IGNORANCE OF THE BALOCH AND INSURGENCY IN BALOCHISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The prolonged insurgency in Balochistan remains one of the most pressing security challenges in Pakistan. While various factors such as underdevelopment, political exclusion, and foreign interference are often cited. For decades, the Baloch have faced systematic neglect in political representation, development planning, and national policymaking. Their identity, culture, and grievances have often been dismissed or overlooked, resulting in a deep sense of alienation. This ignorance is not just limited to cultural marginalization but extends to their exclusion from major national initiatives such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), federal-level job opportunities, and scholarship programs. The Baloch increasingly feel used for their land and resources while being denied participation in the benefits of development. This continued neglect has shaped a collective psychological response, where many Baloch view resistance as the only way to be seen and heard. It has created fertile ground for insurgent narratives that capitalize on frustration and identity-based exclusion. The more they are ignored, the stronger the reaction becomes—a dynamic deeply embedded in the Baloch psyche. The insurgency, therefore, cannot be understood purely through a security lens; it must be seen as a political and psychological reaction to being made invisible in the national framework. This research is based on qualitative analysis of secondary data, including academic literature and media sources. It also includes insights from interviews with Baloch youth, scholars, and civil society representatives. Lasting peace in Balochistan requires a fundamental shift: from ignorance to engagement, from exclusion to inclusion, and from denial to recognition of the Baloch as equal and respected stakeholders in Pakistan's future. The insurgency is not merely a reaction to economic deprivation, but also a response to the psychological and political invisibility experienced by the Baloch. Only by confronting the ignorance at the heart of the issue can lasting peace and integration be achieved in Balochistan. Keywords: Baloch, Ignorance, Insurgency, Identity, Political alienation, Central policy.

INTRODUCTION

Balochistan, Pakistan, the largest province in land mass, is both at the center of the national strategic and economic agenda and simultaneously marginal in its political, cultural, and developmental agendas. The province lies on an immensely geopolitically strategic location with Iran on the west, Afghanistan to its north, and southern part of the Arabian Sea; the province plays a significant connective role between South Asia, Central Asia, and the Middle East (Harrison, 1981; Khan, 2020). It also hosts the deep-sea Gwadar Port, one of the flagship projects of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and is rich in natural gas, copper, gold and other minerals (Small, 2015). Balochistan is the least developed province in Pakistan, where human development indicators are the lowest and poverty and unemployment are high along with general neglect of infrastructure (Yusuf, 2012). Such a sharp divide between resource abundance and domestic poverty is not merely a reaction to neglect but rather a product of a long-standing trend of what can be considered political, cultural and developmental blindness, or perhaps a kind of systematic alienation that is rooted deep in the connection between the people and the state since Pakistan was established.

The Baloch insurgency is one of the oldest internal conflicts and, despite its significance, the most

misunderstood long-running war simultaneously in official discourse and popular media. Far too often, it is reduced to a security problem solely, an insurgency based either on separatist aspirations, tribal militancy, or foreign interference (Akbar, 2020). Such factors are present, but the security-only perspective ignores the structural preconditions that render insurgency probable and even unavoidable in many situations. The stories of insurgents strike a chord in Balochistan because they represent popularly held grievances: that Balochistan is exploited by the national power to gain resources nationally without proper local compensation; national mega-projects like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor fail to create sufficient local employment opportunities and, as such, benefit the national economy with local job opportunities (Khan, 2020); that the national government does not provide sufficient gas connections to local communities surrounding Sui gas fields that have driven industries and households across the nation for These complaints are not theoretical: they are the experiences of many and built into the fabric of everyday life.

The origins of these grievances go back to the legendary transfer of the princely state of Kalat to Pakistan in 1948, an event most Baloch nationalists refer to as forced (Harrison, 1981). This is an early episode that would define a relationship of mistrust, occasional revolt, and repeated military interventions. The much-debated policy of One Unit of the 1950s that integrated the western provinces of Pakistan into a single administrative entity further created a diluted political profile and authority of Balochistan (Bansal, 2021). Although the province of Balochistan was given all provincial rights in 1970, the federal aspect of resource and security control was perceived to predominate, which narrowed the extent of self-governance (ICG, 2012).

Not only has each wave of insurgency had its immediate causes, but it has also been inspired by the historical memory of marginalization. Politically, Balochistan has only had a nominal representation in the federal institutions of Pakistan. The seats of the National Assembly and the Senate have failed to bring real influence on the decisions that affect the future of the province (Yusuf, 2012). As an example, the federal government and their Chinese partners have taken over the planning and implementation of CPEC projects with fewer contributions of local stakeholders (Small, 2015).

This non-inclusion is not limited to the economic policy arena, but it also extends to other areas of governance such as security and education, where policies are frequently decided in Islamabad with little or no consultation with the provinces. What it gets is a growing disparity between the representation and the reality of power—and it is this disparity that insurgents groups take advantage of by portraying themselves as the actual guardian of the Baloch (Rehman, 2019). Rather culturally, Baloch has been sidelined in the mainstream narrative of Pakistan. The curriculum at school is not much engaged with Baloch history, traditions, or contributions, and the province is most often presented by its geography and resource sectors, circumscribing the population and culture (Akbar, 2020).

On an economic front, the lackluster underdevelopment of the province is an eye-opener considering its endowment of resources. Though Balochistan has a substantial proportion of natural gas in Pakistan and some of the most natural copper and gold reserves worldwide, the people in the region do not usually enjoy the benefits of such resources (Yusuf, 2012). Work in large construction job positions is commonly occupied by others that reside in other provinces, causing a greater sense of alienation (Bansal, 2021).

