

2023

NEWSLETTER



POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT FORMAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE UNIVERSITY-FCCU LAHORE, PAKISTAN

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Dr. Sikandar Hayat

I welcome to this Newsletter of the Department of Political Science, a premier department of the Faculty of Social Sciences that I truly admire. It has a well-qualified faculty, keen students, and a promising and productive program of studies both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, presently offering an MPhil degree in Political Science. In the following pages, you will see a host of their activities, both curricular and extra-curricular, covered, including that of the Forman Political Science Society, one of the most active, engaging student societies on the campus.

I commend the Editor, and indeed the entire editorial team, for all their efforts and dedicated work to bring out this issue in time and thus continue to pursue and promote the multifarious achievements of the department for the benefit of all concerned. Finally, I would like to appreciate the devotion and able guidance of Dr. Zamurrad Awan, Associate Professor, in getting this Newsletter published regularly and out in time, like always.

Thank you all!

Message from the Chair



Dr. Shakila Noor Sindhu

Newsletter is an opportunity to reflect on our achievements during December 2022 to December 2023 and share some exciting updates with you. I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation for the faculty of Political Science for their tireless efforts and dedication throughout the year. Their commitment to excellence is pivotal in our continued growth and achievements. It would be an incomplete introduction without mentioning the incredibly important and supportive role of the Dean Social Sciences, Dr. Sikandar Hayat. His vision, dedication, expertise, and positive attitude have made an enormous contribution to our success journey. In fact, under his supervision we have vanquished several challenges and reached new milestones that make us proud. In this edition of our newsletter, you'll find a wealth of information showcasing the recent triumphs, and upcoming ventures of both faculty and students. Let me reiterate, the department of Political Science is committed to the cause of civic citizenship, and collective responsibility to introduce a positive and sustainable change in Pakistani and global society. Within these pages you will find insights and plans that we have initiated from sensitizing the youth about alarmingly declining environment index to distinguish between information, knowledge, and opinions for making better choices.

I believe that the future holds even greater opportunities and success with the talent, dedication, and collaborative approach of faculty and students and with these attributes they will continue to reach new heights.

Meet Our Faculty



Dr. Shakila Noor Sindhu
(Assistant Professor
& Chairperson)



Dr. Muhammad Younis
(Associate Professor)



Dr. Shahzadi Zamurrad Awan
(Associate Professor)



Muneeza Mirza
(Assistant Professor)



Qalandar Memon
(Assistant Professor)



Dr. Abeeda Qureshi
(Assistant Professor)



Dr. Mudassar Farooqi
(Assistant Professor)



Dr. Ayra Indrias Pataras (Assistant Professor)



Muhammad Usman Farooq
(Lecturer)



Syed Irtiza Shafaat
(Lecturer)



Muhammad Azhar
(Visiting Faculty)



Iqra Riaz Ud Din
(Visiting Faculty)

Department's Administrative Staff



Mr Fayyaz Raza
(Academic Associate)

Mr. Fayyaz Raza is an Administrative Associate/Academic Advisor working for the Department of Political Science, History, and Sociology. His primary responsibility is to facilitate faculty logistics, particularly while arranging meetings, seminars, and thesis defense of undergraduate and postgraduate students of respective departments, and he also supervises the Teaching Assistance (TAs). His remarkable administrative skills and professionalism are prominent features of his personality. His commitment to his duties and responsibilities has made him an excellent support for all faculty members.



Shanza Shahbaz
(Teacher Assistant)

As a Teaching Assistant (TA) in the Political Science department for the past year, Shanza Shahbaz reflects on her journey of growth. Grateful for Ma'am Shakila Sindhu's guidance, she expresses pride in her personal and professional development. Inspired by Ma'am Zamurrad Awan to step beyond her comfort zone, Shanza passionately embraces the experience. Her words resonate: "I am incredibly proud to learn under Ma'am Shakila Sindhu's supervision. Ma'am Zamurrad Awan inspires me to push boundaries. I love this experience and am committed to working hard in fulfilling my TA responsibilities."



Zainab Abid
(Teacher Assistant)

Zainab Abid has been a Teacher Assistant (TA) for the last two years. The experience she gained through this opportunity has helped her learn and grow in various ways. Zainab shared her experience, explaining, "From assisting professors in the classroom to guiding students, my experience has been rewarding and challenging. I have developed strong communication and organizational skills that honed my multitasking ability. Most importantly, I have had the privilege of making a positive impact on the students I have worked with. Being a TA has truly been a fulfilling experience, and I am excited to share the knowledge and expertise I have gained with others."



Faculty Achievements

Dr Muhammad Younas (Associate Professor)



In 2023, Dr. Younas was actively involved in various professional activities, ranging from mentoring students to participating in academic conferences internationally. The following are glimpses of his academic achievements during this year.



