agent under decentralization or governance framework; halfway through the gender lens the same factor became ambivalent (*discussed below in detail*). The thematic analysis identified stated core categories; 1. Local Autonomy & Ownership, 2, Capacity Building and 3. Poverty.

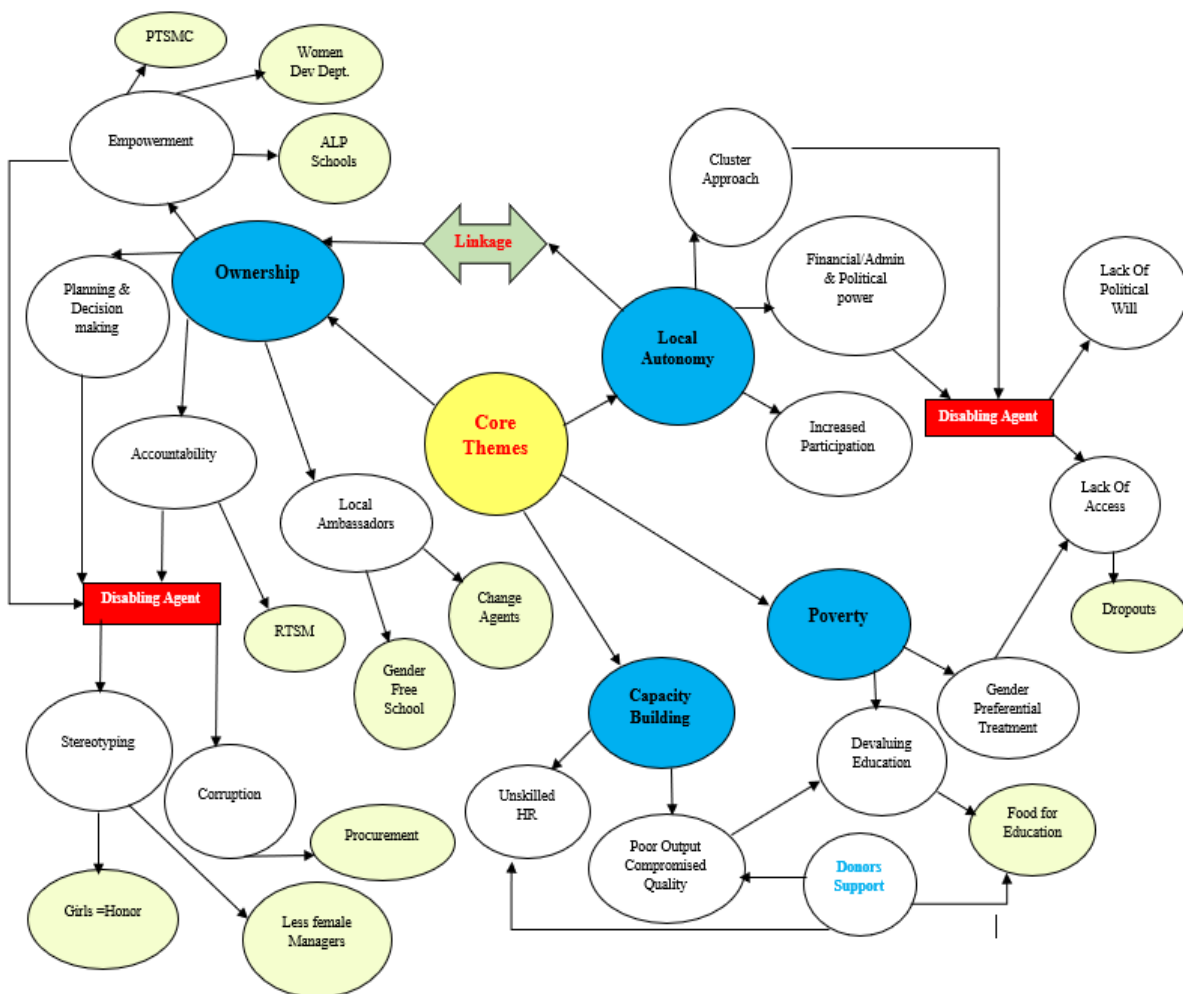


Figure 7: Thematic Mind Mapping (Table Attached In Appendix)

Source: Mapped By Author Based On “Braun And Clarke’s Six-Phase Framework For Doing A Thematic Analysis”

(Maguire & Delahunt, 2017)