These trends are instances of what we may term developmental ignorance, lack of design, and implementation of development initiatives that respond to the development needs and wishes of the people in the areas that are the closest to the ground. The aftereffects of this persistent political, cultural, and developmental blindness are not entirely material. They are highly psychological. The feeling of being ignored is a strong source of invisibility to many Baloch, as many have seen their identity sidelined, their needs ignored, and their pleas and grievances dismissed (Harrison, 1981; Rehman, 2019). It is not an invisibility of passivity; there is a psychological need to make their mark and their claim to be recognized. This feeling has served the insurgents well, as they use it to expand the contexts in which the armed struggle becomes a struggle to be seen and heard.

Such acts will not result in sustainable peace unless the aspects of political exclusion and cultural and economic marginalization are resolved. Instead, they can encourage the new forms of resistance and develop the cycle of conflict. Even though decades of instability have received little theoretical

exploration, the involvement of ignorance, as a framework of structural neglect, in perpetuating the insurgency has not been discussed extensively. Most of the available literature has been devoted to either the security dimension of the conflict or to contextualizing the conflict in the geopolitics of Pakistan—its neighbors and world powers' relationship. Although these views are crucial, they threaten to distract attention from the lived experiences of the Baloch people and how systemic neglect is forming their viewpoints and making their decisions.

This paper aims to fill this gap through exploring this insurgency within the framework of political, cultural, and developmental ignorance based on qualitative research on secondary resources and primary with Baloch in province. This research seeks to transform the discourse surrounding security management into the discourse of political recognition and inclusion by focusing on the experience and point of view of the Baloch themselves. It contends that the insurgency is not only a response against economic deprivation but, even more importantly, a response to its lack of visibility in psychology and the politics of its national identity in Balochistan. Peace in Balochistan will only ever be achieved by an extreme reversal of its state policy: by ignorance being replaced by involvement, by exclusion by inclusion, and by denial being replaced by acceptance of the Baloch as an equal and respected stakeholder in the future of Pakistan. It is only through addressing the ignorance that fuels the problem that the endless insurgency can be overcome, allowing true integration and stability.

Historical and Current Context of the Baloch Insurgency

Phase I (1948–1950): The Post-Accession Rupture

The early stage of the insurgency was a result of the integration of the princely state of Kalat in Pakistan that occurred in March 1948. Although the Khan of Kalat signed the instrument of accession, some of the Baloch and nationalists considered the whole procedure as forceful, which resulted in an armed initiative organized by the brother of the Khan, Prince Abdul Karim (Harrison, 1981).

The complaint did not just lie in the principles of sovereignty but also in the anticipations that the Baloch political identity will be absorbed by a centralized govt that does not offer any significant autonomy. This practical story also sowed the seeds

of a lasting distrust that became characteristic of center-periphery relations moving forward. Prince Abdul Karim entered Afghanistan in search of allies and asylum, and it came as a clear early indicator of how the Baloch turmoil was going to interact with the regional politics (Harrison, 1981).

It is important to note that despite the size of the insurgence and the inferior equipment, the symbolic significance of the revolt was well-founded: the insistence on the lack of legitimacy of accession and the deprivation of self-determination. With mobility and tribal loyalties, the insurgents were characterized by political ambiguity displayed during the early post-Partition years, which operated on rugged territories (Wirsing, 2008). Pakistan reacted to it as a robust security policy, and it prioritized quick, brutal suppression instead of any dialogue (International Crisis Group [ICG], 2012).

Without much outside assistance (or a wide tribal alliance), the forces of Abdul Karim were eventually overpowered. The failure of his attempt did not put forward the end of the chapter, but it normalized the behavior that any grievance would be addressed by use of force and not through collaborative talk. The subsequent political alienation was increased by its wake. Even moderate Baloch leaders learned the lesson that there was little reward in trying to work with the center and there was only the possibility of retributive action in going against the center. The episode was recalled as a wrong that also happened first, or a wrong that was expounded upon, in oral histories and in nationalist narratives (Harrison, 1981).

Such memory politics prolonged the life of the insurgent frame onto a duration that was much larger than the material extent of the pioneering uprising. Larger analyses of this insurgency take it to be of little strategic importance and of some tactical importance. It imbibed a set of repertoires, cross-border refuge, irregular warfare, and tribal networking, replicated in subsequent conflicts. It further provided the rationale of the moralism of the resistance: the demands to be recognized and enjoy autonomy could not be divorced from dignity and status in the federation (Wirsing, 2008).

Phase II (1958–1960): The One Unit Backlash and Nauroz Khan's Revolt

The second uprising was caused by the establishment of One Unit scheme in 1955 when West Pakistan was united into a single administrative unit, with Balochistan losing political

power even more (Bansal, 2021). This seemed to many tribal leaders and nationalists an institutionalized destruction of identity and power. As early as 1958 Nawab Nauroz Khan led armed opposition, presenting it as a safeguard of self-rule and other perquisites inside the Khanate (Wirsing, 2008).

This movement by Nauroz Khan also reflected the changes in palace politics to tribal led insurgency. The interior districts were already the focus of guerrilla operations in the form of ambushes and outpost harassment, revealing the flimsiness of the state presence (Bansal, 2021). The revolt, however, had limited reach since it was short in strategy and foreign sponsors. Martial law and aggressive military operation undermined control that the insurgents had on territory.

This altered dramatically with the reported amnesty offer of around the surrender, which was then followed by the arrest and treason trial and execution of a few of the friends of Nauroz Khan (Harrison, 1981). This was a betrayal parable among the Baloch communities, and has a permanent impact on trust on negotiated solutions. It went into the memory of the masses as evidence that any negotiations with Islamabad could be overturned. A political settlement was not identical with state victory. The One Unit system held out until early 1960s and nationalist rhetoric grew even more focused. Imbalance of federal power and provincial (in terms of resources, language policy and public investment) remained a framework of grievances (Bansal, 2021; ICG, 2012).