Research Project “DisTerrMem”



In the Summer of 2023, Dr. Younas was at the University of Warsaw, Poland, and Vytautas Magnus University (VDU), Kaunas, Lithuania, for a research project on Disputed Territories and Memory. Horizon 2020, the European Union’s prestigious research and innovation program, funded it. During this academic engagement, Dr Younas remained involved in the following activities:

- Attended secondment in Warsaw and Kaunas and spent two months researching the politics of memory and borders at the University of Warsaw and VDU.
- Presented his research findings in a conference with other researchers, faculty members, and staff of the University of Warsaw and VDU. He discussed colonialism, democracy, and politics in Pakistan.



Paper Publications

- Co-authored chapter, “ Politics of Memory, Colonization and Democracy in Pakistan” accepted for publication in the Book, “Pathways to Agonism: Theoretical and Practical Approaches to the Memories of Disputed Territories” (due in November 2023) by Brill publisher.
- Co-authored article, “What Went Wrong in Afghanistan? A Strategic Analysis of the American War on Terrorism”, accepted for Publication in the Fall 2023 issue of Beacon Journal of Pakistan Naval War College.





Faculty Achievements

Dr. Shakila Noor Sindhu (Assistant Professor)



Throughout 2023, Dr. Shakila has been involved in various academic activities, ranging from new course design to actively participating in conferences and talks. The details of her activities are below:



Engagement with HEC

Dr. Shakila Sindhu contributed to the course design process of HEC's new undergraduate policy for 2023. She served as the convener in the 'Civics and Community Engagement' course. This course aims to develop a sense of responsible citizenship and a spirit of community engagement among the youth to impact society positively. She was also a member of the 'Ideology and Constitution' course designed by HEC as a part of HEC's overarching undergraduate education policy. These are core courses and would be taught throughout the country and across the disciplines.



Conference Participation

Delivered a talk at the University of Management & Technology, highlighting the future and importance of Political Science and International Relations.



Students Internships

Dr. Shakila encouraged students to engage themselves in internships during the summer. She is actively involved with several departments, both governmental and non-governmental, for the placement of Political Science students. In the summer of 2023, due to her efforts, nine students undertook internships in various departments, including the State Bank of Pakistan, Sports Board, Government of Balochistan, Population Welfare Department, Government of Punjab, and media outlets.



Faculty Achievements

Dr. Zamurad Awan (Associate Professor)



The year 2023 has proven to be an exciting and productive time for Dr. Zamurad, marked by her active participation in three international academic conferences and the publication of two research papers. The details of her achievements are outlined below:



International Conferences

Challenging Borders in Domestic and International Human Rights Conference

The international conference "Challenging Borders in Domestic and International Human Rights Conference" took place at Albion College in Michigan, US, from April 30 to May 2, 2023. Under my supervision as a faculty mentor, three students from Forman Christian College, Ayesha Butt (MPhil-Political Science), Amena Aamir, and Fatima Aamir (Baccalaureate-Psychology), presented a panel presentation titled "Relevance of Human Rights in the Human Rights Debates: A Case Study of Selected Muslim Countries." This academic gathering debated global human rights challenges, fostering meaningful conversations, idea exchange, and valuable connections. Our panel received appreciation from all the delegates.



The AMICAL conference for libraries, technology and pedagogy

From May 24th to 26th, 2023, I attended AMICAL 2023 at Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane, Morocco. In the community idea exchange session, I discussed my fall 2022 "Student-Teacher Oral History Interview Project", which was accepted for the Digital Oral History Cohort Program by AMICAL's Digital Liberal Arts programs.



Through this project, my students with interview skills, ethical considerations, and transcription techniques using the Oral History in the Liberal Arts-OHLA website. AMICAL introduced me to novel teaching approaches, especially incorporating AI tools like ChatGPT, which are increasingly relevant in academia. This experience broadened my perspective on innovative teaching methodologies and their application in the evolving education landscape.

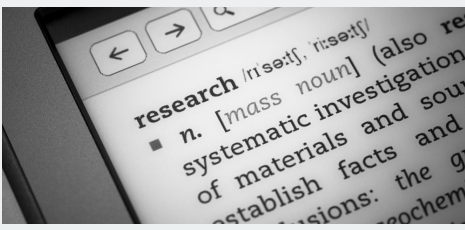
73rd Political Studies Association Annual Conference

From 3rd to 5th April 2023, the University of Liverpool, in the UK, organized the 73rd Annual Conference, "Political Futures.". I was privileged to present an oral presentation on "Women Political Participation in Pakistan: A Critical Evaluation of Mainstream Political Parties (2018-2022)". The conference was attended by scholars and experts from diverse backgrounds, featuring panels, roundtables, keynote speeches, specialist group meetings, and various events that enriched the academic experience.



