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Saraiki and Hazara Provinces Movements in Pakistan: A Matter of Primordial Emotions or a Strategic Choice for Political Gains?

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Abstract

Identity politics and ethno-political mobilization have attracted enormous scholarly attention. But despite its multiethnic complexity, Pakistan has received little attention in literature. Furthermore, only a few studies have focused on understanding the phenomenon of identity politics through the lens of nationalism theories, such as primordialism and instrumentalism. Hence, this study set out to determine whether the ethnopolitical demands for the creation of new provinces in Pakistan's Saraiki and Hazara regions are based on primordialist emotions and sentiments or if ethnic affiliations are being politicized for political and socioeconomic gains. It uses primary evidence gathered through a public opinion survey. The findings show that no single theory adequately explains the ethnopolitical mobilization for territorial autonomy in the selected regions of Pakistan. Furthermore, the comparative findings indicate some similarities as well as differences between the two cases. While the Saraiki province demand is primarily grounded on regional disparity, the Hazara province movement is more concerned about the identification and preservation of Hazara identity. It is argued that the territorial aspect of Saraiki identity has contributed to its growth and long-term survival. However, the Hazara identity has failed to grow since it relied solely on the Hazara identity while ignoring territorial issues. Hence, it can be inferred that the primordial impetus for the masses to mobilize politically is not long-lasting, insofar as the political agenda revolves around the protection or promotion of socio-cultural value systems and linguistic distinctiveness. In fact, ethnopolitical mobilization gets momentum once the ethnic elites politicize and manipulate ethnic identities.

Keywords: Ethnopolitical movements; primordialism; instrumentalism; Saraiki movement; Hazara Movement; Pakistan

INTRODUCTION:

Nationalism creates a sense of distinctiveness in a group, community, or nation based on linguistic identity, ethnic attachment, shared history, common religious or cultural ties, tribal affinities, and regional affiliation. Generally, nationalism is classified into two broad categories: ethnic vs. civic nationalism (Grosby, 2005, p. 46). While the latter predominantly defines a community in terms of territorial affiliation, the former characterizes a nation along ethnic, linguistic, religious, or cultural ties (Lecours, 2000). That is featured as a tool having significant potential to lead towards the formation of ethno-linguistic movements in the locus where identity-constituting elements, i.e., language, culture, history, religion, and ethnicity, etc., are not entertained satisfactorily (Kohn, 2017, p. 29). Evidence shows that most of the post-colonial states have witnessed ethno-nationalist movements (Forrest, 2006). These conflict-ridden states have adopted divergent policies and approaches to deal with the challenges of separatism. These policies included assimilative, coercive, and accommodative approaches.

Pakistan, since its inception in 1947, has witnessed ethno-nationalist movements. Bengali nationalism culminated, and East Pakistan separated in 1971. In addition, the provinces of Sindh, Balochistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) also saw separatist movements. It has been argued that the centralisation of political power and the exclusive nature of the power structure were the primary reasons for ethno-political conflict in Pakistan during the 1960s and 1970s. The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, however, not only provided autonomy to provinces but also established a bicameral parliament, which provided parity representation to smaller units in the Senate irrespective of their population size. Subsequently, in 2010, the federation provided more autonomy to provinces by abolishing the Concurrent Legislative List. This Amendment transferred seventeen ministries to provinces. In addition, the powers and role of the Senate were enhanced significantly (Jaffrelot, Waseem, & Faiz, 2024; Shah & Khan, 2023; Waseem, 2024). The federation not only delegated the authority and responsibility but also provided sufficient resources to the provinces by revising the criteria of fund distribution between the federation and provinces and among provinces. The smaller provinces benefited from this change in criteria, as the share of Balochistan was almost doubled in the 7th NFC Award (Aziz, 2010). This amendment also embraced diversity and agreed to rename the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on the demand of Pashtun nationalists. However, the provincial autonomy provided by the 18th Amendment, the fiscal resources provided by the 7th NFC Award that was signed on 30th December, 2009, and the renaming of NWFP as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa augmented the demands for the creation of separate provinces for Hazrewals in the Hazara region of KP and for Saraikis in South Punjab.

Many scholars have investigated the movements for the creation of new provinces in the regions of Hazara and South Punjab in Pakistan (Abbasi, Kalhoro, & Ayaz, 2022; Ahmar, 2013; Asif, Naazer, & Mahmood, 2019; Mughal, 2020; Mushtaq & Shaheen, 2017; Siddiqi, 2024). However, most of these studies solely relied on secondary sources and lacked any empirical analysis. Hence, this study attempts to understand these demands through survey evidence. The public opinion is gauged using a structured questionnaire built on the assumptions of the most prominent theories of ethnicity and nationalism, primordialism and instrumentalism. This empirical study aims to analyze the dynamics of these ethno-nationalist movements to comprehend the nature of their

demands. Since very meagre literature based on primary sources on Saraiki and Hazara ethno-nationalism is available, it is an original contribution to the existing body of literature in the field.

This paper has been divided into six sections. The second part deals with alternative explanations of ethno-political mobilization, i.e., the primordialist and instrumentalist paradigms. The third section outlines the Hazara and Saraiki province movements. The next section elaborates on the research design and explains the sampling method and questionnaire. This is followed by the results of the analyses and the interpretation of findings. The final section summarizes the discussion and concludes the study.

Primordialist and Instrumentalist Explanations of Ethnopolitical Mobilization

The literature on ethnicity and nationalism contains numerous theories that explain ethnopolitical mobilization in multiethnic societies. The mainstream theories of ethnic identity, primordialism and instrumentalism, present alternative explanations for ethnopolitical conflict. Primordialism postulates that ethnic identity is ascriptive and inherent, and therefore, the ethnic group membership is fixed. It emphasizes that the ethnic differences are "ancestral, deep and irreconcilable", and therefore ethnic conflict stems naturally and inevitably from ancient hatreds between ethnic groups (Filić, 2012). The instrumentalist theory, on the other hand, argues that ethnicity is manipulated and used as an instrument by the ethnic elite for political gains.

