



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**The Role of Institutional Trust in Shaping Youth Political Participation in Pakistan: A Behaviouralist Analysis in the Context of SDG 16**

<sup>1</sup>Nayab Asghar, <sup>2</sup>Sunaila Farooq and <sup>3</sup>Fakhira Rasheed

1. MS Scholar, Department of Politics and International Relations, Government College Women University Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan
2. MS Scholar, Department of Politics and International Relations, Government College Women University Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan
3. MS Scholar, Department of Politics and International Relations, Government College Women University Sialkot, Punjab, Pakistan

**Corresponding Author**      [nayabasghar71@gmail.com](mailto:nayabasghar71@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT**

This study examines the role of institutional trust in shaping youth political participation in Pakistan through political behaviourism theory within the framework of SDG 16, which emphasizes peace, justice, and strong institutions. As a country with a large youth population, Pakistan's democratic future depends on the political attitudes, perceptions, and participation patterns of its young citizens. However, political instability, governance challenges, concerns about corruption, and electoral transparency have undermined youth trust in political institutions, which has affected their engagement in formal democratic processes. Political behaviourism describes the impact that individuals' beliefs, attitudes, and trust in political institutions have on political participation. To analyze this relationship, the study used a quantitative and descriptive research design. Data were collected from 400 respondents using a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale using online and offline survey methods. The results show that although Pakistani youth generally display low trust in political institutions, they remain politically aware and actively engage through social media and alternative forms of political expression. The study recommends to strengthen transparency, accountability, civic education, and inclusive governance for the restoration of youth confidence in Pakistan and for the promotion of meaningful democratic participation.

**Keywords:** Institutional Trust, Youth Political Participation, Political Behaviourism Theory, Democratic Governance, Political Awareness, Youth Engagement, Electoral Transparency, Online Political Activism, SDG 16, Pakistan

**Introduction**

In most modern-day democracies, Youth do not only constitute an age bracket; they represent a moral and political entity that will determine the future direction of democratic governance. The involvement of youth is a measure of whether the political system is revitalized by their inclusion or on its way to disengagement and disillusionment. This is an important issue in developing democracies where most political institutions are usually not regarded as being legitimate. This is in consonance with the priorities set for the world by the Sustainable Development Goals, which includes Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, where inclusion and democratic political processes, and effective political institutions are critical to sustainable societies. This is in line with global priorities outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals, which include Goal 16, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, where inclusive and democratic political processes, responsible political institutions, and participatory governance are emphasized as prerequisites of sustainable societies (Aslam, & Muzaffar, 2025; (Aslam, & Muzaffar, 2025b) Pakistan is one such place where such an issue can be examined and comprehended. It is among the youngest

countries in South Asia, and much of its population is under the age of thirty. The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2022) notes that millions of Pakistanis belong to the youth cohort. This demographic strength means that youths have the power to influence election results, shape political debate and transform public expectations about democratic practices. The politics of youth thus holds relevance for the current and future directions of democratic growth.

During national elections, constitutional debates and times of political crisis, young people in Pakistan exhibit clear political consciousness. They take part in demonstrations, use digital platforms to voice their strong opinions and react quickly to political disputes. Nevertheless, this zeal does not always result in long-term institutional involvement like voting, party membership or organized civic engagement. According to the Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (2023) youth voter turnout often falls below national averages in several electoral cycles. This discrepancy between institutional participation and political interest raises a question: what shapes people's decisions to participate in, discontinue, or reroute their political activity?

One of the key factors that might help to explain this is in relation to institutional trust. Which is defined as citizens' trust in the fairness, competence, and legitimacy of political institutions. The behavioural approach to political science, which was dominated by thinkers such as David Easton and Sidney Verba, is based upon the assumption that political behaviour is generated by citizens' attitudes, perceptions, and evaluative judgments about political authority.

