



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Concept of Corruption in Pakistan: Anecdotal Evidence From Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP)**

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**ABSTRACT**

Corruption is a multidimensional phenomenon that is defined differently across contexts. In this study, we conceptualize Corruption in Pakistan by providing contextual evidence from Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP). PCP, on one hand, has deposited huge perceptions of the citizens regarding corruption or structural issues of the country while, on the other hand, as an e-governance tool, PCP highlights how e-governance can reduce corruption. Using institutional theory and principal agent theory as theoretical foundations, this research investigates the main causes of governance failures in Pakistan, with a particular focus on how it has affected the economic and social systems and what is the way forward in terms of e-governance. This conceptualization is based on PCP data on complaints, resolutions of the complaints, and the resulting feedback for the years 2022 and 2023. We find that corruption, bureaucratic resistance, infrastructure weaknesses, and reliable data are challenges to good governance in Pakistan. The study shows that e-governance platforms like PCP contribute to greater transparency and accountability in government operations, which has the potential to improve Pakistan's performance on corruption indices. Alternatively, e-governance through the PCP platform can help combat corruption and can create a more transparent accountable and efficient governance system in Pakistan.

**KEYWORDS** Pakistan Citizen Portal, Corruption in Pakistan, E-governance, Citizen engagement, Citizen Complaints

**Introduction**

Corruption is defined as the abuse of entrusted powers for private gains (Transparency International, 2023). It can take the form of petty corruption in public service delivery, grand corruption at political level, and administrative corruption such as bribery, favoritism, and misuse of authority. In Developing countries, corruption weakens institutions, reduces public trust, and undermines socio economic development (Muzaffar, & Choudhary, 2017). Citizens often perceive corruption through experiences like delays, red tape, discrimination and informal payments which reflect broader governance failures.

Corruption remains a serious problem in most countries around the world, with majority of scores below 50 on the Corruption Perception Index, CPI). Pakistan's own trends are shown in Table 1. The score improved steadily from 27 in 2012 to the peak 33 in 2018 but fell back to 27 in 2022 and has since improved only with narrow band, standing at 28 in 2025. As demonstrated, e-governance has shown that Limiting the extent of corruption through tools like PCP and other digital tool and Countries such as Estonia and South Korea show. How digital governance reforms will reinforce accountability and service delivery (Adeodato and Pournouri, 2020). Although corruption is a global issue, in Pakistan it has evolved due to political instability, inefficiency of civil servants and lack of democratic accountability during Ayub Khan, Zia-ul-Haq and Pervez Musharraf's military regime times (Misbah & Muzaffar, 2026; Khan, 2018). Nepotism, favouritism and discrimination have also added to the poor governance outcomes.

To counter these prevailing issues, Pakistan has become progressively more conservative in its approach to governance. In Pakistan E-governance started to appear in the early 2000s, and gradually expanded towards the concept of digital governance reforms, In collaboration with institutions like NADRA, PEMRA and NITB. These were attempts to foster improvement in: Transparent and service delivery. The Digital reforms speeded up from 2013 to 2018, when led by national ICT strategies. One of the major achievements was launching of Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP) in 2018, and which gives citizens a direct means of giving their complaints and monitoring the progress of grievance resolution. The Platform aims to solve some of the inefficiency and corruption problems that have long plagued developing nations by using technology.

But even with the reforms, scandals such as the Rental Power Projects (RPP) remain an example of the use of favouritism and misuse of authority. (Khan, 2017; Raza et al., 2022). Meanwhile, issues of extortion, gender violence, police brutality, land grabs and political corruption are just some of the problems that have plagued the system on a daily basis. The increased rate of crime also suggests that enforcement and accountability are lacking. Many citizens experience these on a regular basis. This undermines citizens' trust in the state, instills insecurity, and stifles economic growth. Pakistan loses 2-3% of its GDP each year to corruption, and weak rule of law deters investment in the country (Hussain, 2023). Selective enforcement at accountability institutions such as NAB have also been blamed. (Imran et al., 2023).