Primordialists believe that group identity is a given and natural phenomenon, which has come about since ancient times. They claim that humanity has indeed evolved into distinct, organic communities, each with its own language and culture, with each individual's sense of identity derived from his/her location within one such community. Therefore, they argue that ethnic conflicts among groups arise inevitably from ancient hatreds between ethnic groups and mutual fear of extinction, expulsion, and domination among the groups (Geertz, 1963). Hence, it is proclaimed that any ethnically heterogeneous society will inevitably be involved in ethnic conflicts (Vanhanen, 1999).

The writings of Edward Shils, Clifford Geertz, Steven Van Evera, and Steven Crosby provide foundational assumptions to this theory. To them, ethnic identity is ascribed, inherent, and a genetic/biological phenomenon. Resultantly, it is immutable and cannot be changed across time and space. Primordialists argue that common ancestry, common blood, common rituals, common language, and shared history would foster cooperation and solidarity among the members of the in-group and conflict against the out-group. They argue that as ethnic differences are ancestral, inescapable, and irreconcilable, ethnic conflicts are inevitable in multiethnic societies. It is argued that ethnic conflicts become more evident and violent in the presence of an environment where one identity group is perceived as a 'monopolizer' and the other as 'monopolized'. The latter might initiate ethnic mobilization at the first stage to safeguard its identity and political mobilization later to pursue political goals. They may demand identity recognition within the existing territorial structure. If not addressed with adequate measures, it may go for separate constituent units. And sometimes may revolt for separation (Geertz, 1963; S. Grosby, 1994; Shils, 1957; Van Evera, 2001).

Contrary to the primordialist argument, however, instrumentalists believe that the presence of ethnic identity in any society is not the source of ethnic conflict. They assert that ethnic conflict

arises only when ethnic identities are politicized or manipulated to generate political and socio-economic advantages for an ethnic group at the cost of depriving or neglecting other ethnic groups (Che, 2016). Instrumentalists such as Abner Cohen, Fredrik Barth, Ernest Gellner, Nathan Glazer, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan do not believe that ethnicity is a given and inborn feature of humans. They argue that ethnicity does not necessarily lead to ethno-political violence. Instead, ethnic conflicts emerge only when ethnic identities are politicized and manipulated by the ethnic elite in the pursuit of political and economic gains for their own group at the cost of depriving and neglecting other identity groups. In this way, they characterize other politico-economic factors, in addition to ethnic identity, as explanatory of ethno-political violence. These factors may range from security concerns, political power, and economic greed to social benefits (Bačová, 1998; Brown, 2004; Cohen, 1976; Glazer, Moynihan, & Schelling, 1975; Haas, 1993). Instrumentalists argue that ethnic identity is a tool, and one becomes ethnic and remains ethnic until his/her ethnic identity yields substantial benefits to him/her. Hence, it is variable across temporal and spatial variations, and the formative boundaries are very open and flexible. Instrumentalists do not completely reject the existence of ethnicity as a given and ethnic conflict as an unavoidable phenomenon; rather, they differ on their constituting markers. Instead of language, race, culture, history and clan, these are the political gains and economic benefits which determine the ethnic identity of a group.

Although both primordialism and instrumentalism have not escaped criticism from scholars, they are among the most widely used theories of ethnicity and nationalism. Therefore, this study investigates the ethno-political demands of Saraikis and Hazarewals for separate provinces through the lens of these theories to understand the phenomenon. The primary aim of this research is to investigate whether the demands for the creation of new provinces are identity-driven (primordialist paradigm) or elite-driven (instrumentalist paradigm). Under the primordialist paradigm, this study seeks to examine the incidence of primordial sentiments and the perceived natural and enduring bond of ethnic identities in respective regions. A set of questions asks about the attachment of people with ethnolinguistic identity in both regions. The questions inquire if people believe that (a) their identity is deep-rooted, (b) their language is the primary marker of their identity, (c) they prefer their language as the medium of instruction for primary education, (d) they demand a separate province to protect their distinctive identity, and (e) and they demand the creation of a new province on linguistic bases. Similarly, under the instrumentalist paradigm, a set of questions examines the manifestation of instrumental reasoning among people of both regions (Independent variable-2). The questions interrogate whether people agree that (a) the demand of a new province aims to overcome regional deprivation, (b) to safeguard socio-political interests, (c) and nationalist leadership expresses the genuine public sentiments, (d) to get local control of natural resources, and (e) to address perceived political marginalization at the provincial level.

The Demands for the Creation of New Provinces: The Saraiki and Hazara Provinces

Pakistan is a complex multiethnic state. Each of its provinces is associated with a certain ethnolinguistic group – Punjab with Punjabis, Sindh with Sindhis, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with Pashtuns, and Balochistan with Baloch. Similarly, each province has a substantial geographically concentrated minority: Saraikis in South Punjab, Mohajirs in urban Sindh, Hazarewals in the Hazara region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Pashtuns in north Balochistan (Mushtaq, 2018).

Historically, the provincial minorities in Pakistan have been demanding the creation of new provinces in their respective provincial regions. The Saraikis have been advocating for a Saraiki or South Punjab province; the Hazarewals are calling for a Hazara province; and the Mohajirs of urban Sindh are asserting a Mohajir province consisting of Karachi and Hyderabad. In fact, the unprecedented decentralization resulting from the 18th Constitutional Amendment reinforced the claims of provincial minorities for separate provinces, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab province. In 2010, the Hazarewals were the first to mobilize in favor of a new province, claiming that the renamed KP province would be dominated by the Pashtun. Besides, the demand for Saraiki province, which was already coherently articulated on southern Punjab's peripheralization at the cost of central Punjab's material and human development, gained momentum (Faiz, 2021; Mushtaq, 2016; Siddiqi, 2024). Resultantly, the National Assembly of Pakistan passed a resolution in 2012 sanctioning the creation of a new province comprising the three divisions of South Punjab (Multan, Bahawalpur, and DG Khan Divisions). However, the Punjab Assembly passed resolutions for the creation of two provinces: South Punjab province and the Bahawalpur province. Afterwards, the KP Assembly adopted a resolution to create Hazara province in 2014 (Dawn, March 21, 2014). The mainstream political parties (PML-N, PTI, and PPP) adopted the proposals for the creation of new provinces in their party manifestos for the 2013 General Elections, "although driven largely by electoral considerations as opposed to a credible commitment to ethno-federalism" (Siddiqi, 2024). In short, the agenda of new provinces was at the forefront of political debates in Pakistan when the survey data for this study were collected in 2014.