More tactically, this insurgency solidified the coercive approach of the central and hastened the process of militarizing center -Baloch relations. In the case of insurgents, it highlighted the importance of organizational consolidation, expansion of tribal coalitions of tribes, and cross-border connections, factors that would resurface later in the post-invasion course of action (Wirsing, 2008).

Phase III (1962–1969): The Parari Campaign and Guerrilla Modernity

The third insurgency is particularly linked to Sher Mohammad Marri and the Parari movement that became acclimated to the modern guerrilla war in the Marri-Bugti hills and Jhalawan area (Bansal, 2021). Highlighting mobility and focused targeting of infrastructure and state outposts, the campaign expanded the insurgent repertoire as compared to more traditional tribal warfare. Organizational

discipline was contributed by left-wing-based influences, connections in Kabul, and anti-centralization politics (Wirsing, 2008). The battles continued well into the 1960s, and federal forces were stressed in lightly controlled territories (Harrison, 1981).

Although the intensity of the conflict varied, the insurgency usurped the state in the story of inevitability and control. A localist demand eventually became connected to natural resource sovereignty and cultural defense as the Baloch cause became based more and more on sovereign control of natural resources and cultural preservation—a harbinger of future rhetoric regarding gas, minerals, and seaport rights (Bansal, 2021). This was a time that also brought the generation of new activists—students, urban professionals, and diaspora in the country—forward to a future of framing Balochistan, not as a fringe backwater, but as a political community that warrants constitutional status (ICG, 2012).

The combination of guerrilla tactics and political messages provided increased insurgent legitimacy to non-combatants. Towards the end of the decade, the attrition, insufficient outside sponsoring, and expense of sustained insurgency had given way to a political reform. Then, in 1970, Balochistan was offered a completely provincial status by the government, which partially solved constitutional demands, but the disputes over control of resources and security policy remained unsolved (Harrison, 1981). At this stage, a more modern insurgent doctrine was promoted, and the nexus of resources and rights was ingrained into Baloch politics. The insurgents had a lesson that the only way to survive is to be even more organized and to have a political wing to keep momentum going beyond full-blown fighting (Wirsing, 2008).

Phase IV (1973–1977): Dismissal, War, and the Deepening of Mistrust

When the Balochistan-elected National Awami Party (NAP) government was dismissed by the Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1973, it led to the largest and most fatal insurgency to date (Harrison, 1981). Islamabad explained the action as necessary to allow national security due to supposed collusion with foreign powers, whereas Baloch leaders accused it of being an attack on federalism. The mobilization in the Marri, Mengal, and Bugti regions was much intensified, bringing about a prolonged rural-based insurrection (Bansal, 2021).

The conflict escalated to a series of multi-year combats, air strikes, major military sweeps, and counter-guerrilla war. It is estimated thousands of combatants were killed, and civilians experienced major displacement and property destruction (ICG, 2012). The military focus on decisive force was due to the fact that negotiation is a good reward for rebellion, and the Baloch cadres believed that only armed fights compelled the state to pay attention to their needs (Wirsing, 2008).

Geopolitics in the region contributed. The Iranian Shah allegedly provided helicopters and assistance to Pakistan in order to curb the spread of unrest to Iranian Balochistan (Harrison, 1981). Threat perceptions in Islamabad were influenced by Afghan involvement and Cold War alignments broadly in a regionally based context of security. Through the repression, attrition, and national political rupture that saw off Bhutto by 1977, scope was offered that led to de-escalation and amnesty as well. However, the post-conflict reforms did little, and fundamental grievances regarding representation, language rights, and fair sharing of resources were not addressed (Bansal, 2021). The 1973-77 conflict was in many ways the model of coercion rather than consent to Baloch. The lack of a lasting political agreement guaranteed that suspicion remained solidified and the circumstances for miniature warfare were left untouched (Harrison, 1981).

Phase V (2003–Present): Resource Politics, CPEC, and an Evolving Insurgent Ecosystem

Insurgency in the province did revive after a relative calm in the early 2000s in response to resource control disputes, mega-projects (like Gwadar Port), and the growing military presence in the province . Assassination of Nawab Akbar Bugti in 2006 turned into a unification point as all grievances were centered around dignity, deprivation, and dangers of security-centred model of governance (ICG, 2012). The emergence of new groups Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), Baloch Republican Army (BRA) and Baloch Liberation Front (BLF) perfected recruitment, propaganda and targeting tactics.

Since 2015, CPEC increased the strategic layers, as well as the symbolism. The insurgents would go after Chinese interests and infrastructure to increase the expenses to the state and the foreign investors (Small, 2015). The 2019 attack against the Pearl Continental Hotel in Gwadar emphasized the capabilities to attack sites of symbolic value associated with foreign investment.

A strong tactical change occurred in April 2022, when the BLA Majeed Brigade carried out a female suicide car bomb attack in Karachi University at the Confucius Institute, which killed 3 Chinese scholastics, and a Pakistani chauffeur (Rehman, 2022). This expanded the insurgent scope and gave an indication of the desire to diversify the organization membership and target sets.

Violence further intensified in 2024-2025, with major attacks that had an impact in 2025 against Chinese nationals in the Dasu hydropower project, as well as the hijacking of the Jaffar Express in March 2025 by BLA which led to dozens of killings, massive hostage taking (Reuters, 2025). These events left many observers noting that the only security approach was not enough.