**Table 1**  
**Corruption Score for Pakistan Between year 2012-2025**

| Year      | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| CPI Score | 27   | 28   | 29   | 30   | 32   | 32   | 33   |
| Year      | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 | 2025 |
| CPI Score | 32   | 31   | 28   | 27   | 29   | 27   | 28   |

Source: CPI Index Report on Corruption

Countries such as South Korea and Estonia have shown that e-governance is an important tool to combat corruption. (Adeodato and Pournouri, 2020). PCP is a digital service platform and a source of anecdotal evidence of governance performance, based on good practices around the world. In this context, this study conceptualizes corruption in the context of Pakistan by taking the concept from structural issues identified in the Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP). It provides a definition and a categorisation of these recurring governance and administrative problems as signals of corruption. The study is empirical and systematic, analysing the complaints of citizens about corruption, thus providing a foundation that can be applied to the understanding of corruption in practice. It is also a representative example of the overall e-governance initiative in Pakistan, and how it can help to tackle and mitigate issues.

The rest of this study is composed of five sections. The existing literature on corruption and e-governance is reviewed in Section 2 and theories of corruption are reviewed and discussed with particular attention being paid to the two theories that form the basis of this research namely: Institutional Theory and Principal-Agent Theory. In Section 3, the research method is introduced, encompassing research design, data sources and the method to analyze the research to evaluate the influence of e-governance on corruption. Section 4 presents the findings and results obtained from the data gathered from the Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP) and explores financial corruption, abuse of power, fraud, harassment and inefficiency as a few categories of corruption. This research ends with an analysis of important findings and policy recommendations on governance strengthening and a reduction of corruption through e-governance practices in Section 5.

## **Literature Review**

In this review of literature, we expound on the theoretical frameworks and models that inform how e-governance is studied and giving the groundwork needed to access digital governance initiatives against the backdown of corruption. The concept of e-governance and its role in improving governance have gained Significant attention globally particularly in developing countries such as Pakistan, where corruption is considered as one of the core challenges to good governance. E-governance is seen as a tool to enhance transparency, accountability and citizen engagement in government processes, all of which are important for combating corruption and reshaping citizen perception of integrity in the public sector.

To understand the relationship between corruption and governance, several theoretical frameworks have been proposed in the literature. The principle Agent thoery is all about the interaction between citizens and official interests, arguing that closing information gaps between the two curbs favouritism. Whereas, Institutional Theory takes a different approach, locating the roots of corruption governance structures, normative and culture aspects (Malik, et. al., 2023; Tremblay-Cantin et al., 2023)

Adopting principle-agent theory to e-governance studies is a tool to create accountability mechanisms, tracking systems and incentive mechanisms that can reduce the temptation to engage in corrupt practices. The institutional theory, principal Agent theory is adopted to explain the dynamics of e-governance for the fight against corruption and to enhance governance in Pakistan. Institutional theory, on the other hand explains that the formal rules, informal rules and organizational structures that make up institutions have a strong influence on how individuals and organizations behave (Bell, 2002; Muzaffar, et al., 2023). Helmke and Levitsky (2004) treats institutions as a backbone of good governance and determine how citizens perceive the effectiveness and legitimacy of public systems. The issue of negative perception of corruption in Pakistan is not new, as bribery, favoritism and misuse of power are “a practice” (Ullah et al., 2022). These perceptions have reinforced citizens' mistrust of state institutions and have reduced citizens engagement in the civil participation.

Within this Institutional context, Initiative like PCP gives citizens a formal, structured channel to raise complaints and seek remedies which pushed institution towards greater responsibility and accountability. Self-organization theory add to this picture by showing that such systems function within rather than outisdes, existing institutional framework, where effectiveness depends on sustaining transparency and accountability.

These Theoretical ideas are reflected in empirical measures of corruption for example Corruption Perception Index (CPI). Pakistan's ranking on the corruption perception index shows it is ranked 133<sup>rd</sup> out of 180 countries with a score of 29, reflecting a marginal improvement from previous years. Despite this slight progress, Pakistan continues to perform poorly compared to regional peers as India ranks 93<sup>rd</sup> (score 39), Nepal 108<sup>th</sup> (score 35) and Bangladesh 149<sup>th</sup> (score 24). These figures indicate that the public perception of corruption in Pakistan remains alarmingly high, suggesting deep rooted issues of weak accountability limited transparency, and ineffective enforcement mechanisms ( Transparency international, 2023)