Saraiki Province Movement

The South Punjab has witnessed the rise of two movements for territorial autonomy, the Saraiki province movement based in Multan and surroundings, and the Bahawalpur province movement comprising the Bahawalpur Division of Punjab. While the Bahawalpur province movement is grounded in territorial nationalism inspired by the memory of more than two centuries of independent existence as a princely state, the demand of the Saraiki province is driven by a strong sense of inequality and deprivation. Originally, the Saraiki movement focused on identifying Saraiki as a separate language and endorsing Saraiki culture. However, with the adoption of the demand for the creation of a Saraiki province in South Punjab, this movement has gradually shifted toward territorial ambitions (Mushtaq, 2022).

Saraikis, as Table 1 indicates, are 12.19% of Pakistan's population, but they are territorially concentrated in Southern Punjab. Historically, South Punjab had been a fertile and resource-abundant area. The region's peculiar culture bestows it with a unique identity that differentiates it from other parts of Punjab. In the Mughal era, southern Punjab's territories were known as a separate province named Multan; however, the successors (Sikh rulers, Ranjeet Singh) abolished its provincial status, and it was annexed to Punjab. Under the one-unit scheme of 1955, the princely state of Bahawalpur was merged into the province of West Pakistan. However, later, when this scheme was abandoned in July 1970, Bahawalpur's previous status was not restored, and it was merged into Punjab province. In addition, Dera Ghazi Khan was a part of Balochistan before its merger with Punjab in 1849 (Mushtaq, 2016).

This region is reported to be relatively less developed, deprived, and marginalized in terms of social, cultural, economic, and political development. Hence, in this part, the sentiments and sense

of marginalization started to grow, which gradually paved the way for the development of ethno-nationalist sentiments in the region (Mughal, 2020; Shaheen, Mahmood, & Naazer, 2020). Eventually, the Saraiki ethno-nationalist movement became evident with the demand for a separate province, but the state authorities overlooked the matter till 2010. However, with the enactment of the 18th constitutional amendment, the separate province movement gained impetus, and Saraiki nationalists felt an opportunity to justify their demand on ethnic lines based on renaming the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Saraiki nationalists feel and argue that Saraiki is a distinct and historic language; therefore, a separate province, namely "Siraikistan", would help in the preservation of their distinct Saraiki identity (Sheikh, Shaikh, & Price, 2012). However, it is argued that this movement is still far away from its ultimate political destination. It requires a wider-ranging narrative and a broader spectrum. Without essential changes in its objectives and approach, this movement would not be able to achieve its eventual goal in the near future (Mushtaq, 2016; Mushtaq & Shaheen, 2017).

Table 1: Ethnolinguistic Composition of Pakistan (2017)

Groups	Population share at the national level (Percentage)	Geographical concentration of groups (Percentage)			
	Pakistan	Punjab	Sindh	KP	Balochistan
Punjabi	38.78	95.15	3.16	0.22	0.17
Pushto	18.24	5.75	6.90	74.87	11.51
Sindhi	14.55	0.56	97.52	0.11	1.86
Saraiki	12.19	89.83	4.22	4.50	1.29
Urdu	7.08	36.41	59.21	2.3	0.68
Balochi	3.02	14.58	15.23	0.44	69.70
Hindko	2.44	12.77	14.88	69.15	0.68
Brahvi	1.24	1.26	13.63	2.74	82.27
Kashmiri	0.17	0.17	0.15	0.14	0.14
Others	2.43	24.05	27.98	39.21	6.48
Total	100	52.96	23.04	17.10	5.94

Source: Authors' calculations

Hazara Province Movement

Hindko-speaking Hazarewals are a small minority at the national level (2.44 %), but most of them reside in the Hazara region of KP (69.15%). Currently, the Hazara Division comprises the districts of Abbottabad, Haripur, Batagram, Upper Kohistan, Mansehra, Kolai-Palas, Lower Kohistan, and Torghar. Previously, Hazarewals were ardent supporters of the Pakistan movement as opposed to the Pashtun nationalists of this province. Since the inception of Pakistan, however, they have been in quest to carve out a distinct cultural, political, and territorial space in the country (Abbasi et al., 2022). In the 1970s, Hindko Batool Gerga— an association of some prominent poets, intellectuals, and lawyers of the Hazara region worked to protect and develop the Hindko language and literature. They demanded the status of a regional language for Hindko and asserted that it should be recognized as a regional language in the constitution (Asif et al., 2019).

The Hazarewals were the first to mobilize in favor of a new province after the enactment of the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010, when the NWFP was renamed as KP (Ahmar, 2013).