The contemporary insurgency would not be a chain of command as one would think of it but a splintered ecosystem. Factions divide up and re-form; strategies change; and grievances are ever updated through a sense of exclusion in political representation, resource advantages and cultural validation. In the absence of a plausible political conciliatory agreement, the use of force will not bring lasting peace (Bansal, 2021; ICG, 2012).

Research Problem Statement

Ignorance with regard to Balochistan does not merely mean the lack of awareness but an intentional or institutionalized lack of concern towards the political, cultural, and developmental demands of Baloch. At the political level, this negligence translates into a persistent lack of representation of Baloch in policy-setting and decision-making processes at the national level, wherein strategic and policy decisions may be made with little or no participation by the province.

At a cultural level, such neglect can be seen in the marginalization of Baloch history, language, and customs in the national discourse of Pakistan as a whole, leading to a low profile of Baloch identity in media and educational and official discourse.

It comes in developmental terms when there was unjust allocation of resources and development initiatives in which mega-developments and extraction of natural resources in Balochistan add so much to the national economy, which is not proportionate to the local population in terms of employment, infrastructure, and other benefits to the people, like schools, roads, etc. Related to this is the disconnect between the policy of the state and the recognition of Baloch identity that has been in

existence since the state's agreement into the Pakistani federation.

Top-down planning has dominated federal and provincial relations of the large-scale initiatives; activities of negotiating and implementing the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and exploitation of Sui gas fields are frequently negotiated and executed without practical consultation with an affected community or their democratic voices. This lack of connection supports the view that the province is treated as a land with the location and the resources rather than its people. The rhetoric of development regularly falls short of incorporating the generation of Baloch cultural heritage, political independence, or a fair share of the economic process, resulting in an increasing rift between the apparent objectives of the central government and the desires of the locals.

This division, structural ignorance, and consistent policy-identity gap have created a feeling of political alienation and psychological invisibility for many Baloch. In this context, insurgent is attractively echoed since they describe grievances that are ingrained in lived experience. To many, resistance becomes a means of resisting the forces of systemic neglect and fighting to gain a sense of presence and recognition.

Consequently, the Balochistan insurgency cannot be considered within the security framework alone; it has to be interpreted as applying an adverse reaction to the several decades of non-representation in politics, culture, jobs and development through exclusion. To resolve this issue, there must be a paradigm policy change, which is to shift ignorance to involvement, exclusion to inclusion, and denial to acceptance to recognize the Baloch as a stakeholder in the future of Pakistan through an equal and respectful perspective.

1. Objectives of the Study

o To explore how ignorance fuels insurgency.
o To examine the political, psychological, and socio-economic dimensions.

Research Questions

o How does political and cultural ignorance contribute to the insurgency?
o What role does identity-based exclusion play in escalating tensions?

The Concept of Ignorance in the Baloch Context
Cultural Marginalization

The cultural aspect of the ignorance in Balochistan lies in systematic disparagement of Baloch identity, language, and heritage in the Pakistani nationhood. Frames in education, media, and the political discourse have been promoting one dominant idea of the nation, especially Punjab and Urdu-related national identity since gaining independence, and not representing the historical presence of Baloch, their contribution to the culture or impacting the reality (ICG, 2012). In education, school curricula usually restrict the study of Baloch history into some minor geographical mentions without mentioning the great history of Baloch literary cultures, tribal systems, and their contribution to the political developments of the region (Khan, 2020).

The same is emulated by the media. National media generally represent Balochistan in a limited capacity where emphasis is given to insurgency, violence and underdevelopment with consequent little or no coverage of cultural attainments and lives of projects like pennies of everyday (Harrison, 1981). This handpicked visibility furthers the stereotype and depicts the province as an irrevocable problem area and does not show the culturally rich province with diverse traditions and histories.

Cultural integration in the province is also fenced by the fact that the mainstream literature and film do not represent it. Baloch characters are then limited in their appearance and usually play out roles dependent on a stereotype of rebellion or tribalism, rather than non-complex multidimensional characters (Bansal, 2021). These portrayals degrade the social distance between Balochistan and the nation.

Such tropes of disregard and misrepresentation have over time led to a shared feeling that the Baloch culture is devalued and even under threat. This leads to defensive cultural nationalism; where ensuring the form of language, practice and historical accounts serves as resistance (Wirsing, 2008). Therefore, it is not merely a question of omission when it comes to the cultural marginalization in Balochistan, but a matter of structure within the Pakistani fundamental governance and national identity formation

Political Alienation

The root cause of political alienation among people in Balochistan lies in the fact that the province has always been underrepresented in the federal institutions of Pakistan and decision-making processes. In spite of Balochistan comprising 44

percent of the land area of Pakistan, it also boasts the least population of all the provinces, thus the province will be allocated fewer seats in the national assembly (Government of Pakistan, 2023). Although proportional representation rests on population numbers, the geopolitical value and developmental requirements of the province are unique making them deserve higher weight in terms of federal decision-making, a self-restraining issue that has not been well met (Harrison, 1981).

Provincial leaders have also been complaining that what they already get is mostly symbolic: most decisions affecting development, security, and allocation of resources were taken in Islamabad without true provincial input. As an illustration, the development and implementation of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) plans in Balochistan have been dominated by federal government and Chinese interests with little involvement of the local people or their elected officials (Small, 2015).

Political mistrust has also been deep rooted by the historical rejection of elected provincial governments. Of note, the dismissal of National Awami Party-led government in 1973 caused one of the bloodiest uprisings ever witnessed in the history of Pakistan (Wirsing, 2008). These interventions have strengthened the impression that the federal administration would not tolerate dissent, and would not permit true provincial autonomy.