Research Publications

- Awan, S. Z. (2023). Contextualizing the Socio-Psychological Consequences of First Covid-19 Wave: A Gendered Perspective. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, 38(1), 65-82. https://pjpr.scione.com/newfiles/pjpr.scione.com/755/2023-38-1-5-755_2.pdf
- Awan, S.Z. (2023). Women's political participation in the socio-cultural environment of Pakistan: A critical review of mainstream political parties (2018-2022). *Simulacra* (, Volume 6, Issue 2, November 2023, <https://doi.org/10.21107/sml.v6i2.22741>





Faculty Achievements

Dr. Abeeda Qureshi (Assistant Professor)



During 2023, Dr. Abeeda has been involved in research publications and other department-related responsibilities. Her notable published work titled, "Dr. Israr Ahmad: An Analysis of his ideology about Political Islam and Examining its Practicality," is featured in *Al-Salihah (Journal of Women, Society, and Religion)*. Additionally, she is working on her forthcoming book, 'Reconstructing Citizenship in Islam: An Analysis of the Status of Minorities in an Islamic State.' Following are glimpses of her academic activities during the year. Dr. Abeeda also participated in an International Conference on Islamophobia in Turkey and presented her paper titled, "Applying a Western Centric Model of Integration towards Religious Minorities in Pakistan: A Constitutional and Theological Inquiry."

5-day Research Methods Workshop



Dr. Abeeda was also invited to deliver a lecture on Qualitative Data Collection Techniques - Elite Interviews in a 5-day Research Methods Workshop, jointly organized by the University of Lahore and FCCU.



Two-day workshop on SPSS



During the last academic year, the research committee of the Department of Political Science, under the supervision of Dr. Abeeda, organized a two-day workshop on SPSS.

This event was a collaborative effort between the two departments: Statistics and Political Science. The research committee also organized a guest lecture featuring Dr. Fatima Sajjad from UMT. The topic of her presentation was 'Promoting Critical Pedagogy to Counter Violent Extremism on Campus', which highlighted rising extremism in educational institutions and possible ways to counter it.



Middle East's Fertile Crescent

In the Spring of 2023, Dr. Abeeda offered a post-graduate course on the politico-strategic dynamics of the Middle East. It was the lofty ideals of encouraging students to read some recent academic works on the Middle East and to make them familiar with the ins and outs of publishing on their own, which were pursued by Dr. Abeeda when she asked every student to write a book review each and submit it to a peer-reviewed academic journal for publication. Not only was the class able to produce excellent book reviews, but three of the students' book reviews were accepted as publications in peer-reviewed journals. Given the modest quantitative strength of the class and the rarity of the journals that accept unsolicited book reviews, it remains an achievement to be proud of. Below are the details of students who got their first publications:

Guided Students for Research Publications

- Abdul Ahad-Ahad, A. (2023). The Iran National Front and the Struggle for Democracy . *Pakistan Review of Social Sciences (PRSS)*, 4(2), 1-3. Retrieved from <https://journals.pakistanreview.com/index.php/PRSS/article/view/199>
- Ahtesham. "Middle East Crisis Factory"- Dawn Journal.
- Syeda Noor ul Huda. "The Ayatollah Begs to Differ: The Paradox of Modern Iran". *International Journal of Social Science Research and Review*.

Presentations in National & International Conferences

- Participated in an International Conference on 'Sustainable Governance in the Global South'. (Re) Thinking Social Contract for Pakistan (14-15 December, 2023) on 'Reconstructing Citizenship in Islam: A Constitutional and Theological Analysis of the Status of Minorities in an Islamic State - A Case Study of Pakistan'.
- Invited by 'Loe Sujag' to take part in an X space Twitter discussion on 'Women Candidates in Elections: Tokenism or Inclusion?' Along with Mona Lena Krook, Momina Waheed, Salma Butt



Faculty Achievements

Dr. Mudassar Farooqi (*Assistant Professor*)



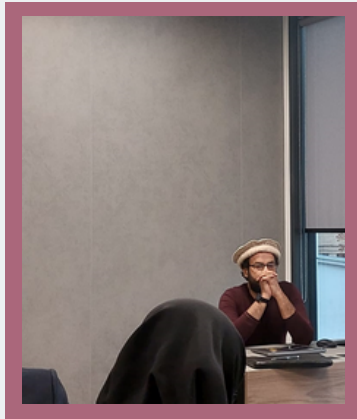
In 2023, Dr. Mudassar has been actively involved in various professional activities, ranging from mentoring students to publishing his research. His research interests encompass Wars and Military Strategy, Strategic and Security Studies, Political Marketing, Jihadi Terrorism, Taliban and Hybrid Warfare, Eastern IR Theory, and Post-Modernist research methods. The following are glimpses of his academic achievements during this year.