As indicated earlier, since the independence of Pakistan, majority of Balochistan (Princely State Of Kalat) was interested in maintaining its sovereignty. Nevertheless, subsequent to its rather controversial accession to Pakistan, multiple factors added to the already fragile relationship between the region and the federal government. The paltry remuneration to the province in return of availing its natural resources, and the massive development funds allocations to densely populated provinces by the central government were considered two major setbacks, that pushed the territory to the most marginalized status. Many hoped that the act of devolution of power to the regions would not only aid in curtailing the age-old complaints, but the prospect of increased autonomy may result in unanimous alignment to the country's vision. A vision that may aid restructuring the sociocultural dynamics towards an overall progress of the nation. Nonetheless, the conundrum is to learn, how effective decentralized governing mechanism has been for women empowerment especially in a highly patriarchal setting. Has the devolution of power to the locals facilitated women/girl's empowerment or did it further hamper it? The literature review depicts that women empowerment in Balochistan compared to other comparatively "progressive" provinces have been at the backfooting. Be it economic empowerment, or access to quality education, a girl from Balochistan encountered a tougher journey compared to other provinces. So, did decentralization play any instrumental role to bring about any radical change to the progression of women? or it remained stagnant irrelevant to whatsoever the governance system is? The findings have been evaluated under four theoretical frameworks, two for each concept under studies: decentralization and gender, respectively. Each core theme has been assessed under the theoretical frames to comprehend its link and effectiveness pertaining the objectives under study. The core themes that surfaced under thematic analysis were:

1. Local Autonomy & Ownership:

Marginal consent could be found with reference to a formal definition of local autonomy . However, various studies summarize it from a multispheric perspective. Three prominent dimensions, take local autonomy as, recognizing one's local identity, and possessing the liberty to accomplish desired results, without any federal intervention (Pratchett, 2004). The interviewees appertained to the Provincial

Secretariat of Education, Women Development Department, United Nations and NGOs. Surprisingly, all of them had a constructive viewpoint regarding the power that has come with decentralization. The financial, political, and administrative powers that decentralization has provided; it has enabled them to “own” the professional mission at provincial level. This sense of “ownership” has changed the standpoint that the majority earlier had about governmental tasks, “... *It (Balochistan) is a tribal society, how can people sitting in Islamabad take such decisions...*” (Interviewee 1). The autonomy, that has been part of decentralized governance, has motivated the locals, to go extra mile and show rest of the provinces that, Balochistan has the enthusiasm to achieve its political objectives, if given the reins. Decentralization promotes local motivation to adopt development projects that are perceived to benefit the domestic dynamics, that might have been overlooked in the past by the federal power, due to limited awareness about the locality (Miller, 2002). Since the initiation of 18th constitutional amendment, a score of initiatives that might have been considered impossible in the past have been incorporated some being:

a. Local Ambassadors/Champions:

To meet the shortage of number of schools in every district, Balochistan Education Department introduced the concept of gender free (co-education) schools, to eliminate gender segregation in schools, and take measures to increase girls literacy rate and school enrollment, that suffered in the past due to unavailability of girls school in the vicinity. As per an interviewee had this idea been ordained by the central government, it might have caused hue and cry, and might have been considered as disrespecting the culture. However, ensuing devolution of power, local bureaucrats took it upon themselves to act as education ambassadors/champions in their respective districts, promoting through their self-image, how education can liberate the mind and aids to economic independence. The notion played a pivotal role in making locals embrace the idea of a primary coeducation school. While evaluating the concept of decentralization in educational governance, studies reveal that it contributes effectively to enhance efficiency in overseeing education systems, as the decentralized approach in such settings may activate resources that otherwise may not have been possible to attain (Weiler, 1990).

b. Planning, Decision Making & Transparency:

During the earlier phase of decentralization, all the region's procurement in education sector was centralized at the provincial education directorate which led to quite a few corruption scandals.

“Amongst the various challenges, transparency is a significant one, like corruption, initially, the level of corruption was close to 70%, gradually, It has gone down to 30%. Some people tried to benefit themselves through freshly granted provincial autonomy” (Interviewee1)”

“Earlier the education directorate was responsible for procuring the equipment. Number of directors ended up in prison due to their involvement in corruption/kickbacks etc.” (Interviewee 2)”

Currently the government of Balochistan has embraced what it calls a “cluster approach”. This approach follows a methodology, of having school and parents committee, where the members from the community are elected via voting to be part of the committee. Each school PTSMC (Parent's Teachers School Management Committee) is involved in tasks such as assessing the quality of education, to the procurement of schools supplies for repair or renovation etc. The committee conducts a need assessment and based on the findings it then goes ahead with the procurement process. The process also involves check and balance at every step of the way from need assessment till item(s) is procured. This initiative has not only increased the community participation in the planning and the decision-making process but has also strengthened the accountability and transparency mechanism. Inclusion of PTSMC in the school's budget utilization has become part of the cluster policy now. In order to have cluster budget, a school must have an active PTSMC. The minutes of each PTSMC meeting is shared with the Education Secretariat as an additional counter measure. In fact, an incident was discussed where the school required access to water in a vicinity called “*Qilli Shekhan*”, the community there collected PKR 150K (Approx. 1000 USD) on self-help basis to fix the water access problem. The idea of decentralized governance not only grants local autonomy but serves the local government with a purpose to recognize its prospective objectives, and work upon measures to attain them. The power of devolution motivates the local administrative bodies to safeguard their local interests, and pursue best possible measures, for the challenges it faces (Zaharia & Bilouseac, 2009). Nepotism in recruitments, has been a constant dilemma,