Corruption in Pakistan is systemic and multisectoral. Cases like the LDA scandal (Imran et al., 2021), Politicization of accountability like NAB (Ali, 2020). Corruption is being defined as using public property for personal use. In Pakistan, Corruption spans sectors law enforcement, healthcare, and procurement, worsening inequality (Malik and Qureshi, 2021). Scandals like RPP cases show how manipulated bidding processes can lead to major financial losses and serious failures (Waseem, 2019). Weak oversight, poor whistleblower protections, and judicial inefficiency enable these issues to persist in the Ashiana Housing case (Ali et al., 2019). And Malik Riaz's (an established businessman) case of judicial

manipulation (Khan et al., 2018). shows that it is the elite that have impunity. It is still an issue whether the election is manipulated. Changes brought about by allegation from the 2018 elections (Javaid et al., 2022) and this is yet another confirmation of the prevailing public perception of selective accountability and elite impunity in the case of Liaqat Ali Chatta (Ahmad, 2024). All of these make up a social discourse in which corruption feels ubiquitous and institutionalized. Experience indicates that corruption undermines good governance and damages citizens' confidence in public institutions. Basically in Pakistan corruption has been considered as "necessary evil" to avail basic services, which means corruption is normalised. (Ullah et al., 2022).

Corruption disturbs resource allocation, undermines policy implementation, encourages rent-seeking, reduces investor confidence and leads to income inequality (Gupta & Ahmed, 2018). Political interference, electoral strategy, and corruption in governance erode institutional trust, which in turn results in capital outflows and a decrease in investments (Muzaffar, et al., 2024). Poor fiscal management and land grabbing worsen debt, hinder development, and deepen social divisions. Scandals such as the Panama Papers and Benami transactions further illustrate systemic corruption and weak enforcement of financial laws.

According to study on corruption in Pakistan, the issue is widespread and effect many different areas. For many Years, Pakistan had been dealing with worse problems with political corruption, where officials positions has been abused for private benefits (Ahmed & Mashkoor, 2016). According to Ali and Mujahid 2015, Corruption is a pervasion issue in pakistan and has the vilest effects on the nations development and governance.

Internationally, several countries have successfully leveraged e-governance to combat corruption. Singapore's digital systems, Estonia "e-Estonia" strategy and South Korea "e-People, and Rwanda's Irembo platforms shows how digital governance improves transparency, reduces direct contact between citizens and officials and strengthen accountability. (Espinosa & Pino). These examples across the world shows how e-governance tools can reduce corruption and potentially strengthen governance system.

In Pakistan, platforms like PCP serve this purpose of allowing citizens to file complaints and monitor their resolution in real time, thus promoting transparency and accountability (Aaqil et al., 2023; Batool, et. al., 2023). While complaint resolution rates are high, weak laws, infrastructure gaps, digital illiteracy and bureaucratic resistance limit effectiveness (Martins, L 2023). Although extensive research exists on corruption and governance in Pakistan, limited studies use citizen complaints platforms as bottom up evidence of governance performance. Most studies rely on perception indices or intuitional analysis rather than experiential citizen data. This study addresses the gap by using anecdotal evidence from Pakistan citizen portal to examine how corruption, inefficiency and accountability failures are experienced at the citizen level.

While research in Pakistan has concentrated primarily on the reasons for corruption and its consequences, relatively little research has been devoted to exploring how the use of e-governance can help to solve the problem. This paper seeks to make up for this gap by analyzing the causes of corruption and the potential of digital governance in mitigating the problem. The main contribution of this paper is that it uses firsthand information provided by citizens of Pakistan through the Pakistan Citizen portal to provide insights into corruption.

## **Material and Methods**

This section explains the methods used in this research. The study uses a combination of sets qualitative descriptions, as well as documentary analysis. The Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP) report was used as a primary data source. As a result, the chapter also

discusses the causes of corruption and how information and communication technology (ICT) used in PCP serves as a mechanism to reduce and prevent corrupt practices. The study also adds up the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) and the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WDI) to further strengtheningmos the research.

The scheme of this study is outlined below keeping the conceptualization of the topic in mind which is designed to prove the role of e-governance in reducing the issue of corruption in the country. The study will be based on Pakistan citizen portal (PCP) and other e-governance indicators in order to explore how digital platforms can improve governance for better outcomes. The study framework reflects the concept of Institutionalism and Principal-Agent Theory that serves as a basis to understand organizations and their dynamics affecting e-governance efficiency.

The initiative of e-governance tool like PCP to tackle corruption and enhance service delivery have progressed significantly with descriptive qualitative evidence. There is greater transparency between the citizens and the authorities, and it allows citizens to complain directly to the authorities, eliminating the possibility of intermediaries being involved in the process and reduces the chance of officials demanding bribes. Its design has made it easier to use and has boosted citizens' engagement and trust.