In Pakistan, the level of trust in different government institutions varies. Public debates and surveys often show different levels of trust in parliament, political parties, government authorities, and the Election Commission of Pakistan. Episodes of electoral controversy, governance crises and economic instability also contribute to the formation of public perception, especially for the younger generation of citizens who encounter politics at formative stages of their civic development, such perceptions influence whether they view democratic institutions as arenas of opportunity or as structures detached from public accountability (Rasheed et al., 2026). Therefore, this study aims to explain the role of high or low trust of youth on their country's political institutions and its combined impact on their participation in political processes, while utilising the behavioural approach to analyze their behaviours in the phenomenon.

## **Literature Review**

The participation of young individuals in their country's politics determine the long-term stability and responsiveness of the governance systems of that country. Early research defined participation as institutional activities including voting, party membership and campaign involvement as Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie (1972) stated "political participation alludes to the activities through which citizens seek to influence government decisions". However, later, Kay Lehman Schlozman, Sidney Verba and Henry E. Brady (1995) introduced the civic voluntarism model that includes resources, civic skills and political motivation within the fold of political participation that further established participation as an outcome shaped by both individual capacity and structural opportunity as shown below:

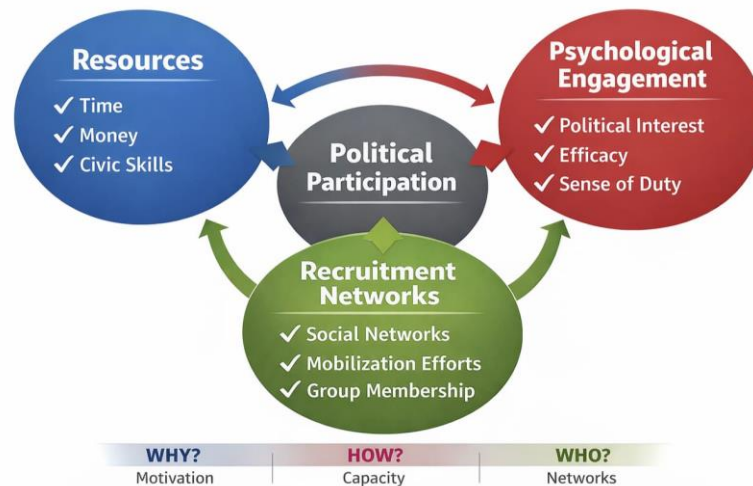


Figure 1: Civic Voluntarism Model

Norris (2002) believes that advanced and developing democracies alike have experienced a transformation in participation patterns and claims that political engagement has not declined but diversified into non-institutional forms such as protests, petitions, civic activism and digital mobilization. Similarly, Asghar et al. (2026) observe a generational shift in participation patterns where younger citizens demonstrate lower attachment to traditional party politics but higher involvement in issue-based activism that concludes that participation now takes multiple institutional and non-institutional forms and demonstrates that citizens may engage outside formal electoral channels when institutional trust weakens.

Robert Dahl is of opinion that “political engagement is not solely determined by institutions but by how individuals perceive governance, political leaders and societal issues”. This is particularly relevant in Pakistan, where young people’s trust in political institutions is often undermined by governance failures, corruption and exclusion from decision-making spaces (Yusuf, 2011). Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (2023) states that around 62.6 million people between the age group of 15 to 29 make up 27.1% of the total population of Pakistan, and more than 64% of the Pakistani population are below 30 years. This youth bulge indicates that Pakistan is not only a young country today but it will likely to remain so until at least 2050 (Najam, 2024). This demographic represents a significant political asset for the country. Nevertheless, in spite of this advantage, youth in Pakistan often encounter political obstacles due to several factors such as the absence of youth-oriented political forums, low levels of civic awareness, socio-economic volatility and disillusionment with traditional political elites (Kanwal, 2025).

The rise of digital platforms has further expanded youth political participation in Pakistan and allowed for instant access to political debates and activism (Asghar, et al., 2025). This form of engagement includes online advocacy campaigns, digital protests, hashtag movements, and sharing political satire, memes or commentary (UNDP Pakistan, 2018). However, despite active online engagement, youth participation in formal political processes such as voting, joining political parties, or running for office remains relatively low (PILDAT, 2023). A contributing factor is the absence of institutional political grooming, especially after the long-standing ban on student unions across many universities in Pakistan, which restricted the traditional training grounds for youth leadership.