This political development created unrest among the Hazara nationalists, who contended that the new name of the province, "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa", only projects the ethnic identity of the Pashtun community. They argued that Hazarewals' identity was weakened by this development. Resultantly, the demand for a separate province in the Hazara region surfaced and gradually gained momentum. The demand made its way to the KP Assembly, which in 2014 passed a law calling for the creation of a Hazara province (Dawn, March 21, 2014). The political groups that advocated for the Hazara province include Hazara Awami Ittehad Pakistan, Hazara Democratic Party, Hazara Qaumi Mahaz, Ittehad Milli Hazara, and Tehreek-e-Suba Hazara (Mushtaq, 2018). It has been argued that the Hazarawal and Siraikistan provincial claims are exclusively ethnic in orientation and driven by the marginalization and deprivation discourse in which the Pashtun and Punjabi majority ethnicities feature prominently, along with excesses of the Pakistani state (Siddiqi, 2024). On the other hand, however, it is argued that provincial minority groups' (Saraikis and Hazarewals) grievances and demands in Pakistan are primarily territorial in nature (Mushtaq, 2022). Nevertheless, the ethno-regional parties of South Punjab and the Hazara region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have remained unable to attract the masses (Mushtaq, 2018).

Research Design: Sampling and Survey Statements

The data used for this analysis were originally gathered for the M. Phil. dissertations of Syeda Aalia Hussan (2015) and Misbah Shaheen (2015). The researchers approached 811 respondents from the Saraiki-speaking region of Punjab and 473 respondents from the Hindko-speaking Hazara region of KP. However, 721 questionnaires for Saraikis and 400 questionnaires for Hazarewals were found appropriate for analysis (Table 2 and Table 3). Therefore, the response rates for Saraikis and Hazarewals were 89% and 85%, respectively. The sample was territorially stratified to collect data from all sub-regions of the target areas of South Punjab (Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan, and Bahawalpur divisions) and Hazara (Abbottabad, Torghar, Kohistan, Haripur, Bhattgram, Mansehra). Before administering the survey, the draft questionnaires were tested in a pilot study. Minor changes were adopted, and the questionnaires were reorganized. This study borrows two sets of statements from the original questionnaires. The first set of five questions investigates attitudes towards demands for separate provinces, taking into account the primordialist propositions, and a second set of questions surveys public opinion through the lens of the instrumentalist paradigm. Each statement is measured on a five-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The statements, along with descriptive and inferential statistics, are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

Findings and Interpretations

This section presents survey statements and statistical analysis (from SPSS) of survey evidence that determines the general trends and sentiments of respondents towards the demands for the creation of new provinces in the Saraiki and Hazara regions. Descriptive as well as inferential statistics have been calculated. The summary statistics of opinions show the number (as a percentage of all responses to that statement) of responses expressing disagreement, neutrality, and agreement for each statement. To simplify the analysis, we have readjusted our Likert scale as follows: 1= Negative perception (disagreement), 2 = Neutral, and 3 = Positive perception (agreement). The summary statistics for primordialist sentiments are presented in Figures 1 and 2.

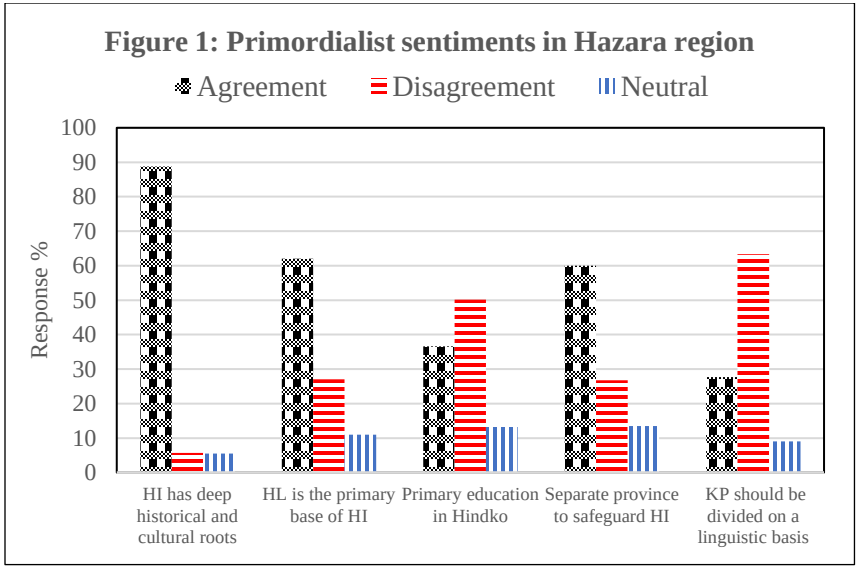
The analysis has computed mean values, which have been used as a measure of location or central tendency (a representative of the data series in terms of a single numerical value). The standard deviation (SD) has been used to measure the average dispersion of the data series around the mean. In addition, the third quartile (Q3) is calculated to indicate that 75% of the distribution of the data series is below this value, while 25% lies above it. To compare the average perception of masses of two samples, i.e., for Hazara and Saraiki, for each statement, an independent sample t-test has been used. For each corresponding p-value, the null hypothesis of equal average perception of masses for the two regions will be rejected if the p-value is less than the 5% level of significance. These statistics are useful for analyzing the general/average tendencies of the responses to each statement, as well as the possible inferences of the analyses with comparison to determine whether or not the differences between the general/average tendencies of the respondents to various statements are statistically significant or not at a 5% level of significance. The results for each theoretical paradigm have been discussed separately in the following sections.

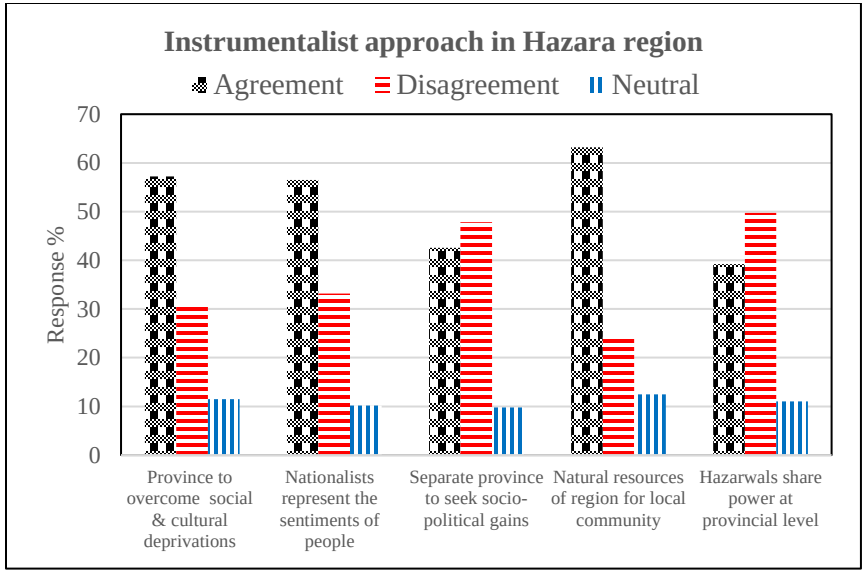
Regional Perspectives towards the Demands of New Provinces