people want to get hired for government position, as it is perceived to be more “secure” job than private sector. Pertaining that problem, as per the provincial education Policy, Planning and Implementation Unit (PPIU), a major achievement has been recruiting teachers through an independent agency. This measure has been taken to ensure that the hiring process is transparent and unbiased. Additionally, it has become a mandatory part of the recruitment policy, that the prospective candidates must belong to the union council where the respective school is. It is a precautionary measure, **“So further devolved from district to sub district, down to the lowest administrative unit, the union council...” (Interviewee 4)**, just to ensure that right person is hired for the job. This measure would not only eradicate the problem of “ghost teachers” (teachers who regularly get salary but do not teach or ever appear in person at schools). It would also ensure that selected teacher would later not use political or social contacts to be transferred to their own desired districts. Furthermore, government cabinet recently passed a decision that irrespective of grade/cadre of teacher, all future teachers would be appointed via Public Service Commission (a body responsible for recruitment of government’s vacant positions, mostly via intensive exams held at arbitrary intervals). The idea is to ensure that the best available human resource is hired to meet the qualified candidate dearth. Several attributes, some being, transparency, accountability, responsiveness, and increased participation etc. have been element of good governance theory in order to strengthen the aim of attaining good governance. Responsiveness when added to other elements of the theory facilitates the attainment of overall objective. It provides flexibility to adapt to emerging changes in the environment and take realistic measures to face the challenges and achieve objective(s) (Ekundayo, 2017).

c. Accountability:

The cornerstone of good governance stresses that accountability needs to be incorporated in the policy and must not be just limited to the institutions. Good governance, holds individuals accountable for their actions, and emphasizes that the responsibilities of people, involved in any assignment must not be riddled with complexity, and should be very clearly defined (Rhodes, 2000). During the early stage, the vulnerability to corruption became blatant due to the fiscal and administrative autonomy, that is part of decentralization. However, the Ministry of Education adopted multiple approaches to ensure that

exploitation of resources is minimized, and professional accountability is increased. In addition to cluster approach, recruitment neutrality aided transparency. The government initiated “RTSM” (Real Time School Monitoring) an android based system in collaboration with UNICEF, under government’s EMIS project (Educational Management Information System) in addition to RTSM, the project has multiple online tools as Complaint Management System (CMS), a Biometric Attendance System, a Decision Support System (DSS) and a Geographical Information System (GIS) for school mapping. The statistical data updated in the RTSM assists in evaluating the overall performance of the education system (primary, middle, and higher secondary schools). It reviews if the schools are operational, teachers are in class, views students attendance, moreover, the responsible education managers are able to evaluate the infrastructure of the school, such as condition of classrooms, availability of toilets, access to basic facilities like drinking water, school furniture etc. This data facilitates the relevant education teams in effective utilization of resources. RTSM also played a vital role in identifying ghost teachers and extirpating them.

d. Empowerment:

In addition to regular schools, the government has partnered with UNICEF in implementing ALP (Accelerated Learning Programmes), the concept is to help and educate adolescents and adults who have missed regular education due to any reason. ALPs have been welcomed with quite zeal by the communities. In fact, places where there is no school building to be used in the afternoon or evening as an ALP center, people have offered their homes for the purpose. ALP centers are also focusing on enabling students acquire some vocational training, in addition to basic school learning, to enable them to have better economic opportunities. PTSMC as discussed above has played a strong role in involving communities in education promotion. It has also empowered parents to voice their wishes and concerns pertaining their children’s education, assuring that pupils receive quality education. Pre 18th amendment women advancement concerns were handled under the flagship of the Social Welfare Department. Post amendment a decade ago Women Development Department was established to work on women empowerment issues in legal, political, and social forums. So far, the department has successfully

established Benazir Crisis Center, and shelter homes for GBV (Gender Based Violence) victims. The centers provide psychological, medical, and legal aid to women. In addition to that Ombud's person's office has been established to handle women harassment issues. Furthermore, the department has successfully launched projects such as "Women Bazars", "Working Women Hostels", and "Women Business Incubation Centers". In business incubation centers women are encouraged to discuss their entrepreneurship ideas and if it has merit, all possible professional support and market linkage assistance and guidance is provided in this regard. The department has been actively involved in the recently passed women inheritance bill. Various women protection and economic empowerment projects are in pipeline. However, there is still some resistance... and as per the interviewee it is a long uphill journey. ***"Here we are not just fighting for our rights... We are fighting a mindset... Women empowerment basically means that you are empowering your generations and it will not only be left to just a single woman, it's an idea where you are uplifting the economy, you are uplifting a family as a whole and you are uplifting the nation in entirety..." (Interviewee 10)"***

In addition to how a child is influenced by the family while stereotyping gender as he or she grows, they are also manipulated by their own gender, once they are old enough to establish their social network and have friends. Their understanding of gender norms, for example, qualities associated with femininity being less valuable etc. is also affected by their social interaction processes, making them develop gendered subculture and divide themselves into homogenous group they connect with (Carter, 2014).