Institutional trust refers to citizens’ confidence in the integrity, fairness, and effectiveness of political institutions. In democratic countries, civilian institutions need confidence of the public for its existence as well as for the smooth execution of the state affairs. In democratic societies when the civilian institutions such as judiciary, election

commission, parliament, police and media secured the public's confidence especially of the young population, the chances of public's participation in political processes such as in voting, peaceful protest or debate over policies largely increases. Uslander and Brown (2005) ween that "Trust plays an important role in the level of citizen participation in political decision-making oppugnant to the traditional view, but according to their theory, the friendly relationship extends from trust to participation". Unfortunately, in Pakistan this trust is shallow, if not absent, due to the political instability, rampant corruption and nepotism as well as constant military rule. The prevailing opinion among the youth is that these institutions are just pretentious structures created for the purpose of masquerading for the powerful elites who run the country. According to Douglass North, "Losing trust in institutions makes a country's demise a self-fulfilling prognostication" ((Aslam, & Muzaffar, 2025a; Faundez, 2016). This opinion fosters frustration which results in apathy towards politics.

Research shows that groups with previously perceived notions about being privilege to certain institutions such as the military tend to rank them higher on trust while having a negative bias towards the elected political entities (Fatima, et al. 2026). For example, the Pakistan Youth Perception Survey released in 2021 showcases an alarming figure which states that 74% of the youth trust military institution, while 58% consider supreme court of Pakistan as reliable institution followed by media with 54% votes in favor while election commission hoard the least confidence with 42%. According to Gallup survey conducted in 2023, the ratio of public trust towards military institution increased to a great extent with 88% of the respondent support (Voice of America, 2024). However, this confidence on military was also decreased in the last previous years of Imran Khan in government when public called for military non-intervention in politics (Farooq, et al., 2026). Furthermore, a lack of trust in the Election Commission also lowers the trust about the elections being free and fair which discourages young people from voting.

Youth participation in Pakistan has been characterized by episodic mobilization, especially in times of elections or during political crises. However, empirical studies often focus on turnout patterns or media influence but not systematically examined the impact of behavioural outcomes over institutional trust. While some research links political dissatisfaction to protest activity, few studies integrate trust as a central explanatory variable in youth participation models. Therefore, while the literature provides substantial insight into participation patterns, youth engagement, and institutional trust separately, fewer studies integrate these variables within a single analytical model in the Pakistani context. This study addresses that gap by examining how institutional trust relates to youth political participation in Pakistan.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is grounded in the behavioural approach to political science. Behaviourism is an empirical approach in social sciences that focuses on the scientific study of human behaviour through observable actions, data collection and analysis. Political behaviourism emerged as part of the broader behavioural revolution in political science during the mid of 20<sup>th</sup> century and sought to apply scientific methods to the study of human behaviour and examines how individuals and groups form political opinions, engage with political systems and respond to political events (Almond & Verba, 1963). It shifted political analysis away from institutions, laws, norms and structures and instead focused on individual political actions, media influence and socialization processes. David Easten defined political behaviourism as "a scientific approach to studying political actions based on empirical data rather than abstract ideologies". Unlike traditional approaches that focus on governments and policies, political behaviourism examines how political attitudes evolve over time and why different societies show different levels of political participation (Dahl, 1961).

Political behaviour alludes to the activities, attitudes and the actions of the individuals or groups related to their country's political processes, decision-making and governance. It includes both legitimate participation as well as illegitimate. Legitimate participation includes voting, protests, lobbying, joining of political parties, engaging in political discussions and expressing opinions on governmental policies while illegitimate one refers to participation via illegal or extremists' activities (Eldersveld, 1964). Scholars argue that political participation is not just a rational process but it is also shaped by emotions, psychological biases and external influences. According to Verba, Schlozman & Brady, political behaviour develops in stages;