When the elected officials of Balochistan seek to contribute to national policy effectively, they do often find themselves inhibited as the larger provinces dominate federal politics. This discrepancy is worsened by the fact that resource control is centralized with the federal government having control over most of the resources and with revenue of provincial resources managed centrally (ICG, 2012). Consequently, Baloch lawmakers have less to leverage access to the development projects or changes in policies that would directly benefit their constituencies.

Most Baloch politicians claim that the mere representation of Baloch in the federal institutions does not serve any purpose of justice, since political representation without any policy role can be viewed as non-actualization. This impression destroys confidence in parliamentary politics and it pushes certain strata of the population towards the extra-parliamentary movement or even an insurgency.

Weak local levels of governance, poor representation within bureaucratic institutions, and lack of serious political education at grassroots strengthen political alienation at the very lower levels. Such elements result in a weak connection between the citizens and the state, limiting the chances of engaging in civic life.

Overall, structural underrepresentation, a centralized decision-making, and a history of political interventions characterized by the omission of consensus-building have led to political alienation in Balochistan. This estrangement catalyzes a vicious cycle of mistrust, which undermines the hopes of finding solutions to the grievances of the province through negotiation.

Economic Exclusion

The economic marginalization of Balochistan is a reality that is as a result of the national development policies focusing on the national rather than local needs. Pakistan is so rich in resources and yet, it is the least developed in terms of the Human Development Index (HDI) indicators in the whole country (Government of Pakistan, 2023). The paradox becomes most evident in the exploitation of the Sui gas fields, which provided a large part of the energy in Pakistan over the decades and yet majority places in Balochistan remain without the gas supply (Bansal, 2021).

Mega-projects such as China Pakistan Economic corridor (CPEC) have been worn as the life changing projects to the Balochistan however, there is little development benefit to the locals (Small, 2015). Although CPEC entails massive development of infrastructure in the province e.g., construction of highways to connect Gwadar to the rest of Pakistan, similar developments are sometimes in transit and trade roles as opposed to greasing local socio-economic interests. Such projects have often been plagued by the hiring of out-of-province workers due to the high number of employment opportunities created by such projects, fueling the perceptions of marginalization (ICG, 2012).

Major efforts such as scholarship programs and institutional and federal-level job quotas meant to bring Baloch youth into national institutions have been accused of lacking in outreach and execution. Most rural youth are not aware of those opportunities and even upon application, the lack of preparatory materials creates a failed competition due to systemic issues (Khan, 2020).

Its rural economy, dominated by livestock, agricultural and miner small-scale mining, is chronically underinvested. Low infrastructural

development, restricted accessibility to markets and absence of technical assistance hamper productivity to continue to engender high poverty levels (Bansal, 2021).

The sharing of revenue arrangements in the Pakistani constitution has been a dispute. Despite the 18th Amendment and the National Finance Commission (NFC) award increasing the ratio of federal revenues shared with the provinces, those opposed to the ratio hold that the distribution formula continues to discriminate against Balochistan compared to its resource contribution and needs (ICG, 2012).

It goes into the economy where basic necessities like health care, education and clean water are not included. Balochistan is among the lowest in terms of literacy and enrollment in school, which indicates decades of under-prioritizing of the social sector throughout the country (Government of Pakistan, 2023).

More resentment is created locally as other provinces or foreign stakeholders seem to be the priority of previous development projects in Balochistan. This sight has been taken advantage by political insurgency groups who interpret economic frustrations as a sign of systematic exploitation

Psychological Invisibility

Psychological invisibility is an inner perception by many Baloch that they are invisible and without voice in the national set-up of Pakistan. It is an accumulative outcome of cultural marginalization, political alienation and economic push and therefore, creates an atmosphere of feeling of being left behind in the national project (Harrison, 1981). To most Baloch observers, the policies of the state make it seem as though the state is aware of the region of resource-rich land and the strategic position of the province without having any considerations of the needs and wants of the people. The feeling is enhanced by the fact that Baloch voices do not feature in national or state venues that control the media, policy discussions and state symbols (ICG, 2012). Lack of adequate voice of the Baloch translates to a psychological stratification between the province and the rest of the country.

That invisibility over decades has led to a defensive form of identity politics, in which championing Baloch identity is positioned as a kind of political resistance (Bansal, 2021). To oppose the obliteration, cultural revival movements, literary associations and youth groups have established themselves, yet these attempts cover under a host of suspicion and restrictions by the state and in turn aggravate alienation.

Insurgents have successfully exploited this trend and formulated armed struggle as not only political or economic conflict but also an effort to seek recognition and dignity (Wirsing, 2008). This framing is very appealing to younger generations that were raised upon exposure to very little in terms of narratives of inclusion.

There is also inter-provincial relationship being affected by psychological invisibility. A large number of Baloch believe that they are socially alienated by other Pakistanis as they sense that other Pakistani people are unaware and care less about their plight (Khan, 2020). Such social disconnect intensifies political and economic differences leading to even harder reconciliation.

The consequences of this invisibility in the long term are devastating. It creates mistrust of national institutions, it weakens the feeling of collective citizenship and maintains the discourses of separateness (Harrison, 1981). Such stories in their turn facilitate mobilization by the political entrepreneurs and insurgent leaders on the basis of identity-based grievances. This is not a matter of infrastructure, not a question of employment; it is an effort that needs to be undertaken seriously to insert the voices, history and identity of the Baloch within the national narrative of Pakistan (ICG, 2012). Devoid of this, even the development programs with the noblest intentions are bound to end up as being perceived as being forced and not being related to the context of the place.

To sum up, the psychological invisibility is a symptom and a result of the broader ignorance pattern in Balochistan, and a reversal of consequences through recognition, representation, and respect needs to be the priority of any long-term peace strategy.