"At school level, in case of teachers, we need female staff due to social and cultural compulsions. However, there is very little representation of women in district or provincial level government positions like; District Education Officer (DEO) and other administrative positions. To cover this gap, there should be a quota system, as I feel inclusion of women in these tiers would improve not only monitoring, quality of education but also empower women. This can create a healthy competition environment. Currently there is a monopoly of male DEOs. Creation of more employment opportunities would create a source of inspiration for girls. The idea of a women monitoring and

administering at the position of DEO will have a significant impact on the society in terms of empowerment of women. Also, at the regional/director level there should be a quota 50/50, for male and female. This will also address the gender disparity issues which are an outcome of male dominated discussions and meetings.” (Interviewee 1)”.

“Recently the appointments at the secretariat like section officers and assistant commissioners, a lot of them are females. Many of them hesitate to get posted to the secretariat due to lack of facilities in infrastructure (toilets, daycare, prayer room). Therefore, almost all women are posted at one specific department, like women empowerment or women development department.” (Interviewee 4)”.

Children observe their families and acquaintances as agent of socialization, they start gender categorizing early from their childhood and gradually select the identity they could relate to. During the later stages of their lives as they developed gender constancy, they subconsciously behave in ways that is expected of that stereotyping or conforms with it (Bussey & Bandura, 1999; Carter, 2014)

2. Capacity Building:

Decentralization is often considered an approach to increase government’s efficiency, especially if the federal government is persistently considered a failure. Decentralization theorist often presume, a “uniform” professional competence of a nation in its entirety, forgoing a studied fact, that federal governments very successfully beckon expert human resource from all across the country. This setback makes it hard for the local government to retain skilled staff. In addition to that, local governments are unable to train their human resource effectively, hence, creating a skilled human resource vacuum (Bardhan, 2002) . The journey post decentralization has been an experiential venture, the devolution of education to the regions under the new constitutional amendment and addition of Article 25A **“Right to Education”**, “ *State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age five to sixteen in such a manner as may be determined by the law*”, made it necessary for the local government, to formulate a strategy to promote education and maximize literacy rate. This addition of the article and devolution of education to the province, required contemporary approach to promote education and

maximize literacy rate. All this contemplating led to the realization that the local government was not experienced enough to realize this goal solitarily.

a. Donor Support:

Initially, education situation analysis was carried out with the monetary and technical support of UNESCO. The analysis revealed, that prior to this devolution, all investments and projects pertaining education were fragmentary. They were not streamlined and lacked local perspectives and need. Moreover, most of these piecemeal mode projects, had more of a donor driven angle to it, due to the absence of a formal Education Sector Plan. Subsequent to the analysis, with the financial and technical assistance of UNICEF, it was decided to initiate the development of a comprehensive Education Sector Plan, under the ownership of the newly established Education Secretariat's, PPIU (Policy, Planning and Implementation Unit).

b. Balochistan Education Sector Plan 2013 - 2018:

The provincial government working for education wanted to develop a more holistic and all-encompassing sector plan. A document, that covered topics ranging from, "Access to quality Education", "Curriculum to Textbooks", "Assessments to teachers' education, governance and management", as well as "Formal, nonformal and technical education". With such a widespread aim it was soon dawned upon the local education department's bureaucracy, that they do not have the required capability, and such an extensive plan would not be possible without the intensive support of other local government departments. Other departments support and experience was much needed, to not only successfully formulate the document, but also to make these departments "torchbearers" to the cause and own the promotion of education. Hence, in addition to the donors' support, facilitation from Social Welfare Department, Finance Department, labor Department, All local education's major departments such as department of education (Primary, Secondary and Intermediate), Bureau Of Curriculum and The Textbook board were made part of this exhaustive exercise. *"The biggest issue in the start was of capacity... Earlier the education policy was made at national level. There used to be 2 to 3 representatives from the provinces. With transfer of authority to provinces, the participation has*

increased. Now the representation is also at the district level. More people are engaged in this which implies that more people have been empowered. The policies are made in context of Balochistan's cultural, economic, and social context. The way we have incorporated this in our sector plan. We have ensured that women participate and that this is done at all level" (Interviewee 3)".

c. Curriculum: Lessons Learned:

- *“Our new sector plan 2020 to 2025 suggests that children that are not learning, it is due to fault in learning design of the curriculum. If you make the curriculum according to the ground realities and learning ability of the children, then it will directly contribute to child's learning. The last curriculum was made for monograde teaching. One teacher, one class however, 84% of schools in Balochistan are multi grade and our curriculum is not for multi grade. What is the result? 50% of our primary grade schools have a single teacher. Single teacher teaching six grades. They are engaging all together. Teaching all the subjects and our curriculum is not addressing this reality...” (Interviewee 3)”.*
- In addition to planning to bring much needed curriculum change, (which is conditional to allocation of sufficient funds). The PPIU team has now been trained to evaluate the existing sector plan from gendered lens and, provide recommendations for the upcoming Education Sector Plan (2020 – 2025) to make it more gender responsive. How effective it will be only time will tell.