Figure 2: Stages of Political Behaviourism

Within this framework, institutional trust serves as a psychological viaduct between citizens and the state. When levels of trust are high, individuals perceive participation as meaningful and are able to influence political outcomes. On the other hand, when trust declines, citizens may question institutional effectiveness. This assessment may reduce institutional participation and lead political activity to informal or alternative channels. In such case, behavioral theory assists to examine variations in trust and translation of that into observable differences in youth political participation. In Pakistan, the political environment has always experienced institutional volatility and fluctuations in public trust. For young citizens who engage in political behavior during periods of institutional uncertainty, the concept of trust can significantly influence participation choices (Arif, et al., 2026). Therefore, this study adopts behavioral theory to explain the relationship between institutional trust and youth political participation as by linking measurable perceptions to observable processes, the behavioral approach provides a systematic basis for analyzing youth political behavior in Pakistan.

### Hypotheses

- H1: Higher levels of institutional trust among youth are positively associated with increased political participation.
- H2: Youth who demonstrate higher institutional trust are highly anticipated to take part in the formal political activities such as voting and electoral engagement.
- H3: Lower levels of institutional trust among youth are associated with a preference for alternative forms of political participation such as online activism and protest activities.

### Material and Methods

#### Research Design

This basic research has employed quantitative methodology with a descriptive approach in order to generalize the results.

**Conceptual Framework**

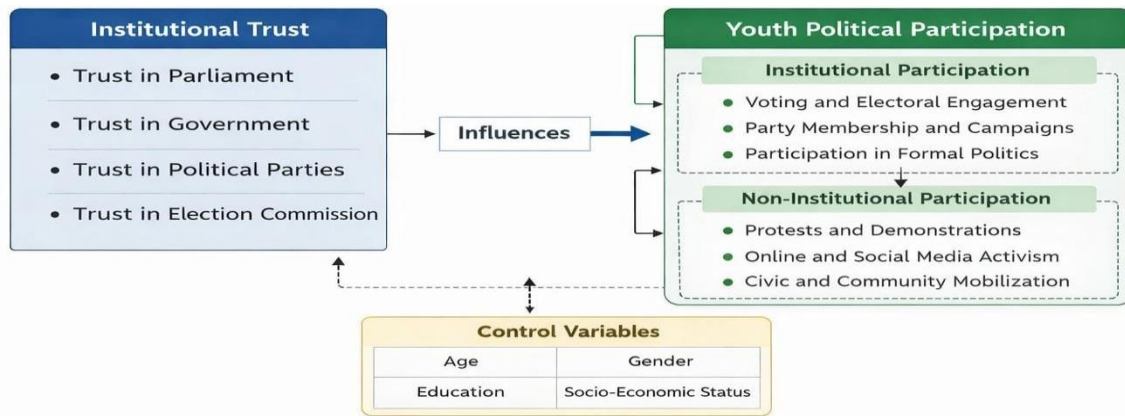


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework

**Target Population and Sampling Technique**

Since this the role of institutional trust in shaping youth political participation in Pakistan through a behavioural analytical framework in the context of Sustainable Development Goal 16, which emphasizes peace, justice, and strong institutions. The study aims to analyze how trust in political institutions influences different forms of political participation among Pakistani youth. Therefore, the population of this study is random general citizens aged above 15 years belonging to both rural and urban areas of Gujranwala Division of Punjab. The participants were from different educational, professional, religious and social backgrounds, and were from both genders.

At a 95% confidence level, the minimum sample size required to conduct this study was collected as 400 by using Cochran's formula. In addition, a representative sample for this study has been obtained by utilising the simple random sampling technique.

**Instruments**

The survey was conducted online after developing questionnaire via google forms and then audience were reached out through social media platforms. The questionnaire was comprised of 10 closed-ended statements based on a five-point Likert. According to the nature of this questionnaire, the Likert scale was selected as SDA = Strongly Disagree = 1, DA = Disagree = 2, N = Neutral = 3, A = Agree = 4 and SA = Strongly Agree = 5. The survey was also conducted offline and the questionnaire was translated into both Urdu and Punjabi languages for less educated people and was read aloud for illiterates.