Theoretical Framework
Relative Deprivation Theory

The Relative Deprivation Theory, first developed by Ted Robert Gurr (1970) assumes that discontent and collective violence is a result of the perceived gap between the expectations and actual living conditions of people. In this model, there is no absolute deprivation but rather relational and individuals compare their conditions to some standard, this may be other communities, previous conditions by the people themselves or what they

think they can achieve with the available resources. The critical aspect that is made in this theory is that injustice may be an equally important cause of unrest, as material reality.

Relative deprivation occurs in the province of Balochistan in the form of the contrast between resource wealth possessed by it and its socio-economic indicators. The Sui gas fields provide Pakistan with energy since 1950s, but most communities around the gas fields are still deprived of household gas connection (Bansal, 2021). That is the expectation based on what is fair as well as constitutional rights that the people of the Baloch would have proportional benefit of wealth that is created on their province. With the failure to match these expectations, resentment further fuels the emotions and leads to the feeling of grievance.

Perceptions have been enhanced by mega-projects such as China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Federal and provincial governments tend to represent CPEC as something that can make a difference to Balochistan, stating that the project will provide employment opportunities, stimulate the development of infrastructure, and improve connectivity points (Small, 2015). Nevertheless, a lot of neighbors complain that locals receive less job opportunities, infrastructure is aimed at strategic transportation but not locals, and Baloch is not involved in decision-making. That perceived mismatch between the promised and actual benefits augments the view that something is being developed around them and not necessarily on or to them.

Baloch feels relative deprivation through inter-provincial comparisons. Balochistan contributes much to national economy; however, people of Punjab or Sindh usually get better access to education, health services, and workplaces (ICG, 2012). This contrasting design intensifies the feeling of marginalization since the citizens of Baloch observe the other areas enjoy the fruits of government that they think is their due because they had been the equal part of the federation.

Relational deprivation is neither an economic nor purely economic issue: it goes all the way to political representation. The low power of Baloch representation in the national policy making as well the habit of dismissing provincial governments is a signal that political involvement does not bring about any significant change (Wirsing, 2008). Political aspect deepens or adds to economic

resentment and feeling of deprivation further becomes multidimensional.

Finally, the Relative Deprivation Theory provides a perspective on how, despite the abundant resources of a perfectly well-off province, underdevelopment and evolution constituting an exclusionary experience may be considered as the source of insurgency. Baloch insurgency is not an issue of secession or ideology alone, it is closely related to the psychological, material gap between what is expected and what has to be endured.

Structural Violence Theory

The Theory of Structural Violence, presented by Johan Galtung (1969), explains the fortification of the social organization and social institutions that do harm to people systematically, and limit their capability to fulfill their potential or to get access to the level of requires needs. Structural violence, in contrast to direct violence is not discrete or physical and thus, easier to conceal and to go unnoticed by those keeping the advantages of violence.

Structural violence in Balochistan could be seen in the poor health and education provisions, absence of infrastructures, underdevelopment and political exclusion. They are not some random failures but the consequences of the long-term patters of governance that considers the interests of more powerful regions and groups of greater importance than the needs of the Baloch population (ICG, 2012). To illustrate, being one of the most revenue-generating provinces in the country the Balochistan province stands at the bottom of Pakistan in terms of literacy rates, maternal health indicators as well as per capita income.

The unequal flow of resources is manifested also in the concept of structural violence. The mineral, gas resources, together with coastal infrastructure of the province are controlled in such a way that national and corporate profits are obtained but local communities experience natural resource degradation, forced removal, and insignificant economic gains (Small, 2015). This social relegation to not enjoy the fruits of local resources allows to maintain dependency and poverty.

Structural violence also occurs culturally through central oppression or even ignorance of Baloch languages, history, and traditions in schools and the mainstream media. Promoting cultural transmission by giving support to the languages of Balochi and Brahui is not only restricted by the current lack of institutional support, it also significantly decreases

the chances of employment and access to education of the first-language speakers of these languages (Khan, 2020).

On the political front, structural violence works by the means of law and administration practices that concentrate power in Islamabad. Despite the 18th Amendment to the Constitution having given more power back to the provinces, practically, federal rights remain predominant in major areas like energy amongst others (Bansal, 2021). This constrains the capacity of Balochistan to make some independent decisions, which have the capacity to respond to the concerns of locals.

Structural violence is also brought on by security policies. Military interventions that touch on areas under insurgency tend to limit the activities, ruin livelihoods, and cause crackdowns or displacement of the civilians. Although this is necessitated by the state as a measure to ensure national security, this has far reached social and economic effects on communities affected who become increasingly mistrustful (Wirsing, 2008).

The psychological environment where insurgency comes up is formed by structural violence. This means the state can be perceived to be hostile or indifferent to the well-being of communities when it continuously neglects their concerns and marginalizes them. Such perception, in its turn, sharpens the lack of confidence in peaceful political solutions, and it enhances responsiveness to insurgent narratives (Harrison, 1981).

It is the significant characteristic of the structural violence that sometimes it may be undetected by other people. Even others in other regions in Pakistan may not realize how deprived Balochistan is and may assume that in the national development process all the regions are receiving an equal share of the same. This invisibility makes structural violence to go on without exerting much pressure among the members of society to change (ICG, 2012).

Lastly, the solution to structural violence in Balochistan does not only call for an economic investment, but also necessitates institutional change that includes redistribution of power, defending the rights of culture, and collaborating with local stakeholders to co-design the policies of development. Failure to address these underlying forces, even large development projects are prone to recreating the same inequalities that violently survive conflict.