It is reported that Pakistan's CPI has risen from 140 to 133 out of 180 countries with transparency, accountability and real time tracking. For example, the Punjab land records management system has been found to have decreased corruption and disputes and the government payment of digitized records have been found to increase transparency, as observed in the literature.

This study is based on the data obtained from one important source to analyze the effect of e-governance in the fight against corruption in Pakistan. The main data source is:

**Data Description:** Pakistan's Prime Minister launched PCP in 2018 and it is operating since 2020, 32% of the people who reported complaints were pleased with resolution mechanism in 2022 and 2023. This demonstrates the efficacy and problems of the system in addressing corruption-related matters.

This section highlights some of the prevalent themes of corruption reported to the Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP) and provides types and effects of corruption in Pakistan.

*The following sub-categories were identified:*

**Financial Corruption:** the use of public and private money by authorities for illegal or unethical purposes *such as embezzlement, kickbacks and bribery*

**Power Abuse:** an injustice or inequality as a result of the misuse of power for personal gain.

**Fraud:** Dishonest behavior, including dishonest information and documents designed to secure an unfair advantage

**Harassment:** Undesirable behavior which makes a working environment hostile, such as sexual ,mental harassment and physical.

**Table 2**  
**Types of Corruption (as described in PCP report) with in context of Pakistan.**

| Type of Corruption   | Sub Category                               | Case Studies/ Examples                                                                  |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Financial Corruption | Corruption/Misappropriation in Govt. Funds | In 2019, (NAB) arrested Sindh officials for embezzling public development funds through |

|                |                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Power Abuse    |                                     | fake companies linking to road construction projects.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                | Corruption/bribery                  | In 2020, A senior (FBR) official was arrested by NAB for collecting bribes from businesses to evade taxes.                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                | Kickbacks/ commission               | In (RPP) case, officials, including ex-PM were accused of taking kickbacks for overpriced power contracts that delivered little or no electricity, costing the state billions of rupees.                                                                                                 |
|                | Favoritism                          | Teachers hiring in Punjab in 2018 faced backlash as many appointments favored relatives of politicians overqualified candidates. sparking public demands for a transparent.                                                                                                              |
|                | Unauthorized privileges             | A senior Karachi police officer used official vehicles and staff for personal errands, leading to criticism and actions.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Fraud/ Forgery | Any other Irregularity              | Fake degree scandal in PIA uncovered that many pilots and staff were hired with forged qualifications, exposing corruption and posing safety risks.                                                                                                                                      |
|                | Fake Degrees/ documents/Credentials | Axact sold fake degrees globally, leading to the arrest of the CEO and staff, and destroying Pakistans education reputation.                                                                                                                                                             |
|                | Impersonation                       | In karachi, A man impersonated a police officer for ages to force money.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Harassment     | Physical Sexual harassment          | Professor at a university was suspended after it was alleged that he had harrassed female pupils sexually.                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                | Mental harassment                   | According to the 2020 report, Mental harasment is pervasive, particularly against women in corporate sector.                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                | Threatening / blackmailing          | A businessman in Islamabad was blackmailed by a gang with doctored videos, forcing him to pay a large sum before the police arrested gang members.                                                                                                                                       |
|                | Discrimination on any basis         | Due to religion discrmination, a christian sanitary woker was denied promotion.                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Inefficiency   | Absenteeism                         | In rural sindh the education sector has faced issues with absenteeism. Despite being on payroll many teachers rarely show up to their assigned schools leaving students without proper education. Ghost Schools where the building exists but no teaching occurs, are a prevalent issue. |
|                | Non serious attitude towards work   | Clerical staff in government office often show lack of commitment, causing delays and frustration.                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|                | Red Tapism                          | Bureaucratic interruptions and old paperwork in Karachi's construction permit process cause project delays, increased costs, discouraged investments.                                                                                                                                    |

(Source: sub-categories report by PCP)

## Results and Discussion

This study examines the Pakistan Citizen Portal as an effective tool to combat depraved governance in pakistan, and gives a descriptive analysis of statistical data in detailed on corruption and inefficiency, including complaints of financial corruption, fraud, harassment, abuse of power and administrative inefficiency. The analysis had the total numbers of complaints registered, and the number of resolved complaints and the total complaints feedback received from citizens on resolved complaints, the citizen satisfaction/dissatisfaction levels on complaints that are resolved, the total of the feedback received on unresolved complaints, Partially resolved complaints, and Number of complaints still pending.