**Reliability and Validity Test**

The content and face validity of the study got checked by an experts' committee at the department of Politics and IR, GCWUS in January 2026 for the sake of pilot testing. After review, the expert committee recommended to remove some items that had weak correlation with the questionnaire to turn it more reliable. However, the coefficient value calculated with the help of SPSS was 0.82 simultaneously shown here:

**Table 1**  
**Reliability Analysis**

	N	%
<b>Valid Items</b>	400	100.0
<b>Excluded</b>	0	.0
<b>Total</b>	400	100.0

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.82	10

The lingo of these tools got checked by experts in English linguistics available in the University's Department of English.

### Ethical Considerations

The Research Ethical Institutional Review Board of GC Women University Sialkot in its 10<sup>th</sup> meeting held on 15-03-2026 reviewed the ethical considerations of this study and found that the ethical guidelines throughout the research have been strictly followed. The citizens' participation was voluntary. They were well informed about the study's aim and allowed to withdraw at any stage.

### Results and Discussions

**Table 2**  
**Trust in Political Institutions**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean Score
01	Political institutions in Pakistan (parliament, ECP, judiciary) are trustworthy.	SA	3	0.75	2.33
		A	30	7.5	
		N	160	40	
		D	110	27.5	
		SD	97	24.25	

Table 2 shows that 0.75% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 7.5% respondents agreed and 40% respondents were neutral. While 27.5% respondents were disagree and 24.25% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 3**  
**Fair and transparent elections**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean score
02	I believe elections in Pakistan are conducted in a fair and transparent manner.	SA	48	12	2.16
		A	20	5	
		N	20	5	
		D	170	42.5	
		SD	142	35.5	

Table 3 demonstrates that 12% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 5% respondents agreed and 5% respondents were neutral. While, 42.5% respondents disagreed and 35.5% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 4**  
**Trust in political institutions, decision to vote.**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean score
03	My trust in political institutions influences my decision to vote	SA	35	8.75	3.12
		A	160	40	
		N	57	14.25	
		D	113	28.25	
		SD	35	8.75	

Table 4 depicts that 8.75% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 40% respondents agreed and 14.25% respondents were neutral. While 28.25% respondents were disagree and 8.75% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 5**  
**Political change in Pakistan and vote**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean score
04	I feel that my vote can bring positive political change in Pakistan.	SA	64	16	3.27
		A	145	36.25	
		N	64	16	
		D	87	21.75	

SD 40 10

Table 5 shows that 16% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 36.25% respondents agreed and 16% respondents were neutral. While 21.75% respondents were disagree and 10% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 6**  
**Youth political participation and democracy**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean score
05	Young people should actively participate in politics to strengthen democracy.	SA	160	40	4.12
		A	184	46	
		N	24	6	
		D	8	2	
		SD	24	6	

Table 6 shows that 40% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 46% respondents agreed and 6% respondents were neutral. While 2% respondents were disagree and 6% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 7**  
**Lack of trust in institutions and voting**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean score
06	Due to lack of trust in institutions, I prefer expressing my political views online instead of voting.	SA	64	16	3.52
		A	160	40	
		N	120	30	
		D	32	8	
		SD	24	6	

Table 6 shows that 16% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 40% respondents agreed and 30% respondents were neutral. While 8% respondents were disagree and 6% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 8**  
**Interest in political participation**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean score
07	I am interested in participating in political activities such as protests, campaigns, or debates.	SA	24	6.1	2.90
		A	123	30.6	
		N	98	24.5	
		D	98	24.5	
		SD	57	14.3	

Table 8 shows that 6.1% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 30.6% respondents agreed and 24.5% respondents were neutral. While 24.5% respondents were disagree and 14.3% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 9**  
**Political instability and political participation**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean score
08	Political instability in Pakistan reduces my willingness to participate in formal politics.	SA	80	20	3.62
		A	176	44	
		N	88	22	
		D	24	6	
		SD	32	8	