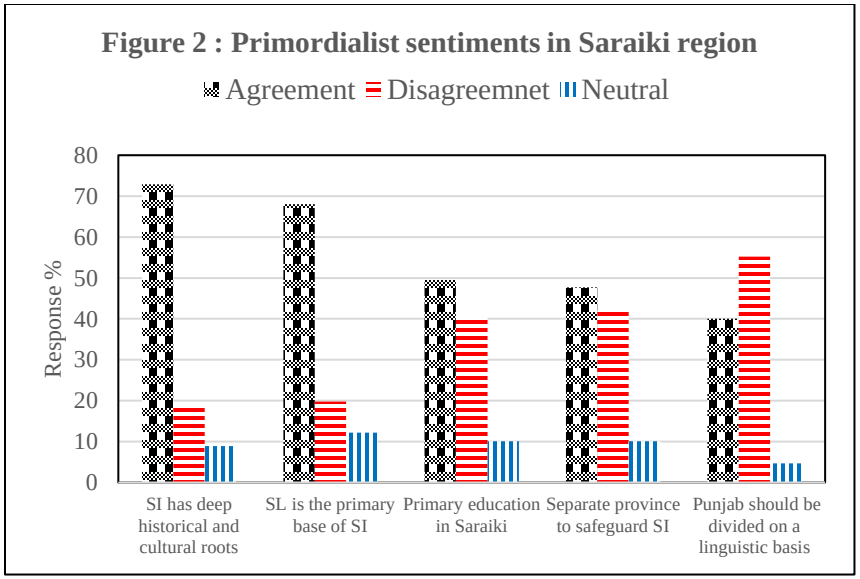
A. Primordialist Sentiments in the Hazara and Saraiki Region

To assess the incidence of primordialist sentiments in the Hazara and Saraiki regions, we surveyed opinions on five statements (Table 2). Overall, the findings suggest that primordialist ties affect public attitudes towards identity politics and autonomy demands in both regions. The survey responses indicate that an overwhelming majority of respondents from both regions—the Hazara (89% agreement vs. 5.7% disagreement) and Saraiki (73% agreement vs 18.3% disagreement)—believe that their identity has deep historical and cultural roots (Figures 1 and 2). While the survey participants from the Hazara region reported a mean score of $M = 4.33$ ($SD = 0.91$; $Q3 = 5$), the respondents from the Saraiki region reported a relatively lower mean score of $M = 3.87$ ($SD = 1.23$; $Q3 = 5$). An independent-samples t-test shows that the difference between the opinions of two regions is statistically significant, $t = 7.21$, $p < 0.001$. The results indicate the widespread manifestation of primordial beliefs in societies of both regions, albeit stronger in the Hazara than the Saraiki region.

With respect to the second statement, the respondents of both regions—the Hazara (62% agreement vs 27% disagreement) and Saraiki (68% agreement vs. 19.8% disagreement)—believe that language is the primary identity marker in their regions (Figures 1 and 2). The mean score of $M=3.50$ ($SD =1.29$; $Q3 =4$) for Hazara and $M=3.75$ ($SD =1.24$; $Q3 =5$) for the Saraiki region suggests a relatively moderate level of agreement, with somewhat higher variability compared to the previous statement. An independent-samples t-test indicates that the difference between the opinions of two regions is statistically significant, $t = -3.12$, $p < 0.002$. However, a vast majority in both regions endorse the significance of linguistic identity and primordial attitudes in relation to identity politics.


Figure 1: Primordialist sentiments in Hazara region
Agreement
Disagreement
Neutral
Response %
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
HI has deep historical and cultural roots
HL is the primary base of HI
Primary education in Hindko
Separate province to safeguard HI
KP should be divided on a linguistic basis


Instrumentalist approach in Hazara region
Agreement
Disagreement
Neutral
Response %
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Province to overcome social & cultural deprivations
Nationalists represent the sentiments of people
Separate province to seek socio-political gains
Natural resources of region for local community
Hazarwals share power at provincial level


Figure 2 : Primordialist sentiments in Saraiki region
Agreement
Disagreemnet
Neutral
Response %
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
SI has deep historical and cultural roots
SL is the primary base of SI
Primary education in Saraiki
Separate province to safeguard SI
Punjab should be divided on a linguistic basis