3. Poverty:

Balochistan makes 48% of Pakistan's landmass and comprises of approximately 5% of the total population (World Bank, 2007). As per Balochistan Drought Needs Assessment (BDNA) Report (February 2019), 24% of Pakistan's Population lives below the poverty line, 31% in rural areas and 13% in Urban. If we evaluate the statistics for Balochistan we find that it has second highest rate in multidimensional poverty after FATA. At aggregate, 71% of Balochistan's total population is multidimensionally poor, 85% in rural areas and 38% in urban. According to

assessment Balochistan's illiteracy rate is 45% , out of which 50% population is from the rural areas and 32% from the Urban locality. Gender specifically the illiteracy rate is 30% males and 63% females (OCHA Services, 2019).

Some major reasons of this disparity in education are considered to be sociocultural outlook; investment in girls' education is considered unwise as she would be married off, and there will not be any return on investment, compared to investment in male child's education. According to stratification system, gender classifies man superior to women despite the fact that they belong to same ethnicity or social standing (Lorber & Farrell, 1991). Parents are uncomfortable sending their girls to school that is miles away, as girls' status in society is linked to family's honor, parents do not feel comfortable sending girls alone to schools due to the security perspective. Furthermore, lack of enthusiasm from parents is noted to be another major reason. Poor economic situation linked with bad quality of education also plays a crucial role here; when parents observe, that despite their efforts of sending girls to school she is not learning anything and ends up performing teacher's house chores, they deem it better to keep her at home and assist mothers in the family's house chores (Shahryar, 2018).

Temporary school enrollment incentive programmes whenever initiated, do work but they are not sustainable, *“There was a program by the name of; ‘ Food for Education ‘. They used to give a box of butter to each girl costing Rs 1000, up to fifth grade. I personally managed that program, I observed that when the girls passed their exams and got promoted from 5th to 6th grade, the parents came and asked the school authorities to fail their girls and put them back in 5th grade. They were not interested in education; they were more interested in the Rs 1000 box of butter. Literally, they were requesting the school to fail their girls. There are a lot of issues of sustainability of such a program.”(Interviewee 12)*”.

It has been observed that if one of the parent's is educated the chances of the children getting education increases despite economic hardships (SDPI, 2011). Drastic economic conditions also urges some parents to engage girl child as housemaid in financially stable households, to get

additional income. In addition to lack of school in the vicinity, poor physical infrastructure, and unavailability of basic facilities, such as a proper school building, access to drinking water, boundary wall, having toilets is amongst the girl’s topmost school dropout reasons.

“...approximately 60% to 70% of girls are absent when they have their days (menstrual periods). Main problem is that of poverty, they cannot afford pads. Therefore, they cannot come to the school, so there is emphasis on taking a leave. UNICEF has worked a lot on this, teams are going to schools to create awareness, conducting trainings of not only the teachers, but of the girls and their mothers as well. There are mothers who say, they have heard about this for the first time in their life. We are also teaching them how to make cost effective pads. You cannot afford ‘always’(brand) pads, you can give it to them for the first time, what will they do later? We give them kits in the schools, with cotton, flannel clothing. We teach them to stitch and to make pads out of these. We are working a lot in this area due to which the schools under our focus area have improved attendance to 90% during these days.” (Interviewee 12)”

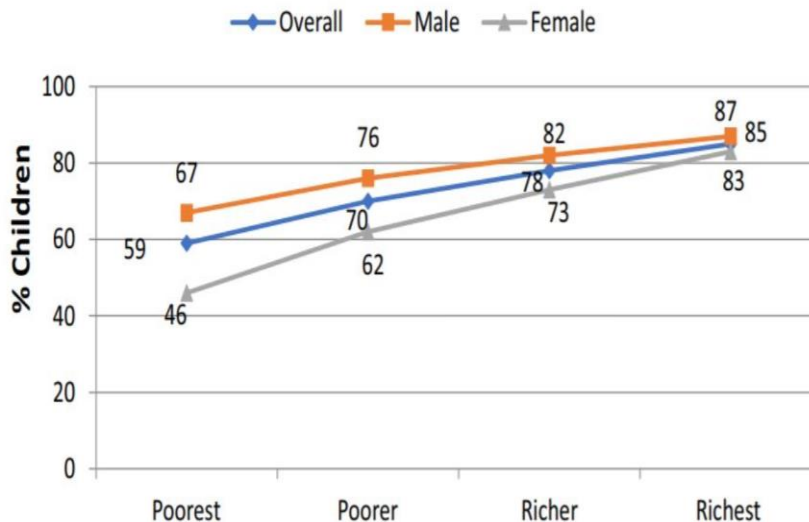


Figure 8: Enrollment By Gender And Wealth

Source: (ASER 2018)

ASER (Annual Status Of Education Report) depicts (See Figure 8), the disparity that exist between economic status and gender while considering school enrollment.