Table 9 shows that 20% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 44% respondents agreed and 22% respondents were neutral. While 6% respondents were disagree and 8% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 10**  
**Social media and political awareness**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean score
09	Social media has increased my awareness about political issues.	SA	120	30	4.02
		A	224	56	
		N	24	6	
		D	8	2	

---



---

SD                      24                      6

---

Table 10 shows that 30% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 56% respondents agreed and 6% respondents were neutral. While 2% respondents were disagree and 6% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 11**  
**Strong institutions and youth participation**

Item no.	Statement	Level	F	%	Mean score
10	Strong and trustworthy institutions can increase youth participation in politics.	SA	152	38	4.00
		A	160	40	
		N	56	14	
		D	0	0	
		SD	32	8	

Table 11 shows that 38% respondents strongly agreed with the statement, 40% respondents agreed and 14% respondents were neutral. While 0% respondents were disagree and 8% respondents strongly disagreed.

**Table 12**  
**Mean Score Assessment**

Statements	Mean Scores
05	4.12
09	4.02
10	4.00
08	3.62
06	3.52
04	3.27
03	3.12
07	2.90
01	2.33
02	2.16
<b>Mean Average of 10 Statements= 3.31</b>	

Table 12 shows that statements number 5,9 and 10 has higher acceptance level, followed by statements 8,6,4 and 3 with moderate level of acceptance. While 7,1 and 2 statements have lowest acceptance level. The average mean score of all statements is 3.31.

## Conclusion

The study investigates the relation between institutional trust and youth political participation in Pakistan within the scope of SDG 16 using behavioral analysis. According to the results of the research, the level of institutional trust impacts the behavior of young people concerning politics. A significant proportion of respondents reported lack of trust in political institutions due to problems related to election processes, governance efficiency, and political accountability. This leads to reluctance to participate in politics formally, including voting, which can be considered an expression of formal democracy. Nevertheless, Pakistani youth stays politically aware, showing interest in political discussions, especially online. The research proved that individuals who have higher levels of trust in political institutions tend to engage in formal politics, while young people who have less trust use other means to express their positions and views, including social networks and protests. One of the factors that contribute to the unwillingness to participate in politics formally is the existence of political instability. Therefore, it is indispensable to strengthen transparency, accountability and democratic credibility of institutions in order to escalate youth engagement and to promote inclusive governance and to support the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16.

### **Recommendations and Policy Implications**

- Political institutions should adopt transparent governance practices to rebuild youth trust as fair electoral procedures, public accountability and anti-corruption measures can improve institutional legitimacy that may led to increased youth political participation.
- Political parties and government institutions should create youth-friendly platforms and include young people in policymaking, consultation processes and leadership roles as this can reduce political alienation and encourage long-term democratic participation of youth.
- Educational institutions should promote healthy political engagement through formation of civic societies and the revival of regulated student unions. These platforms can serve as tutelage for the youth democratic leadership and political participation.
- Civic education should be integrated into educational curricula as a compulsory subject for all fields in order to increase awareness about democratic rights, constitutional responsibilities, electoral systems and peaceful political participation.
- The Election Commission of Pakistan should strengthen transparency during elections by ensuring impartiality, effective monitoring and public communication as building confidence in electoral processes can increase youth voter turnout.
- Since social media significantly shapes political awareness, government institutions and civil society organizations should use digital platforms to engage with youth, and to spread political awareness and encourage informed participation.
- Political instability affects youth willingness to participate in formal politics in a negative manner. Therefore, democratic continuity, policy consistency and effective governance are indispensable in order to strengthen institutional trust.
- Policymakers should align governance reforms with SDG 16 and promote inclusive institutions, participatory governance, access to justice, and public trust to ensure sustainable democratic development in Pakistan.