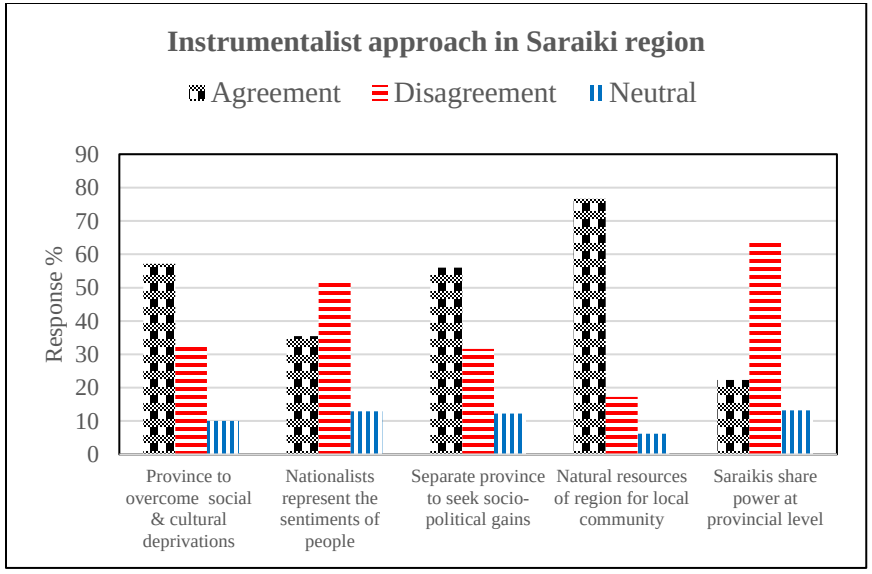

Instrumentalist approach in Saraiki region
Agreement
Disagreement
Neutral
Response %
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Province to overcome social & cultural deprivations
Nationalists represent the sentiments of people
Separate province to seek socio-political gains
Natural resources of region for local community
Saraikis share power at provincial level

Table 2: Descriptive and Comparative Statistics (Primordialist Approach)

	Hazara region			Saraiki region			Hazara Vs Saraiki	
Statements[1]	***Mean***	***SD***	***Q3***	***Mean***	***SD***	***Q3***	***t***	***P***
1. Saraiki/Hazara identity has deep historical & cultural roots.	4.33	0.91	5	3.87	1.23	5	7.21	0.001
2. Saraiki/Hindko language is the primary base of Saraiki/Hazara identity.	3.50	1.29	4	3.75	1.24	5	-3.12	0.002
3. Saraiki/Hazara language should be the medium of instruction in primary-level educational institutions.	2.85	1.38	4	3.16	1.37	4	-3.62	0.001
4. Saraiki/Hazara nationalists demand a separate province to uphold their separate Saraiki/Hazara ethnic identity.	3.55	1.26	5	3.08	1.44	4	5.62	0.001
5. Punjab/KP should be divided on a linguistic basis.	2.46	1.39	4	2.81	1.50	4	- 3.92	0.001
Average	**3.34**	**1.25**	**4.4**	**3.34**	**1.36**	**4.4**	**2.17**	--------

Table 3: Descriptive and Comparative Statistics (Instrumentalist Approach)

	Hazara region			Saraiki region			Hazara Vs Saraiki	
Statements[2]	***Mean***	***SD***	***Q3***	***Mean***	***SD***	***Q3***	***t***	***P***
1. The demand for Saraiki/Hazara province is to overcome the social and cultural deprivations of the region.	3.31	1.36	4	3.40	1.39	5	-1.01	0.313
2. Saraiki/Hazara nationalists express the sentiments of the people in the region.	3.37	1.33	4	2.71	1.32	4	7.96	0.000
3. Saraiki/Hazara nationalists demand a separate province to safeguard their socio-political interests.	2.85	1.42	4	3.33	1.37	4	-5.54	0.000
4. The natural resources of the Saraiki/Hazara region should be used for the development of the Saraiki/Hazara region only.	3.81	1.17	5	3.94	1.20	5	-1.80	0.072
5. Saraikis/Hazarewals have their due share in the power structure of the respective province.	2.84	1.32	4	2.38	1.17	3	5.81	0.000
Average	**3.23**	**1.32**	**4.2**	**3.15**	**1.29**	**4.2**	**- 5.42**	------

[1] Minor changes have been made to statements. However, these revisions have no bearing on the academic content of statements.

[2] Minor changes have been made to statements. However, these revisions have no bearing on the academic content of statements.

Findings of the third statement disclose that the masses of both regions—the Hazara (36.6% agreement vs. 50.2% disagreement) and Saraiki (49% agreement vs 40.4% disagreement) — do not recommend that the native language should be a medium of instruction in primary educational institutions. The average responses of both regions—Hazara (M=2.85; SD =1.38; Q3 =4) and Saraiki (M=3.16; SD =1.37; Q3 =4)—tend to a neutral scale. The comparison shows that the Hazara region scored relatively lower than the Saraiki region ($t = -3.62$, $p < 0.001$), and the difference is statistically significant. This finding weakens the strong claims of affection, as indicated in previous statements, with primordialist sentiments in both regions.

The majority of respondents in the Hazara region (60% agreement vs. 26.8% disagreement) come to an understanding that people demand a separate province to safeguard their distinct ethnic identity. However, the survey participants in the Saraiki region are quite uncertain in this regard (47.7% agreement vs. 42% disagreement). Both regions exhibit varied mean scores (M = 3.55; SD = 1.26; Q3 =5 vs. M = 3.08; SD = 1.44; Q3 =4), and the difference in opinions between the two regions is statistically significant ($t = 5.62$, $p < 0.001$). Finally, the people of both regions—the Hazara region (27.7 % agreement vs 63.3% disagreement) and the Saraiki region (40% agreement vs. 55.5% disagreement)—do not prefer the creation of new provinces on linguistic bases. The Hazara region, with a mean score of M = 2.46 (SD= 1.39; Q3 =4) appears more cautious than the Saraiki region (M = 2.81; SD= 1.50; Q3 =4) to demand a province on linguistic bases. This finding is somewhat surprising as the majority of respondents in this region assert that they demand a separate province to safeguard their distinct ethnic identity. In fact, citizens of both regions claim creation of new provinces on administrative grounds to strengthen their demands while avoiding the state's opposition, which has hitherto been reluctant to embrace ethnic diversity in the past.