Linking Ignorance to Insurgency
The Ignorance–Resistance Cycle

This cycle has been institutionalized in the politics of the province over decades. Indifference here is not a matter of ignorance but a systemic factor in policymaking since the requirement and ambition of the Baloch have always been ignored in the national policies (ICG, 2012).

The refusal to grant substantial provincial autonomy as well as the failure to include them in resource benefits conveys a message that the govt treats province and the resources as more important than people themselves. This is a cause of alienation where the insurgency appears like an acceptable form of political expression to some members of the population. The recruitment of insurgents becomes a simple job as grievances increasingly intensify.

In circumstances when poverty, unemployment, and political marginalization become a way of life, youth are more inclined to consider insurgent organizations as upholders of their rights (Bansal, 2021). Such groups not only provide them with a political cause but also a source of belonging and dignity that many people do not feel they have in their relationship with the state. The cycle does not stop; thus, security operations might lead to only short-term suppression but not to lasting peace without challenging the main sources of exclusion, i.e., political inclusion, equitable resource allocation, and cultural recognition (Wirsing, 2008). The only way to end the cycle is to revert ignorance with active participation and inclusion.

Role of Insurgent Narratives

In the province of Balochistan, the insurgent organizations have been very successful in the process of organizing the province's grievances into storylines that are powerful enough to create followership. The exploitation of resources, political exclusion, and cultural marginalization are the themes of these stories that mostly characterize the Baloch as victims of an internal colonial system (Hechter, 1975). Insurgent leaders may target a broad audience in the province by identifying their needs with largely experienced forms of neglect.

The framing of mega-projects such as CPEC as signs of exploitation and not development is one of the prime components of these stories. The propaganda of insurgents points out the fact that these projects are to the advantage of outsiders, be it other provinces or external investors, despite seemingly having no benefit to the locals in terms of jobs,

training, or participation in decision-making processes (Small, 2015). This strengthens the feeling that economic initiatives are a means of exploitation, not empowerment. Other historical grievances are also used in insurgent messaging. Allusions are made to the disputed accession of the Kalat State in 1948, the removal of the 1973 provincial government, and the extensive militarization of the province in an attempt to present the conflict as a further struggle to achieve autonomy and dignity (Harrison, 1981).

Such continuity of the past lends additional weight to the emotional appeal of the insurgent movement. Insurgent groups appeal to material and psychological grievances by making themselves appear the safeguards of Baloch rights and culture. Such a position would not only facilitate the recruitment process, but it also creates the impression of moral authority for their cause that would be difficult to counter with the state narratives in most of the local communities (Bansal, 2021).

Perception vs. Reality

The defining factor in understanding the relationship between ignorance and insurgency is the discrepancy between the state discourses and the lived experience of Baloch people. On the side of the federal government, the unrest in Balochistan is usually presented as a security issue brought out by separatist militancy and foreign interference (ICG, 2012).

This framing prioritizes interventions, counterinsurgency activities, and economic development schemes. But according to the view of major populations in Balochistan, the real situation is that these solutions do not always solve the source of their dissatisfaction structurally. It has been found that development projects are perceived as unwelcome (imposed) as opposed to inclusive, and security operations are perceived as heavy-handed, which has caused civilian casualties, enforced disappearances, and movement restrictions (Wirsing, 2008).

These kinds of experiences undermine faith in state institutions and confirm insurgent insinuations of structural oppression. The existing gap in perception is further enhanced by Balochistan's underrepresented coverage in the national media. Reporting avoids minimum coverage of peaceful civic activism, local innovations, or thriving communities of locals building their own development (Khan, 2020). Such partial representation evinces a sense of invisibility and misrepresentation among the Baloch.

To eliminate this perception-reality gap, peacebuilding is necessary. As long as the Baloch experiences are not recognized and solutions are not formulated through the inclusion of the Baloch in the policymaking process, the state policies will remain a general negation or exploitation that perpetuates the same environment that makes the consideration of insurgency attractive to some members of society (Bansal, 2021).

Methodology

This study follows a qualitative and exploratory design that seeks to interpret how political, cultural, and developmental ignorance contribute to the continued insurgency in Balochistan through a multidimensional interaction process. Such a method makes possible a detailed exploration of lived experiences, perceptions, and descriptions that such studies do not usually examine.

The study will focus on open-ended inquiry and contextual interpretation to reveal how the process of exclusion has subtle ways of determining collective identities and resistance. Data collection makes use of both secondary and primary sources. The secondary sources are peer-reviewed academic articles and literature, policy reports and papers, reports on human rights, and even trustworthy media discourse to provide a macro-level insight into the historical, political, and economic aspects of the conflict.

The primary information is the primary data, through semi-structured interviews with Baloch youth, scholars, and politicians, giving firsthand information on the theme of marginalization, identity politics, and reaction to the state policies. Data analysis is conducted using thematic analysis, which allows identifying any common patterns in grievances, perceptions, and narratives of both sets of data. Such a process contributes to bridging structural conditions with individual and collective responses to make the findings consolidated with both substantive thought and local knowledge.

Findings and Analysis

Table No 1: Demography of the Study (300 Respondents)

Category	Breakdown	Number of Respondents	Relevance to Study
Geographic Distribution	Quetta (45), Gwadar (30), Turbat/Keich (35), Khuzdar (30), Dera Bugti (28), Panjgur (25), Kharan (22), Mastung (20), Awaran (18), Lasbela (20), Zhob (15), Washuk (12)	300	Ensures proportional coverage of urban centers, rural regions, and insurgency hotspots.
Gender Composition	Male (210), Female (90)	300	Reflects male-dominated public sphere but includes significant female perspectives.
Age Range	18–29 years (90), 30–44 years (120), 45–60 years (90)	300	Balances youth perspectives with mid-career and older generational insights.
Educational Background	University students (75), Lecturers/Academics (40), Journalists (35), NGO workers (50), Tribal elders (50), Other educated professionals (50)	300	Combines academic, policy, and grassroots viewpoints on governance and exclusion.
Socio-Economic Status	Low-income rural residents (160), Middle-class urban participants (110), Upper-middle class professionals (30)	300	Allows comparison between directly impacted communities and relatively advantaged groups.
Occupational Roles	Students (75), Educators (40), Civil society activists (50), Community leaders (35), Journalists (35), Traders/business owners (30), Farmers/fisherfolk (35)	300	Captures a range of actors influencing and experiencing political, cultural, and economic exclusion.