Research Project “DisTerrMem”



In Summer 2023, Dr Mudaddar was in Baltic, Eastern & Western Europe in for a research project on Disputed Territories and Memory, funded by Horizon 2020, the European Union’s biggest research and innovation programme.



Recent Publications

- co-authored chapter, “ Politics of Memory, Colonization and Democracy in Pakistan” accepted for publication in the Book, “Pathways to Agonism: Theoretical and Practical Approaches to the Memories of Disputed Territories” (due in November 2023) by Brill publisher.
- Research Article, “Branding of Jihadism” is under Review—for Fall 2023 volume, at the Sociological
- Co-authored article, “What Went Wrong in Afghanistan? A Strategic Analysis of the American War on Terrorism”, accepted for Publication in the Fall 2023 issue of Beacon Journal of Pakistan Naval War College.



Paper Presentations

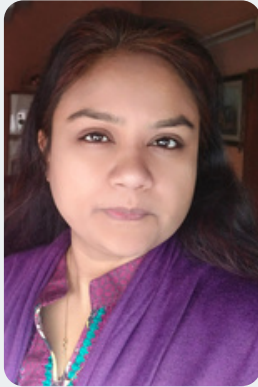
- Research Article Titled “Memory, Terrorism and War Studies: A Case Study of Jihadism in Pakistan and Afghanistan” presented at the annual conference of Disputed Territories and Memories In Lithuania and Poland.
- Guest Lectures (September 2023) on the Russia-Ukraine War and Its Impact on Pakistan at Vytautas Magnus University (a public university in Kaunas, Lithuania).
- Presented my research on Digital Warfare and Taliban (University of Warsaw) at the 27th annual Science Festival of Poland.
- Paper accepted for Presentation at the Annual British Studies Association Conference (June 2023) in the UK, Digital Warfare and Hybrid Security Threats, What Went Wrong in Afghanistan: A Strategic Analysis of American War on Terrorism (HEC’s low budget to visit the UK and delay in visa withheld physical attendance at the conference





Faculty Achievements

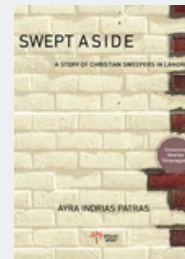
Dr. Ayra Indrias Patras (Assistant Professor)



Dr. Ayra's research work revolves around marginalized communities, identity, feminism, and human rights. During the year 2023, in her accomplishments, the noteworthy contribution remained her book. The three book reviews were published in leading English newspapers.

Published Book

The book titled *Swept Aside, A Story of Christian Sweepers in Lahore* was published by Folio Books in April 2023. This book is based on Dr. Ayra's doctoral dissertation, which investigated the intersections of gender, caste, and labor producing multiple disadvantages for women. It critically describes and analyses the histories and structural forces that shape Christian communities as religious minorities and oppressed castes. The book was well received and reviewed by the three leading English newspapers in Pakistan namely, Dawn, The News, and Daily Times. The book was formally launched by the Centre for Public Policy and Governance, FCCU on 22nd March, 2023.



Presentations in National & International Conferences



Dr. Ayra presented a paper "Double Discrimination in the Workplaces: A Case of Minority Women in Pakistan" in the International Conference on Christianity and Christians in Pakistan held by Kellogg College, University of Oxford on 15-16 June 2023.



Dr. Ayra was invited by Lahore University of Management Sciences to deliver a lecture on religious minorities and workplace discrimination on 3rd October 2023.

Dr. Ayra also presented her work at the 4th Conference on Marginalized Population by the Department of Sociology Forman Christian College University, Lahore on 5th December 2022.



Seminars Series on the Constitution, Religious Freedom & Digital Rights (Jointly conducted by Dr Ayra & Ms Muneeza)



On 7 June 2023, Dr. Ryan Brasher, Former Chair Department of Political Science FCCU spoke on Religious Freedom in the Constitutions of the USA and Pakistan.



Nighat Daad, Lawyers and Digital Rights Experts, and Member Meta Oversight Board delivered a talk on Cyber Laws and the Constitution of Pakistan on 11 Jan 2023 and Osama Siddique, Legal Scholar, Policy Advisor gave a lecture on Judging Politics: Piety Clauses in the Constitution of Pakistan and their discontents on 7 December 2022. These seminars were well attended by students and faculty.



Faculty Achievements

Syed Irtiza Shafaat Bokharie (Lecturer)



Mr Irtiza is currently immersed in his doctoral journey at the Centre for Public Policy and Governance. His research is centered around the intricate processes of democratic consolidation in South Asia, delving into the intersection of political science, history, and philosophy. As a dynamic member of the faculty, he actively contributes to the department's academic landscape and participates in various Political Science Society's initiatives.