4.3 Disabling Factors

a. **Stereotyping:**

Traditional gender stereotyping seems to be ingrained in the bones of a patriarchal society. Irrelevant of which governance system is being followed. The set beliefs, with reference to each gender type heavily weighs down any initiative. Though efforts put by the local government's pertinent department, to increase school enrollment cannot be ignored. However, how intensively focused on minimizing gender disparity they really are, is yet to be seen. Every interviewee highlighted the need for strong female leadership in education sector. There has been minimal rise in female bureaucrats , ***“For instance, in last two years, almost 17 girls have joined as Assistant Commissioners. It is for the very first time in the history of Balochistan province. Last time it was in 1998...” (Interviewee 9)***. But has there been any concrete measures taken in that regard by the provincial government in the past 10 years? Any steadfast female induction quota plan, or some such measure to empower women at influential leading positions is yet to be introduced.

“... there is only one female DEO (district education officer) in 33 districts. There is no female director or divisional director, secretary, or additional secretary in the education department. Although 30 to 40% of 60000 teachers are female teachers. But there is no female representation at higher levels” (Interviewee 12). Salient characteristics, that continue to hinder a woman's progress, despite the efforts to reduce gender disparities, can be attributed to biological difference, societal allocated roles, and gendered segregated duties (Thompson, 2011).

Furthermore, the strong infusion between the tribal culture characteristics and selective religious teachings over the decades, have strengthened its roots in the society. Until a girl or a woman is linked with the honor of the family, there would always be a cloud overshadowing her flight towards self-

empowerment. There would always be a hinderance outside her door, waiting to block her journey to gain knowledge .

b. Lack Of Political Will:

During federal governing system normally, the debate is that the cosmopolitan capital or more progressive provinces, do not comprehend the ground dynamics of a marginalized region, before drafting a unanimous public development plans or relevant policy. However, when given the option to self-govern and take initiatives, how effective the provincial government has been? especially pertaining gender empowerment, is yet to materialize. Some may argue that a decade is more than enough to analyze which way the wind blows. Whereas other might claim, that leaving behind decades of oversight by the central government, cannot be palliated in just a decade. There is also an argument that, societies having very profound patriarchal roots seldom deviate towards liberal stance. The rigid division between male and female socially acceptable roles, has been embedded in societies for generations and has become very complexed and ingrained in it. It is a big challenge to abandon these notion of unperceptive adherence to gender role (Stockard, 2006), it may require more aggressive and radical movement than mere decentralization.

c. Lack Of Access/Infrastructure:

Whether it is due to unavailability of washrooms, drinking water, or not having a school in near locality, girls bear the brunt of all these shortages, which ultimately leads to her dropping out of school. From whichever perspective we assess a girl's lack of access to school, it all boils down to the social stereotyping that a female is born with, a weaker being, someone who needs to be protected, and a person who can even unintentionally cause mortification for her entire family etc. In an Asian society, until and unless the community, the government etc. does not take measure to safeguard her access to education, a major remarkable change may not happen. Very few parents, in such tribal dynamics remain steadfast, and ensure that their daughter is able to go to school. However, the majority has a herd mentality, and they only take action when the masses decide to do so.

“....most important I think is the problem of transportation. Because those females who want to acquire education, they need to be taken from their homes to the schools and colleges. And mostly due to economic reasons, they cannot address this problem. Parents say that we do not have the resources to take you to school, so you better stay home. Here starts the journey that male are given priority over the females because a male can go to his school by one way or another, but the female is stopped because of lack of conveyance. Proper working needs to be done for the sector of transportation.” (Interviewee 10)”

The government’s pilot project, regarding availability of safe transportation for girls’ students is underway and its outcome on school enrollment is yet to be analyzed.

“We are doing a pilot on ‘transportation’ in Pashin area. We want to see, if we start a bus service how would it affect access and enrollment etc.” (Interviewee 9)”

4.4 Some Reflections In The Light Of The Theoretical Frameworks

The concept of decentralization and governance have become all the rage in the recent decades. The theory has been flourishing particularly well in the public sector and the humanitarian arena . As per B. Guy Peters the popularity of the term governance is basically due to its ambivalent nature, while exploring, any essential characteristics can be added to it, just to augment the concept of governance, which often creates a reciprocity between ambiguity and insight, depending on the context its addressed (Peters, 2012).