**Table 3**  
**Total Complaints by Category**

| Category             | Total Complaints | % in Total | Resolved Complaints | % of Resolved Complaints | Resolution Rate (%) |
|----------------------|------------------|------------|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Financial Corruption | 6,362            | 18.8       | 6,053               | 18.6                     | 95.14               |
| Fraud/Forgery        | 7,005            | 20.7       | 6,801               | 20.9                     | 97.09               |
| Harassment           | 2,346            | 6.92       | 2,307               | 7.1                      | 98.34               |
| Inefficiency         | 7,529            | 22.3       | 7,229               | 22.2                     | 96.02               |
| Power Abuse          | 10,554           | 31.2       | 10,206              | 31.3                     | 96.70               |
| Total                | 33,796           | 100.0      | 32,596              | 100.0                    | 96.45               |

(Source: PCP Report 2022-2023)

Here is the data of 2022-2023 complaints received on the Pakistan Citizen Portal through five pockets of Corruption: Financial Corruption, Fraud, harassment, inefficiency, and Power Abuse. Of these, there were the most complaints about Power abuse (10,554 - 31.2%). The lowest number of complaints were of harassment (2346, 6.9%).

Total Complaints Distribution as table 3 shows Power abuse and inefficiency represent more than 53.5% of the total number of complaints while harassment has the smallest distribution of complaints around 6.9%. The distribution of resolved complaints closely mirrors the distribution of complaints received varying by no more than 0.3% in any category. Power Abuse and inefficiency are two main concerning areas which account for highest percentages of both total and resolved complaints. This indicates targeted action is needed to effectively tackle these problems. Harassment: It has fewest complaints, but is dealt with at a proportionate rate, which is a sign of focused efforts.

*Proportional Resolution Efforts:* The resolution rate for the total number of complaints and resolved complaints indicates a proportionate response given the complaints generated.

**Table 4**  
**Year on Year Comparison of Complaint handling 2022 and 2023**

| Indicator                        | 2022   | 2023   | Combined |
|----------------------------------|--------|--------|----------|
| Total Complaints                 | 21,607 | 12,189 | 33,796   |
| Resolved Complaints              | 21,137 | 11,459 | 32,596   |
| Resolution rate (%)              | 97.82  | 94.01  | 96.45    |
| Feedback Received                | 14,055 | 8,508  | 22,563   |
| Feedback response rate (%)       | 65.05  | 69.80  | 66.76    |
| Satisfied                        | 4,013  | 2,239  | 6,252    |
| Satisfaction rate (%)            | 28.55  | 26.3   | 27.71    |
| Feedback Confirmation resolution | 2,715  | 1,417  | 4,132    |
| Resolution rate (%)              | 19.32  | 16.65  | 18.31    |

(Source: Report given by PCP 2022-2023)

Table 4 Dissaggregated the same dataset by year, complaints ratio fell sharply between the two years, from 21,607 in 2022 to 12,189 in 2023, a decline of 43.6%. More importantly every performance measure moved in the same downward direction. The resolution rate fell from 97.82% to 94.01%, the satisfaction rate from 28.55% to 26.32%, and the proportion of feedback confirming that a complaint had actually been resolved from 19.32% to 16.65%. A falling complaint volume accompanied by falling satisfaction is difficult to read as improving performance. It is more consistent with citizens disengaging from a channel they no longer can expect to deliver an outcome.

**Table 5**  
**Analysis Category Wise Breakdown**

| Category             | Total Feedback | Satisfied Complaints | Satisfaction Rate (%) | Unsatisfied Complaints | Unsatisfaction Rate (%) |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Financial Corruption | 41,32          | 1,060                | 25.65                 | 3,072                  | 74.35                   |
| Fraud / Forgery      | 4,032          | 1,254                | 31.10                 | 2,778                  | 68.90                   |
| Harassment           | 1,483          | 501                  | 33.78                 | 982                    | 66.22                   |
| Inefficiency         | 5,771          | 1,566                | 27.14                 | 4,205                  | 72.86                   |
| Power Abuse          | 7,145          | 1,871                | 26.19                 | 5,274                  | 73.81                   |
| Total                | 22563          | 6252                 | 27.71                 | 16,311                 | 72.29                   |

(Source: Report given by PCP 2022-2023)

**Financial corruption:** of the 4132 feedback responses recorded in this category, only 25.65% expressed satisfaction, while almost 75% were dissatisfied. Despite of a high administrative resolution rate, the great majority of complaints did not regard the outcome as satisfactory.