Music and vocalist

Mr Irtiza is also an independent musician and music producer, and has collaborated with international and local artists, including, but not limited to, Ronkini Gupta, Apoorva Mudgal, Mehdi Maloof, Asad Ali Murtaza, Arundyoti Biswas, Titas Biswas, Farheen Raza Jaffry, Suravi Paul and Maitri Verma, amongst others.

Articles in Newspaper

"Does social media encourage right-wing populism?", The Nation, January 21, 2023, <https://www.nation.com.pk/21-Jan-2023/does-social-media-encourage-right-wing-populism>

Pakistan in dire straits", The Nation, March 20, 2023, <https://www.nation.com.pk/20-Mar-2023/pakistan-in-dire-straits>

Muhammad Usman Farooq(Lecturer)



In 2023, Mr. Usman spent two months at Bath University, England's Department of Politics, Languages & International Studies, where he actively contributed to a Horizon 2020 memory studies research project. Mr. Farooq's engagement extended beyond the academic realm as he forged valuable connections with esteemed British academics. The experience was instrumental in broadening Mr. Farooq's perspectives and fostering meaningful dialogues on colonial legacies within cultural and natural heritage sites.



Workshop Participation

Mr. Usman's secondment was his participation in the "Workshop Creative Practices to Explore Colonial Legacies in Cultural and Natural Heritage Sites." This workshop served as a forum for engaging with scholars and experts in memory studies, delving into the intricate memory politics of Britain and Europe.



Research Involvement

Mr. Usman explored various museums in the vibrant cities of Bristol, Bath, and Cardiff. His exploration not only enriched his understanding of diverse perspectives but also provided a nuanced context for the research project.



Faculty Achievements

Muhammad Azhar (*Visiting Faculty*)



Mr. Azhar has recently become a part of the department as a visiting faculty. He is a dynamic faculty member actively involved in departmental activities, contributing significantly to academic debates on various subjects. Below are the details of his work during the year 2023:

Conferences



- Participated in a conference on 'Contemporary Pakistan & Muslim world' at Iqbal institute of International Islamic University, Islamabad.
- Participated in an online/virtual dialogue on 'Crisis of Justice in Contemporary World' organized by University of Malaya and Global justice movement (JUST) in Malaysia.

Television Appearance



Invited as an analyst by leading digital media platforms such as 'Break Through News' and Danish TV, following last year's vote of confidence in the Prime Minister and the subsequent political upheaval in Pakistan.

Newspaper Articles



Published op-ed articles in newspapers on current affairs for international publications such as 'Counter Currents' and 'Middle East Eye'.

Iqra Riaz ud Din (*Visiting Faculty*)

On 11th December 2023, Iqra arranged a students trip to a walled city Lahore where they explored historical places and enjoyed a scrumptious lunch afterwards.



Iqra Riaz Ud Din is a social scientist and data science enthusiast. She joined FCCU as a visiting faculty in 2023. She did her masters research degree from FCCU.



- "Turmoil in Afghanistan: Socio-Political Impact on Pakistan", Published in The Journal of Political Science XL, GC University Lahore. (Co-authored)
- "Political Implications of Unplanned Urbanization in Pakistan: A Case of Punjab", Published in The Journal of Development and Social Sciences. (Co-authored)
- "Public Administration Issues and Perspectives", Published in the 7th edition of Jahanghir Books.

Research Publications



Qalandar Memon
(Assistant Professor)

Faculty on Sabbatical

Mr. Qalandar Memon and Ms. Muneeza Mirza are currently on sabbatical leave in 2023 to focus on their research endeavors. We wish them luck and expect to see them back in 2024.



Muneeza Mirza
(Assistant Professor)



THOUGHTS

- Loved it as a subject overall.
- • I found it very interesting as a subject.
- • It covers many aspects, so it is good as a subject.
- • Good as a subject

I am a political science major, and I believe the subject actually depends on the teacher.

- It's boring.
- It is a good subject. It teaches a person how to become a critical citizen.
- Good as a subject but difficult.
- It makes you question everything when you study it as a subject.



- Political science is a very good subject, and I believe it should be taught to everyone because by knowing your past, you evaluate your present.
- It is one of the subjects everyone should take at least once.
- a perfect and informative subject.
- It is my favorite subject.

The Department of Political Science at Forman Christian (A Chartered University) is one of the largest departments in Social Sciences.

The courses offered by the department are open to students majoring in Political Science as well as other disciplines. To

know the thoughts of students in a random survey between the Month of September and October, a survey was conducted, where the students were asked about their views regarding the subjects offered by Political Science Department.

Here is the snapshot of the responses, which is an interesting insight of students regarding the subject. It's always important to take the feedback of the students for improvement.