Theorist argue that to safeguard national, cultural, and political supremacy, governments in many cases consider the option of decentralization, specifically when it wants to assuage escalating regional disharmony based on ethnicity (Bardhan, 2002).

If we evaluate just the decentralized governance of the provincial education sector both theories address most of the transitioning phases somewhat amicably, but it also reflect, that all the anticipated advantages considered part of such governance has not been accrued yet. However, if we evaluate the convergence point, between the decentralized governance post 18th amendment and its impact on

women's empowerment, unfortunately the factors that only debilitate the very idea of women empowerment in those theories, eventuate or become visible. *“Three fields of influence tend to inform the ways girls are socialized to a marginalized place in society. They include: 1. Attitudes appearing to have genesis inherent in the society in which she lives; 2. Factors embedded in the culture of the educational system; and 3. Self-limiting views or temperaments (Thompson, 2011 , p.138).* Deliberating over this particular study, regrettably it does not show a positive impact yet. However, maybe a comparative case study between the most progressive province and, the most marginalized one may illuminate advancement in girl's empowerment through education somewhat more positively perhaps.

4.5 Conclusion And Recommendations

This Study was undertaken with the objective to explore, measures taken by the Balochistan government's education sector, to ensure empowerment of girls/women through education, subsequent to the passing of the 18th constitutional amendment in April 2010. Balochistan province's unique geography, an orthodox tribal culture in rural areas, history of tension with the Federal authorities, an on & off insurgency. The 18th amendment to Pakistan's constitution in 2010, paved way to transfer greater/significant autonomy to the provinces, both economic and political. Researches reflect that the basic concept of decentralized governance facilitates and creates a more feasible environment towards, local ownership, political and fiscal independence (Boko, 2002). The devolution of power does not necessarily mean exclusion of center's influence in entirety. The aim was to assess, how effective was the idea of decentralization with reference to empowering women. A qualitative field study was carried out in the capital city Quetta of Balochistan. The data was collected via purposive sampling, semi-structured interviews, and the later was categorized under thematic analysis, and further examined under applicable frameworks, both regarding decentralized governance and women empowerment in tribal social settings. Some reflection on the findings and future recommendations can be summarized as:

Balochistan's population is scattered across the vast spaces of the province with relatively poor communication infrastructure and lack of basic utilities especially in rural communities. Lack of

education infrastructure is one of the major hurdles in fight to improve accessibility to education. The low population density and vast distances between rural hamlets and villages restrict accessibility to education in general. However, in case of girls' education, it often means end of schooling and education. Owing to the conservative makeup of the rural tribal society, and its deep-rooted patriarchal core, families are never comfortable to let their girls travel longer distances in pursuit of education. All these factors negatively influence the gender socialization process at the structural level, instead of strengthening it. Infrastructure improvement can be a good indicator to gauge effects of fiscal independence and local priorities.

Provincial autonomy has offered great deal of independence to the Provincial governments in terms of creation of curriculum and its implementation. A close look into the curriculum can be a good way in assessing the thinking of the local political elite and provincial bureaucracy. Do we see themes in the curriculum covering gender sensitive issues or a more egalitarian approach? Has there been an effort made to encourage girls and the larger community (parents, teachers) to acquire education in order to become productive members of the society? Are there any role models, local or foreigner in social sciences or humanities to inspire the younger generation of girls? The efforts put in this direction are not enough to rectify years of damage caused to generations of girls. Will these initial efforts bear fruit? That only time will tell. However, to gain exceptional results, exceptional efforts are required by the government in this direction.

One of the most significant underlying factor that retards progress in a society is chronic poverty. In case of Balochistan where a significant percentage of the populace lives below poverty line, the emphasis is on survival and short-term gain. Such concerns often encourage child labor and tragically creates commodification of children. Lacking in means to travel, affording school uniforms, utensils to all other sets of problems, both increase dropout rates and restricts further enrolments. Poverty elevation initiatives are likely to improve the desire to educate children. Are there any significant government initiatives post 18th amendment to reduce poverty? What do the statistics show us? The cycle of poverty perpetuates orthodoxy and impedes both economic and intellectual progress in a society.

Societies are bound by cultural traditions and belief doctrines. Balochistan province hosts people from rich cultural backgrounds, at its core, it is a tribal and patriarchal society. Religious belief, though overrated, is often sweetly merged in traditional practices. With some natural convergence points between culture, tradition, and religion, it can get challenging often to see the difference. Lack of quality education creates space for ancient ideas to take root and perpetuate, it creates a stagnation and impedes progress. The role of clergy and local community leaders is significant and certainly exercise a wider influence in their communities. Pakistan's constitution tows very closely with the Islamic Faith, with the evolution of parallel Islamic law, women face more challenges than men in pursuing financial and individual independence. Local ownership is most likely to amplify the innate conservativeness of people in this province and cast its shadow on local policies.