**Fraud:** This category record 1,254 staisfies responses out of 4,032 (31.10%) against 2,778 dissatisfied (68.90%). It is the second most positively rated category. Although satisfaction still falls well below one third.

**Harassment:** At 33.78% cases records in this category the highest satisfaction rate of the five categories, it has the smalledt complaints volume (2,346) and the fewer feedback responses (1,483), so the absolute number of satisfies complainants remains low at 501.

**Inefficiency:** Out of 5,772 feedback responses, 1,566 (27.13%) reported satisfaction and 4,205 (72.87%) reported dissatisfaction.

**Power Abuse:** Despite carrying the largest complaint volume, this category records one of the lowest satisfaction rates: 1871 of 7145 respondents (almost 27%) were satisfied and 5,274 (74%) were not.

**Low Satisfaction Rates:** Across All Categories: Satisfaction ranges narrowly from 25% in financial corruption to 33.78% in harassment, with an overall rate of 27.71%. close to three quarter to the citizens who had submitted feedback that they arent satisfied with handling of their complaints. And this holds even in the categories with the highest administrative resolution rates. Procedural closure of a complaint and citizen perceived resolution are therefore not the same thing.

**Table 6**  
**Resolved, Not Resolved and Partially Resolved**

| Category             | Resolved | %      | Not Resolved | %     | Partially Resolved | %     |
|----------------------|----------|--------|--------------|-------|--------------------|-------|
| Financial Corruption | 684      | 16.55  | 2,996        | 72.51 | 452                | 10.94 |
| Fraud / Forgery      | 777      | 19.27  | 2,755        | 68.33 | 500                | 12.40 |
| Harassment           | 340      | 22.93  | 967          | 65.21 | 176                | 11.87 |
| Inefficiency         | 1,016    | 17.61  | 4,021        | 69.68 | 734                | 12.72 |
| Power Abuse          | 1,315    | 18.401 | 5129         | 71.78 | 701                | 9.81  |
| Total                | 4,132    | 18.31  | 15,868       | 70.33 | 2,563              | 11.36 |

(Source: PCP Report 2022-2023)

Table 6 sets out the resolution status reported by citizens themselves, Across all categories, only 18.31% of feedback were resolved complaints, 70.33% reported that it had not been resolved and 11.36% were partially resolved. Power Abuse and inefficiency

account for the largest absolute numbers of unresolved feedback at 5,129 and 4,021 respectively

This part of the report analyses and discusses data gathered from PCP, and other sources, concluding that digital governance efforts such as PCP can play a important role in ensuring transparency, efficiency and corrupt free governance in Pakistan.

The following section discusses each category in detail:  
**Financial Corruption:** It is the use of public property for personal gain, including bribes, embezzlement and financial fraud. It weakens financial system institutions, damages public trust, and is a barrier to economic development. Categories are as follow:

*Bribery:* giving or receiving of values to affect official duty or public policy.

*Embezzlement:* embezzling funds for personal gain or to take for oneself.

*Financial Fraud:* When someone intentionally deceived in a financial transaction for personal gain.

Statistical data will be drawn to create a visual representation for understanding.

**Table 7**  
**Statistical data in the category of Financial Corruption by PCP**

| Sub- Category                           | value | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Total Complaints                        | 6,362 | -          |
| Resolved Complaints                     | 6,053 | 95.14      |
| Total Feedbacks                         | 4,132 | -          |
| Satisfied                               | 1,060 | 25.65      |
| Unsatisfied                             | 3,072 | 74.35      |
| Feedback with Resolved Status           | 684   | 16.55      |
| Feedback with Not Resolved Status       | 2,996 | 72.51      |
| Feedback with Partial Resolution Status | 452   | 10.94      |

(Source: Report given by PCP 2022-2023)

Table 7 shows that 6,053 of 6,362 financial corruption complaints were closed, a resolution rate of 95.14%. On the Administrative measure the system thereforer appears to be handling the category effectively.

Citizen feedback presents a different picture. Of the 41,32 responses received, only 16.55% confirmed that the complaint had been resolved, 72.51% reported that it had not. And 10.94% reported partial resolution.

**Fraud** is an intentional or improper trick that is designed to ensure unfair or illegal advantage that benefits the perpetrator. The act of altering signatures, documents and any other items with purpose of deception.