## References

- Arif, N., Arif, R., & Fatima, A. (2026). Cybersecurity in Pakistan: Public Opinion and the Effectiveness of Government Response. *Pakistan Languages and Humanities Review*, 10(1), 70–82.
- Arif, R., Arif, N., & Fatima, A. (2026). A Constitutional Analysis of Pakistan's 26th and 27th Amendments: Implications for Governance and Representation. *Journal of Development and Social Sciences*, 7(1), 59–68.
- Asghar, N., Cheema, A. T., & Muzaffar, M. (2025). The Impact of Media Coverage on Political Behavior among Pakistani Students: A Case Study of GC Women University Sialkot. *Journal of Development and Social Sciences*, 6(2), 266–279.
- Asghar, N., Muzaffar, M., Sunaila Farooq, & Rasheed, F. (2026). Public Awareness of Fundamental Human Rights and Democratic Values in Pakistan: A Quantitative Study. *Journal of Political Stability Archive*, 4(1), 369-385.
- Aslam, H. & Muzaffar, M. (2025). The Interplay between Political Stability and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Pakistan: An Assessment, *Journal of Development and Social Sciences* 6 (2), 221-231
- Aslam, H., & Muzaffar, (2025b). Interplay Of Socio-Political Development & Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Implementation: Evidence From Pakistan. *Journal Of Social Sciences Development*, 4(1), 113–124. <https://doi.org/10.53664/JSSD/04-01-2025-10-113-125>
- Aslam, H., & Muzaffar, M. (2025a). Barriers to Sustainable Development: Examining Pakistan's Economic Taboos and SDG Challenges. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 9(2), 351–366
- Dahl, R. A. (1961). *Who governs? Democracy and power in an American city*. Yale University Press.
- Eldersveld, S. J. (1964). *Political Parties: A Behavioral Analysis*. Rand McNally.
- Farooq, S., Asghar, N., & Rasheed, F. (2026). Economic Policies and Political Stability in Pakistan: A Comparative Analysis of PML-N and PTI Governments. *Annals of Human and Social Sciences*, 7(1), 65–78.
- Fatima, A., Arif, N., & Arif, R. (2026). The Role of Digitalization in Promoting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Pakistan. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 10(1), 14–25.
- Faundez, J. (2016). Douglass North's theory of institutions: Lessons for law and development. *Hague Journal on the Rule of Law*, 8(2), 373–419. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40803-016-0028-8>
- Kanwal, S. (2025, January 31). Youth empowerment in Pakistan: Challenges and remedies. *The Spine Times*. <https://spinetimes.pk/youth-empowerment-in-pakistan-challenges-and-remedies/>
- Najam, A. (2024, May 5). Pakistan's moment of youth. *Dawn*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1831567>
- Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. (2022). *Labour Force Survey 2020–21 (Annual Report)*. Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Planning, Development & Special Initiatives.

[https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/labour\\_force/publications/lfs2020\\_21/LFS\\_2020-21\\_Report.pdf](https://www.pbs.gov.pk/sites/default/files/labour_force/publications/lfs2020_21/LFS_2020-21_Report.pdf)

Pakistan Bureau of Statistics. (2023). Pakistan social and living standards measurement survey (PSLM) 2022-23. Government of Pakistan.

PILDAT. (2023). *Democracy's Vanguard: Youth's Electoral Participation in Pakistan*. Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency

Rasheed, F., Asghar, N., & Farooq, S. (2026). The Federal - Unitary Debate in Pakistan: An Analytical Study of the State Structure. *Pakistan Social Sciences Review*, 10(1), 92–100. [https://doi.org/10.35484/pssr.2026\(10-I\)08](https://doi.org/10.35484/pssr.2026(10-I)08)

UNDP Pakistan (2018). *National Human Development Report: Unleashing the Potential of a Young Pakistan*

Uslaner, E. M., & Brown, M. (2005). Inequality, trust, and civic engagement. *American Politics Research*, 33(6), 868–894. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532673X04271903>

Verba, S., Schlozman, K. L., & Brady, H.E. (1995). *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*. Harvard University Press.

*Voice of America*. (2024, February 2). Poll: Pakistani youth hope for transparent elections, trust military. <https://www.voanews.com/a/poll-pakistani-youth-hope-for-transparent-elections-trust-military-/7469012.html>

Yusuf, M. (2011). Youth and the future. In S. Cohen (Ed), *Pakistan's future*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.