STUDENTS MISCONCEPTIONS

- I thought this subject would only teach us about politics nothing else.
- I was told that it is very difficult.
- It teaches ideologies and terms too on contrary to what I thought not just power and politics.
- Misconception was that we won't get jobs after this.
- I thought it would be related to political system only.
- Misconception was you can take it as a general education course and get a straight A.
- The misconception was it only teaches you politics and manipulation.
- Misconception was that we only study about politics and not how things work.
- The only misconception I had was you study political science only if you want to become a politician.
- I thought it would only teach us about politics.
- I thought it would only teach us about past governments, but it is teaching us how things are working.
- Misconception was that it is only a learning degree, and you will not get job after this.



FACULTY RESPONSE



- Generally students come with preconceived notions that a Major in Political Science means they will be CSP officers at the end of their graduation or perhaps the subject could build leadership skills in them automatically.
- Some students feel that Political Science has no real career path or it is the easiest subject to earn a graduation degree. These are unrealistic thoughts.
- Political Science is a subject that empowers its students with information and analytical skills to evaluate the situation/circumstances and help them make rational choices (familiarity with the culture, religion, domestic and international laws, and policies designed by the government etc).
- It allows them to minimize biases, think as a community and take responsibility for their decisions.
- The subject makes them aware of their rights and ensures that rights are abstract concepts without responsibilities.
- There is no free lunch in life and no success without effort.

Student Spotlight

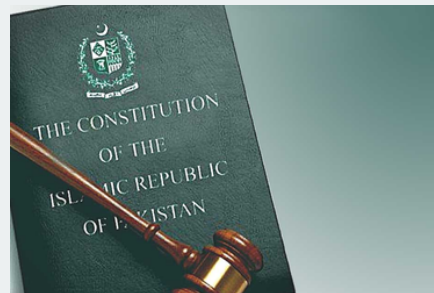
PAKISTAN'S CONSTITUTIONAL TURMOIL IN 2023

Since independence Pakistan has been at crossroads regarding its fluent functioning of government. We can find its illustration in the creation of our first constitution which took us about 9 years. We also find such incidents where the institutions sided the unconstitutional acts; let us not forget General Musharraf coup which was termed legal by Supreme court under doctrine of necessity but in 2007 when Musharraf declared emergency and suspended constitution his action was termed illegal by Judiciary. In reaction to it Musharraf imposed Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) under which almost 50 judges were removed who were involved in this decision and new bench was formed which upheld Musharraf decision of emergency. It would be not to say wrong that the motto of Pakistani political parties has always been to remain in power for it they have always tried to oust the party in power that's why we had 29 prime ministers since 1947 and none of them completed a full five-year term and that's why we also have history full of constitutional crisis. Likewise, our past the current scenario of Pakistan constitutional crisis is in front of us which started in 2022 and in 2023 it turned into its worst conditions.

In 2023, Pakistan witnessed a tumultuous start to the year marked by political instability and division within the country. This period was characterized by a prominent opposition movement, spearheaded by former Prime Minister Imran Khan, challenging the authority of both the military and the existing coalition government. The nation found itself at a critical juncture, grappling with the implications of this political upheaval as it unfolded. At the onset of 2023, Pakistan experienced the dissolution of the KPK and the Punjab assemblies.

The elections ought to be conducted within 90 days as instructed by the Constitution in Article 224. More than 9 months have elapsed since the elections were initially announced to take place for the formation of the new Government by the Caretaker set-up. On the ground, it seems like the caretaker Government forgot the premise that they were only here to "assist the Commission to hold elections in accordance with law".

The elections ought to be conducted within 90 days as instructed by the Constitution in Article 224. More than 9 months have elapsed since the elections were initially announced to take place for the formation of the new Government by the Caretaker set-up. On the ground, it seems like the caretaker Government forgot the premise that they were only here to "assist the Commission to hold elections in accordance with law".



Nor only they failed to assist the commission, but they also violated the constitution of Pakistan by presenting a mammoth budget for the fiscal year for 23-24 as the Elections Act 2017. This move shows that the concerned authorities are not at all informed or concerned about the activities of the caretaker government which in turn shows that the constitution has no binding authority whatsoever.

Whereas, in regard of elections the President of Pakistan wrote a letter to the Election Commission of Pakistan as per the article 48b "Where the President dissolves the National Assembly, notwithstanding anything contained in clause, he shall, appoint a date, not later than ninety days from the date of the dissolution, for the holding of a general election to the Assembly" and requested the Chief Election Commissioner to meet the President to set the elections date. The Election Commission of Pakistan declined to meet the President quoting Section 57 of Elections Act 2017, Sultan Raja stated that "the meeting would be of no use as it is the sole responsibility of the Election Commission to announce the date as per the Elections Act".