***Subcategories include:***

*Fake Degrees/Documents/Credentials:* Production or utilization of falsified educational and professional documents.

*Impersonation:* To pretend to be someone for deceptive purposes.

*Occurrence:* They are phishing, hacking, false ads, and fake documents, which target persons and institutions in various settings.

**Table 8**  
**Statistical Data in Category of Fraud/Forgery**

| Sub categories                          | Values | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Total Complaints                        | 7,005  | -          |
| Resolved Complaints                     | 6,801  | 97.09      |
| Total feedback                          | 4,032  | -          |
| Satisfied                               | 1,254  | 31.10      |
| Unsatisfied                             | 2,778  | 68.90      |
| Feedback with Resolved Status           | 777    | 19.27      |
| Feedback with not Resolved Status       | 2,755  | 68.33      |
| Feedback with Partially Resolved Status | 500    | 12.40      |

(Source: Report given by PCP 2022-2023)

Table 8 record 7,005 fraud and forgery complaints, of which 6,801 were closed a resolution rate of 97.09%, the second highest of the five categories.

Citizen feedback again diverges from this 68.33% of respondents reported that their complaints had been resolved, against 19.27% who confirmed resolution and 12.40% who reported partial resolution.

**Power Abuse:** It occurs when those who have power use it in an inappropriate way to exploit, harm, or to take advantage of others. This can involve unlawful behaviour which may have a serious impact on persons and organizations.

**Place of occurrence:** Workplaces, Government, institutions. It is characterized by favoritism, coercion, intimidation and is not always subject to accountability as a result of the power abuser.

**Table 9**  
**Statistical Data in the Category of Power Abuse**

| Sub Categories                          | Value  | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Total Complaints                        | 10,554 | -          |
| Resolved Complaints                     | 10,206 | 96.70      |
| Total feedback                          | 7,145  | -          |
| Satisfied                               | 1,871  | 26.19      |
| Unsatisfied                             | 5,274  | 73.81      |
| Feedback with Resolved Status           | 1,315  | 18.40      |
| Feedback with not Resolved Status       | 5,129  | 71.78      |
| Feedback with Partially Resolved Status | 701    | 9.81       |

(Source: Report given by PCP 2022-2023)

The Table 9 shows that 10,206 of 10,554 powee abuse complaints were closed, a resolution rate of 96.70%

Feedback for this category records almost 72% of respondents reporting no resolution, 18.40% confirming resolution and 9.81% reporting partial resolution, this is the widest gap between citizen and administrative and it occurs in the category with highest complaint volume.

## Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted conduct which prejudices, offends or intimidates the target. It can be in form of verbal, physical or psychological that happens in workplace, school and public areas. Examples of sub categories can be physical sexual, mental harassment, threats or discrimination for any reason.

Occurrence:

It happens in various settings, including workplaces, schools and online too. It can include a hostile environment, including threats, stalking, derogatory comments and unwanted advances.

**Table 10**  
**Statistical Data in the Category of Harassment**

| Sub Categories                          | Values | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Total Complaints                        | 2,346  | -          |
| Resolved Complaints                     | 2,307  | 98.34      |
| Total feedback                          | 1,483  | -          |
| Satisfied                               | 501    | 33.78      |
| Unsatisfied                             | 982    | 66.22      |
| Feedback with Resolved Status           | 340    | 22.93      |
| Feedback with not Resolved Status       | 967    | 65.21      |
| Feedback with Partially Resolved Status | 176    | 11.87      |

(Source: Report given by PCP 2022-2023)

Table 10 shows 2,307 of 2,346 harassment complaints closed, a resolution rate of 98.34% the highest of the five categories.

Even so 65.21% of feedback reported that the complaint had not been resolved, with 22.93% confirming resolution and 11.87% reporting partial resolved. Harassment nonetheless remains the category with the smallest gap between official closure and citizen reported outcome.

### Inefficiency

It is defined as inability to get desired results in least amount of time, efforts and resources. It results in sub-optimal processes, sub-optimal performance, delays and higher costs due to inability to utilise skills, sub-optimal management, or lack of resources.