B. Instrumentalist Approach in the Hazara and Saraiki Region

As opposed to primordialists, instrumentalists point to factors other than ethnic identity to explain ethnopolitical conflicts in plural societies. In fact, they argue that ethnic identities are politicized by ethnic elites for political and socio-economic gains (Che, 2016). In this backdrop, we assess if the demands for new provinces are driven by instrumentalism, and nationalists promote ethnic agendas to overcome socio-economic disparities. We surveyed public opinions in both regions on five statements (Table 3). The survey findings demonstrate that respondents from both regions—the Hazara (57.2% agreement vs 31.2% disagreement) and Saraiki (57.1% agreement vs. 32.9% disagreement)—come to an agreement that people demand the creation of new provinces to overcome the social and cultural deprivations of their respective regions. The findings exhibit a moderate mean score and variability in responses of the Hazara (M = 3.31; SD = 1.36; Q3 = 4) and Saraiki regions (M = 3.40; SD = 1.39; Q3 = 5). It is noteworthy that people in both regions hold comparable views in connection with this statement ($t = -1.01$, $p < 0.313$).

Compared to the survey participants of the Saraiki region (35.5% agreement vs. 51.6% disagreement), the respondents of the Hazara region (56.5% agreement vs. 33.2% disagreement) seem to be more content with the efforts of nationalists who advocate a separate province. The mean score of the Saraiki region (M= 2.71) indicates the general tendency of responses from disagree to neutral. The difference in opinions of both regions is statistically significant ($t = 7.21$, $p < 0.001$). It can be argued that as the leadership of the Hazara province movement was more active in the field that contributed to people's trust. On the other hand, leadership in the Saraiki

region remained divided and failed to generate a genuine political mobilization for the creation of a new province.

The survey findings show that respondents from the Hazara region do not agree that they demand a separate province to safeguard their socio-political interests (42.6% agreement vs. 47.8% disagreement). However, a moderate level of agreement is demonstrated by respondents of the Saraiki region (56% agreement vs. 31.6% disagreement) in this regard. The comparison of opinions of the two regions shows disparity, and the difference is statistically significant ($t = -5.54$, $p < 0.001$). With respect to the fourth statement, the respondents of both regions agreed to the suggestion that the natural resources of the Saraiki (76.6% agreement vs. 17.2% disagreement) and Hazara (63.2% agreement vs. 24.3% disagreement) regions should be used for the development of the respective regions only. This result highlights how relative underdevelopment underpins the demands for separate provinces and territorial autonomy in Pakistan. Both regions exhibit similar opinions ($t = -1.80$, $p < 0.072$) on this statement. Lastly, the respondents of both regions—Hazara (39.2% agreement vs. 49.7% disagreement) and Saraiki (22.3% agreement vs. 64.5% disagreement) tend to disagree that they have been provided their due share in the power structure of their respective provinces. However, the results clearly show that the sense of marginalization/underdevelopment is significantly higher in the masses of the Saraiki region ($M = 2.38$; $SD = 1.17$; $Q3 = 3$) than in the Hazara region ($M = 2.84$; $SD = 1.32$; $Q3 = 4$). This difference in opinions between the two regions is statistically significant ($t = 5.81$, $p < 0.001$).

One unanticipated result in connection with the instrumentalist approach is that the people of both regions, the Hazara and Saraiki, demonstrate almost an identical degree of agreement (3.31 vs. 3.40) with the proposition that they demand a separate province to "overcome social and cultural deprivations of their respective regions" (Figure 2). In the same vein, a similar kind of agreement exists towards the assertion that the natural resources of the regions must be used for the development of the respective Saraiki and Hazara regions. Further analysis of the results, however, reveals that people of the Saraiki region exhibit relatively greater agreement than the people of the Hazara region that they "demand a separate province to safeguard their socio-political interests". As shown in Figure 2, the people of the Saraiki region are more uncertain than the people of the Hazara region about receiving a fair share of provincial power, and whether Saraiki nationalists voice their concerns seriously. Overall, these results indicate that people of the Saraiki region display relatively greater agreement than the people of the Hazara region that they demand a separate province to address regional disparity and accomplish socio-political goals. These findings are unsurprising because the Saraiki region is much poorer and less developed than central Punjab. However, in terms of socio-economic development, the Hazara region is comparable to the rest of the KP province.

Intra-regional Variability in Attitudes

This section explores the intergroup variation in attitudes towards the demand for the creation of new provinces in both regions, the Hazara region and the Saraiki region, respectively.

A. Intergroup Variations in Attitudes in the Hazara Region

A One-way ANOVA test is used to identify intraregional variability in opinions among various groups based on ethnolinguistic and political affiliations. The results indicate that there is no significant difference in opinions among linguistic groups (i.e., Hazarewals, Pashtuns, and others) for both paradigms: primordialism and instrumentalism.

Table 4: ANOVA-Variations in Opinion among Groups (mother tongue) in the Hazara Region

Paradigm	Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Primordialism	Between Groups	2.717	3	.906	1.701	.166
	Within Groups	210.816	396	.532		
	Total	213.532	399			
Instrumentalism	Between Groups	1.203	3	.401	.795	.497
	Within Groups	199.549	396	.504		
	Total	200.752	399			

Similarly, the findings show no significant difference in opinions among groups based on political affiliation (such as PTI, PML-N, PPP, and HQM) for both paradigms, primordialism and instrumentalism.

Table 5: ANOVA-Variations in Opinion among Groups (Political affiliation) in Hazara Region

Paradigm		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Primordialism	Between Groups	1.496	4	.374	.697	.595
	Within Groups	212.036	395	.537		
	Total	213.532	399			
Instrumentalism	Between Groups	1.492	4	.373	.739	.566
	Within Groups	199.260	395	.504		
	Total	200.752	399			

The ANOVA results in the tables indicate that opinions are generally consistent across ethnic groups and political parties regarding the creation of new provinces in the Hazara region.

B. Intergroup Variations in Attitudes in the Saraiki Region

A One-way ANOVA test is used to identify intraregional variability in opinions among various ethnolinguistic groups and respondents with different political affiliations in the Saraiki region. The results indicate a significant difference in opinions among various linguistic groups (such as Saraikis, Punjabis, and others) for both paradigms, primordialism and instrumentalism.