Moving on, we also saw that The Pakistani Constitution's articles 10, 19, and 10A were also flagrantly violated by the same responsible officials, who acted swiftly to make arrests from the Islamabad High Court's grounds. The arrests were done in reaction to the 9 May incidents which were termed as a "Black day" in history of Pakistan by ISPR. While, In this context, military courts were used for trials but later on it was declared null and void by Supreme court of Pakistan and shifted trials to civilian courts. The arrests were criticized by Human watch as peaceful protesters were also arrested, they claimed that "the violators should be punished but those who adhered to peaceful protests and means they shouldn't be arbitrary detained".



So, In conclusion, the constitutional crisis in Pakistan during 2023 was a multifaceted issue characterized by political instability, unilateral decision-making, and legislative alterations. It's irony for Pakistan that its leaders claim that "democracy is the only way forward" & "No one is above law" but in reality we see things contrary to it. In Animal farm George Orwell sketch's out this scenario as "those who control the government claims, "We all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others".

The students of Political science, Saffiullah (Mphil), Muhammad Saim Irfan Sibt Ali (Baculurrate) has contributed to this article.

Student Spotlight

NAVIGATING GENDER EQUALITY IN PAKISTAN: A CLOSER LOOK AT ISLAMIC AND WESTERN FEMINISM

The current situation of women in Pakistan is a complex mixture of progress and ongoing struggles. Significant legal reforms have been implemented, while various civil society organizations, including those influenced by Islamic feminist principles, have dedicated themselves to empowering women. Despite these efforts, deep-rooted cultural norms and barriers within society remain major obstacles to achieving full gender equality in the country. In the global fight for gender equality, two important movements that have played significant roles are Western feminism and Islamic feminism. Both movements aim to challenge patriarchal norms and advocate for a fair and inclusive society for people of all genders.

Let's first discuss the evolution of Western feminism, which took place through multiple waves, each with its distinctive features. The initial wave, appearing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, centered on achieving women's right to vote and other legal entitlements. In contrast, the second wave, spanning from the 1960s to the 1980s, broadened its focus to encompass reproductive rights, workplace bias, and violence based on gender. More recently, the third wave emerged in the 1990s and persists today to acknowledge how gender intersects with race, class, sexual orientation, and other social identities.

Built on the idea of equality between genders, Western feminism is rooted in a secular and humanist ideology rather than religious beliefs. This movement has advocated for various issues, such as reproductive autonomy, fair wages, and addressing violence based on gender. It has been greatly influenced by notable figures like Betty Friedan, author of "The Feminine Mystique," Gloria Steinem, and Angela Davis, who is recognized for her efforts towards ending mass incarceration and promoting racial equity. These influential individuals have greatly impacted Western feminist ideals and activism, motivating future generations to strive for a more inclusive and fair society.

The emergence of Islamic feminism in the late 20th century sought to unite Islamic teachings and feminist principles in modern society. This movement challenges patriarchal interpretations of Islamic texts, which have long been used to justify gender inequality, by emphasizing that such interpretations are not true reflections of Islam or fair. Prominent figures within the movement, such as Amina Wadud and Fatima Mernissi, have made notable advancements in developing new interpretations of Islamic texts and promoting the importance of social reforms for achieving a more egalitarian society.

A multifaceted movement, Islamic feminism advocates the rights of women to education, employment, and political participation, as well as eliminating gender-based violence and discrimination. The movement also aims to create a more inclusive and diverse understanding of Islam that recognizes the rights and dignity of all individuals, regardless of their gender identity. An important contribution of Islamic feminism is its new interpretation of Islamic texts, which offers an alternative perspective on traditional teachings. As a result, conventional beliefs about women in Islam are challenged and new insights are revealed. Amina Wadud, for example, interpreted the Quranic text in a way that enabled women to lead congregational prayers, traditionally a male-dominated practice. Islamic feminism is a progressive, empowering movement that seeks to reconcile Islamic teachings with modern feminist theories. To create a society where everyone can live with dignity and respect, this movement advocates social reform and gender equality.



In recent years, Pakistan has taken important steps towards legal reforms aimed at enhancing the rights of women. These reforms have encompassed a variety of new laws that tackle critical concerns including workplace harassment, inheritance, domestic violence, and discrimination. A notable example is the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act of 2010, which serves as a crucial tool for safeguarding women's rights by establishing a legal structure for preventing and addressing workplace harassment - a prevalent issue among women in Pakistan.

The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, introduced in 2016, was introduced to address the persistent problem of crimes against women in Pakistan. This legal reform aimed to strengthen the legal framework for addressing crimes against women and introduced tougher penalties for offenses such as rape, acid attacks, and honour killings. Pakistan's women's rights were significantly protected with the introduction of this act. As part of the effort to combat gender-based discrimination in Pakistan, several legislative changes have been made. Muslim Family Laws Ordinances were amended in 2015, which provided women with greater inheritance rights. This revision helped address the issue of inheritance, which has traditionally been biased against women in Pakistan.