Though political autonomy created opportunity for the local political leadership, to create laws and chart policies that conformed to the aspirations of people of Balochistan. Do we see any set of laws that indicate the direction being pursued by the provincial political body? Has there been structural organizational changes made at provincial and divisional secretariats to encourage participation of women in governance? Not yet. It took almost 62 years to relinquish federal power in support of devolution of power to the provinces, how long will decentralization take to show its effectiveness? And will it ever be effective for women empowerment in view of all the background information we studied? I believe another in-depth study may help in finding an answer to that.

Decentralization is a form of government that encourages local empowerment. In order to access its impact on various social streams of the society, there should be a broader study covering its effects on a wider spectrum of society catering for variations in terms of income & poverty level, demographics, culture, and tradition. The complexities or negativities of a federal style centralized system can be found at the provincial and district level as well. Post 18th amendment, we do not see any significant and sustainable initiative that targets improvement of girls' education. The study highlights almost the same disparities and setbacks exists today, that were faced back in the 50s irrespective of the governance system. The patriarchal lens has failed to see the emergency and importance of gender equality and

empowerment. We do see encouraging projects mostly led and financed by foreign NGOs. Women in government still face the basic challenges to work in spaces that are not women friendly. Gender free schools only impact education at the primary level which in the long terms does not serve the purpose. There is lack of aggressive education policy. The curriculum does not show any motivation to create better awareness in terms of gender equality and role of women in the modern society.

We do see that no significant internal or external initiatives in this regard can work without getting the key stakeholders on board, more specifically the influential people like tribal, community leaders and clergy. This coupled with investment in improved core and support infrastructure, might lay a strong foundation to raise a nation that has strong, confident, and empowered women.

CHAPTER 5:

5.1 References

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5.2 Appendix

5.2.1 Sub Research Questions

1. How would you describe the policy shift towards women empowerment after the 18th amendment compare to the past?
2. What would you say are the major challenges faced and milestones realized by the government regarding women empowerment after the passing of the 18th amendment?
3. Which component pertaining to women empowerment policy you believe needs more awareness amongst people?
4. Concerning the social empowerment sub-component, “empowerment through education”, what actions you think could accelerate the success of this sub-component?
5. Has there been any efforts made to reduce gender gap in access to quality education? If yes, what are they?
6. How induction of female students is promoted in the province?
7. What concrete measures have been taken to reduce female students’ dropout rates?
8. How the “right to education for girls” made accessible in remote areas and urban low income and slums?
9. Are there any steps taken to advance induction of female students with disabilities and minority?
10. How women empowerment through education is promoted amongst parents and community? Is it effective?
11. What revisions have been made to the existing curriculum to remove gender stereotypes?
12. Does teacher training cover gender sensitivity components? How is it monitored and reported?
13. What are the constraints, gaps and accomplishments concerning reducing gender gap in access to quality education and achieving women empowerment through education.
14. What are the achievements and constraints in reducing the gender gap specifically in education sector of Balochistan?

5.2.2 Thematic Analysis Table

BROAD/CORE THEME	SUB-THEME	EXAMPLE
Local Autonomy/ Ownership	Cluster Approach, Financial, Administrative and Political Devolution, Increased Participation, Empowerment, Planning And Decision Making, Accountability, Local Ambassadors, Transparency.	Dropouts, PTSMCs, Women Development Department, ALP Schools, RTSM, Gender Free School, Change Agents
Capacity Building	Unskilled HR, Poor Output And Compromised Quality, Donor’s Support	Ghost Teachers, Monograde Teaching Approach in Multi-grade School Environment.
Poverty	Devaluing Education, Gender Preferential Treatment	Food For Education, Child Labor , Even One Parent’s Literacy Brings Change
Disabling Agent	Lack Of Access Both Infrastructure (Schools In Vicinity) And Access To Basic Facilities (Toilets, Drinking Water) , Lack Of Political Will, Stereotyping, Corruption	Girls linked to family honor, Transportation Issues, Lack Of Females At Leading Positions, Personal Incentives In Procurement Procedures

5.2.3 ACRONYMS

ALP	Accelerated Learning Programme
ASER	Annual Status Of Education Report
CPEC	China Pakistan Economic Corridor
CMS	Complaint Management System
DEO	District Education Officer
DSS	Decision Support System
EMIS	Educational Management Information System
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GIS	Geographic Information System
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MFLO	Muslim Family Law Ordinance
PPP	Pakistan People’s Party
PPIU	Policy Planning And Implementation Unit
PTSMC	Parents Teachers School Management Committee
RTSM	Real Time School Monitoring
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
UDHR	Universal Declaration Of Human Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, And Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
USAID	United States Agency For International Development
V-AID	Village Agricultural And Industrial Development

5.2.4 Pakistan’s Map



(Lesniewski, n.d)