**Table 11**  
**Statistical data in the category of inefficiency**

| Sub Categories                          | Value | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Total Complaints                        | 7,529 | -          |
| Resolved Complaints                     | 7,229 | 96.02      |
| Total feedback                          | 5,771 | -          |
| Satisfied                               | 1,566 | 27.14      |
| Unsatisfied                             | 4,205 | 72.86      |
| Feedback with Resolved Status           | 1,016 | 17.61      |
| Feedback with not Resolved Status       | 4,021 | 69.68      |
| Feedback with Partially Resolved Status | 734   | 12.72      |

(Source: Report given by PCP 2022-2023)

Table 11 shows that 7,229 of 7,529 inefficiency complaints were closed, a resolution rate of 96.02%

As in the other categories feedback is considerably less positive: 69.66% of respondents reported no resolution, 17.60% confirmed resolution and 12.71% reported partial resolution.

### Conclusion

This study focused on anecdotal information from the Pakistan Citizen Portal (PCP) for 2022-2023, Analyze governance issues in Pakistan. Study of complaints reveals that almost half (53%) complaints are related to misuse of authority and administrative failures, highlighting mismanagement of authority and administrative laxity/weaknesses as significant issues for citizens. The problems of favoritism, absenteeism and red tape are indicative of systemic institutional failures and structural weaknesses that allow for

misconduct, weak monitoring mechanisms, and misaligned incentives between the government and the citizen.

The central finding concerns the distance between official and experienced outcomes. While 96.45% of complaints are formally recorded as resolved, only 27.71% of citizens who submitted feedback reported satisfaction and only 18.31% confirmed that their complaints had resolved. The gap is widest in power abuse, where almost 72% of respondents reported no resolution against a 96.70% administrative closure rate and narrowest in harassment, which records both the highest closure rate 98.34% and the high satisfaction rate 33.78%, although on the smallest complaints volume. These results are consistent with institutional and principal agent perspectives, they point that persistent information asymmetry between citizens and public agents, and to weak institutional oversight of the terms on which a complaint is declared closed.

In this sense, PCP has improved transparency, accountability and citizen participation, reduced information gaps between citizens and public officials and implemented digital records which have minimized discretionary interactions. These enhancements have led to some improvements in Pakistan's Corruption Perceptions Index, highlighting the importance of strengthening institutions in curbing corruption. But, these challenges will need to be overcome if progress is to be made, and these include: bureaucratic resistance, poor enforcement, lack of access to digital information in rural areas, data incompleteness, false complaints and data integrity problems.

A series of measures are needed to address these challenges, including strengthening accountability systems, the creation of incentives for performance, increased monitoring of officials, more rigorous policy enforcement, better victim support and staff training, and better data verification and management, among others. International experience offers useful lessons in this regard: Indian Central Vigilance Commission, Brazil Fala, BR platform, Estonia's e-Estonia initiative and South Korea e-people system all demonstrate how comprehensive institutional, technological, data reforms can strengthen

## **Recommendations**

Pakistan's bad governance and PCP can be improved by implementing the following recommendations:

**Strengthen Legal Frameworks:** The government should ensure that the PCP platform, where people can register their complaints and also give feedback based on their complaints on behalf of resolution within the time frame. The government also restrict its policy against crimes like corruption and harassment by imposing penalties

**Improved Data Management:** The government should ensure the transparency in data and make sure that the submitted complaints are complete during the registration process, which makes the entered data more reliable and valid. PCP should also publish satisfaction and citizen confirmed resolution figures alongside the resolution rate in its currently reports, since the resolution rate on its own does not reflect the citizen experience. The fall in complaints volume of 43.6% between 2022 and 2023, alongside a fall in satisfaction, needs to be examined rather than read as an improvement in performance.

**Capacity Building and training:** The government should train its employees to make e-service more effective and efficient for people. For that, the government needs to implement training programs that make government employees more skillful on such platforms. This training can be provided through workshops and seminars in public institutions.

**Declarations****Authors' Contribution**

Asma Ishtiaq conceptualised the study, compiled and analysed the Pakistan Citizen Portal data, and prepared the original draft of the manuscript, Dr. karim khan supervised the research, contributed to the theoretical framing and methodology design and critically reviewed the manuscript. Both authors have read and approved the final version.

**Conflicting Interests**

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**Ethical Considerations**

This study addresses exclusively on aggregated, publicly reported statistics given by PCP. No individual complainants were identified, contacted or interviewed and no personal data were accessed in at any stage. The authors have complied with the ethical standards of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics in the conduct and reporting of this research.

**AI Use Statement**

No AI tool was used to generate any data, conduct analysis and produce results, or draft the intellectual content of this article. The authors reviewed and take full responsibility for the integrity and accuracy of the final manuscript.

**Data Availability Statement**

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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