"These legal reforms represent a positive shift in Pakistan's legal system towards addressing gender-based crimes and discrimination. They are essential steps toward protecting and enhancing the rights of women and promoting gender equality." Despite legal reforms, cultural norms and societal challenges persist as significant obstacles to gender equality in Pakistan. Because of deeply ingrained cultural and patriarchal norms, women face barriers to education, employment, and participation in public life. Child marriages, honour killings, limited access to resources, and discriminatory practices plague society today.

In Pakistan, civil society organizations such as the Aurat Foundation and Shirkat Gah play a vital role in advocating for women's rights and gender equality. To empower women, these organizations engage in educational initiatives, legal advocacy, and socioeconomic support. It aims to interpret Islamic teachings to promote women's rights and challenge patriarchal norms, influencing activism and advocacy for gender equality. Women in Pakistan currently face a complex mix of advances and challenges. In addition, civil society organizations, including those influenced by Islamic feminist principles, have made concerted efforts to empower women through legal reforms. Despite this, deeply entrenched cultural norms and societal barriers continue to obstruct full gender equality.

Areeba Younis (MPhil Student)

In 2023, FPSS organized many events of academic and extracurricular nature, engaging a large audience not only from their own department but also from other departments of FCCU. Following is a brief overview of those events:

A look into 2023: Events by Forman Political Science Society

On Jan 13th, book Launch and discussion on "My Life and Times" was arranged. It was an Auto Biography of Abdul Samad Khan Achakzai (1907-1973).



On Jan 23rd, *Siyasiyat Magazine* launch was arranged. The magazine focused on providing students with a space to express themselves through their contributions.



On Jan 25th, activity on climate change and its environmental impact on our society's health was organized, where the notable speaker was "Syeda Henna Babar Ali".



On Feb 6th, the activities were hosted by FPSS for new students.

On Feb 7th, freshmen were enlightened about the significance of Political Science as a major degree option and its impact on their career.



On March 2nd, an academic session was organized with Sir Irtiza Bokhari from the Political Science Department, shedding light on democratic processes in Pakistan and South Asia in general.

On March 4th, an student delegation was guided on a campus stroll with students, delving into the history of FCCU and providing insights into its development over the years for their anthropology course.



On March 7th, an academic discussion was organized on Jinnah's career and political evolution, led by the world-renowned historian, author, and academic, Dr. Ishtiaq Ahmed.



FPSS Activities 2023 Events by Forman Political Science Society

Cultural Night (Freshman week)

The cultural night event was celebrated at the start of the fall semester, where the freshmen were exposed to the culturally diverse environment of FCCU. The event was organized by the Forman Political Science Society. The students of different ethnicities presented their cultures in the ramp walk. The cultural groups were given the chance to celebrate their culture with their traditional dance, such as Bangra, Balochi Chap, Attan, and Jhumar. The different cultural ethnicities were appreciated for participating in the event and were given a token of appreciation by the Rector. Lastly, the event was concluded with a speech by the honorable Rector, appreciating the diverse culture of FCCU.



Seminar on freedom of speech, prospects and challenges

A session was conducted on Freedom of Speech. The Forman Political Science Society (FPSS) invited Syed Muzzamil to brief the audience on Freedom of Speech. The session started by discussing the Freedom of Speech in Pakistan. Moreover, the constitutional provision, article 19-a, was also discussed. The theory of Social Contract by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Rousseau was also applied to Pakistan's political perspective. The impact of Islamisation during the 1970s was also discussed. Lastly, the house was opened for a Q/A session. The students from the KPK, Balochistan, Punjab, and Gilgit Baltistan regions inquired about different problems of freedom of speech.



AIPS Workshop

Dr. Shakila, alongside Dr. Sikandar Hayat, organized an American Institute of Pakistan Studies (AIPS) workshop featuring Dr. Walter Hakala, a distinguished US academic. Dr. Hakala emphasized the universality of research, encouraging social scientists to engage in conceptual discussions. Practical tips on impressing teachers were shared, and a Q&A addressed concerns about pursuing passions. Students from Baccalaureate and MPhil studies in Political Science attended the session.



Newsletter Team



Dr. Shahzadi Zamurrad Awan
(Newsletter Editor-in-Chief)

"I am thrilled to present the 2023 Political Science Department newsletter! In my third year as editor, it's been an honor. My goal has been to enhance its impact, showcasing our esteemed faculty's professional and academic achievements. The newsletter provides a comprehensive overview of yearly accomplishments, offering valuable insight into faculty challenges and strengths. Thanks to all contributors, faculty members, and readers for your collaborative efforts. Your support has made this newsletter a valuable resource. Looking forward to future editions and the continued growth of our academic community."



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