Table 6: ANOVA-Variations in Opinion among Groups (Mother tongue) in Saraiki Region

Paradigms	Source of variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Primordialism	Between Groups	250.174	3	83.391	134.340	.000
	Within Groups	445.077	717	.621		
	Total	695.250	720			
Instrumentalism	Between Groups	4.713	3	1.571	4.953	.002
	Within Groups	227.449	717	.317		
	Total	232.162	720			

As the ANOVA indicates statistically significant intergroup variations in attitudes, post hoc tests are performed to identify the pairs of groups that exhibit significant variations in opinions. While Table 6 shows variations in opinions of various ethno-linguistic groups, Table 8 indicates variations in opinion among the respondents with different political affiliations.

Table 7: Intergroup Variations in Attitudes (post hoc tests-Multiple Comparisons)

Dependent Variable	*(I) Mother tongue*	*(J) Mother tongue*	*Mean Difference (I-J)*	*Std. Error*	*Sig.*	*95% Confidence Interval*	
						Lower Bound	*Upper Bound*
Primordialism	Saraiki	Punjabi	1.24078	.06255	.001	1.0797	1.4019
		Urdu	.76855	.13693	.001	.4160	1.1212
		Others	.94744	.20710	.001	.4142	1.4807
	Punjabi	Urdu	-.47222	.14017	.004	-.8332	-.1113
		Others	-.29333	.20926	.499	-.8322	.2455
	Urdu	Others	.17889	.24213	.881	-.4446	.8024
Instrumentalism	Saraiki	Punjabi	.17203	.04472	.001	.0569	.2872
		Urdu	.05588	.09789	.941	-.1962	.3079
		Others	.09699	.14805	.914	-.2842	.4782
	Punjabi	Urdu	-.11615	.10021	.653	-.3742	.1419
		Others	-.07504	.14959	.959	-.4602	.3102
	Urdu	Others	.04111	.17309	.995	-.4046	.4868

Note: As the group sizes are unequal, the harmonic mean of the group sizes is used.

The most significant finding of the post hoc tests is that Saraikis exhibit a statistically significant difference in opinions in connection to the primordial sentiments than all other groups. They also have different opinions from Punjabis on primordialism (Table 7). Subsequently, a one-way ANOVA test is used to ascertain intraregional variability in opinions among various respondents with different political affiliations. While results indicate significant differences in opinions related to primordialism, no significant differences exist in connection to instrumentalism (Table 9).

Table 8: ANOVA-Variations in Opinion among Groups (Political affiliation) in Saraiki Region

Paradigms	**Source of variation**	**Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Primordialism	Between Groups	45.779	4	11.445	12.617	.000
	Within Groups	649.472	716	.907		
	Total	695.250	720			
Instrumentalism	Between Groups	2.311	4	.578	1.799	.127
	Within Groups	229.852	716	.321		
	Total	232.162	720			

The analysis uses post hoc tests to identify the pairs of groups that exhibit a statistically significant difference in relation to the instrumentalist paradigm. The results show that PTI demonstrates a different opinion from PPP.

Table 9: Intergroup variations in attitudes (Post Hoc Tests-Multiple Comparisons)

Dependent Variable	*(I) Mother tongue*	*(J) Mother tongue*	*Mean Difference (I-J)*	*Std. Error*	*Sig.*	*95% Confidence Interval*	
						Lower Bound	*Upper Bound*
Primordialism	PML-N	PPP	-.43568	.09598	-.698	-.6982	-.1732
		PTI	-.00431	.09104	-.253	-.2533	.2447
		Saraikis	-.76189	.14441	-1.15	-1.1568	-.3670
		Others	-.01462	.16443	1.00	-.4643	.4351
	PPP	PTI	.43137	.09369	.001	.1752	.6876
		Saraikis	-.32620	.14609	.169	-.7257	.0733
		Others	.42107	.16592	.084	-.0327	.8748
	PTI	Saraiki	-.75758	.14290	.001	-1.1484	-.3668
		Others	-.01030	.16311	1.00	-.4564	.4358
	Saraiki	Others	.74727	.19791	.002	.2060	1.2885

Summary and Conclusions

Building on survey evidence, this paper provides a comprehensive analysis of the two ethno-nationalist movements (Hazara and Saraiki) of Pakistan. Overall, the empirical analysis of survey findings suggests that the demands for Saraiki and Hazara separate province movements are substantially distinct from one another in several ways. The masses of the Saraiki region prefer the creation of a new province on an administrative basis, while the inclination of Hazarewals is towards the creation of a new province on a linguistic basis. The inclination of Hazarewals towards identity recognition and the establishment of a province on a linguistic basis is relatively more significant than that of Saraiki speakers. The analysis also reveals that respondents of both regions believe that their identity has deep historical and cultural roots, and their language is the primary basis of their identity. There exists a difference of opinion regarding the language as a medium of instruction in educational institutions. The people of Hazara believe that the renaming of the province has threatened the integrity of the Hazara identity.

In the case of instrumentalist theory, statistical findings support the assumption that identity has been used as a tool by political leadership to achieve their own socio-political and economic goals. The respondents of both Saraiki and Hazara regions imagined uniformly that their distinct linguistic and cultural identity is being manipulated by the political elite of the regions for their own motives. The people of both regions believe that they do not have adequate access to the power structure of the respective provinces. The findings indicate variations between the underpinning factors of Saraiki and Hazara province movements in the context of the theoretical parameters of primordialism and instrumentalism. It is therefore suggested that it would not be an appropriate policy to address both Saraiki and Hazara ethno-nationalist movements by opting for any similar political, constitutional or administrative solution. The variation in the responses of Saraiki and Hazara is based on their socio-economic development levels. The Hazara region is relatively more developed than the Saraiki region. Therefore, their inclination towards identity recognition is comparably high, while the Saraiki respondents showed more concern about socio-political and economic inequalities.

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