Explanation

This table integrates all demographic sectors for the study's 300 respondents. The geographic spread ensures the inclusion of voices from districts that are politically strategic (Quetta, Gwadar, Turbat), resource-rich (Dera Bugti, Lasbela), conflict-prone (Awaran, Panjgur), and socio-economically neglected (Kharan, Washuk).

Gender distribution reflects Balochistan's male-dominated political environment while deliberately amplifying women's perspectives through targeted inclusion of female academics, activists, and NGO workers.

The age structure is balanced, with equal weight given to young adults (experiencing current insurgency narratives), middle-aged respondents (actively engaged in the workforce and politics), and older generations (carriers of historical memory).

Educational backgrounds and occupational roles were chosen to capture a diversity of knowledge sources—from formal academia to traditional tribal authority—ensuring that the findings are representative of both policy discourse and community-level realities.

The socio-economic profile shows a heavier representation of low-income rural communities, reflecting their higher vulnerability to economic exclusion and their direct experience with resource exploitation and mega-project displacement. This creates a foundation for analyzing how economic marginalization intersects with political and cultural ignorance in fueling insurgency.

Table 2 — Ignorance as a Driver of Insurgency in Balochistan (n = 300)

Driver of Ignorance	Field Indicators (from interviews & notes)	Respondents (n)	% of Total	Districts Citing Most Often
Centralized decision-making / low autonomy	Key decisions taken in Islamabad; limited role of provincial assembly; opaque inter-govt coordination	234	78%	Quetta, Khuzdar, Turbat (Keich)
Cultural invisibility / identity neglect	Baloch history absent in curricula; limited media portrayal beyond "security"; weak support for Balochi/Brahui	225	75%	Turbat (Keich), Panjgur, Quetta
CPEC job exclusion / outsider hiring	Preference for non-local labor; limited skill pipelines for Baloch youth	246	82%	Gwadar, Lasbela, Turbat (Keich)
Development without local consultation	Schemes designed off-site; token meetings; weak community buy-in	195	65%	Dera Bugti, Awaran, Kharan
Underrepresentation in federal policy for a	Minimal Baloch presence in ministries, regulatory bodies, apex committees	210	70%	Quetta, Mastung, Zhob
Security-first approach over dialogue	Frequent operations; restricted civic space; episodic blackouts	204	68%	Awaran, Mastung, Panjgur
Displacement without adequate compensation	Fisherfolk relocation; land acquisition disputes; weak grievance redress	168	56%	Gwadar, Dera Bugti, Lasbela
Environmental neglect / resource damage	Water stress around worksites; dust/noise; degraded livelihoods (fishing, grazing)	180	60%	Gwadar, Kharan, Washuk
Historical grievances / trust deficit	Memories of dismissals & operations; skepticism toward "packages" and amnesties	216	72%	Dera Bugti, Turbat (Keich), Panjgur

Analysis

Reported experiences converge on a structural pattern of exclusion, rather than isolated administrative lapses. The strongest signal is economic/administrative exclusion around CPEC employment (82%), closely followed by centralized decision-making (78%) and historic trust deficits (72%). Together, these factors map onto the study's objective—exploring how ignorance fuels insurgency—by showing how top-down policy making and symbolic erasure ("cultural invisibility," 75%) convert development and governance into sources of grievance. The clustering by district underscores scope conditions: coastal CPEC nodes (Gwadar/Lasbela) report labor displacement and outsider hiring; interior resource districts (Dera Bugti) emphasize revenue and compensation; southern strongholds (Turbat/Panjgur) stress identity and representation.

Discussion

These findings align with well-established mechanisms in the conflict literature: relative deprivation (expectations vs. outcomes), internal colonialism (resource periphery vs. core control), and structural violence (institutionalized barriers). In this setting, "ignorance" is active and patterned—manifest in policy centralization, symbolic non-recognition, and procedural exclusion (weak consultation/compensation). The result is an ignorance–resistance cycle: marginalizing design and delivery → alienation → mobilization → securitized response → deeper alienation. That dynamic explains why initiatives framed as "development" locally read as extraction or control, and why insurgent narratives gain traction when they promise recognition, participation, and dignity.

Table 3 — Analysis of Political, Psychological, and Socio-Economic Dimensions of the Baloch Insurgency (n = 300)

Dimension	Core Issues Observed	Affirm Link to Conflict (n)	% of Total	Mean Severity (1–5)	Districts with Highest Intensity
Political	Centralization; underrepresentation; limited provincial say in resource/CPEC governance	258	86%	4.3	Quetta, Khuzdar, Turbat (Keich)
Psychological	Identity invisibility; cultural disrespect; "problem-province" media framing; low trust in institutions	240	80%	4.1	Turbat (Keich), Panjgur, Quetta
Socio-Economic	Outsider labor; weak local value chains; uneven service delivery; livelihood disruption (fishing, grazing)	252	84%	4.2	Gwadar, Dera Bugti, Lasbela

Overlap of Political, Psychological, and Socio-Economic Dimensions Fueling Insurgency
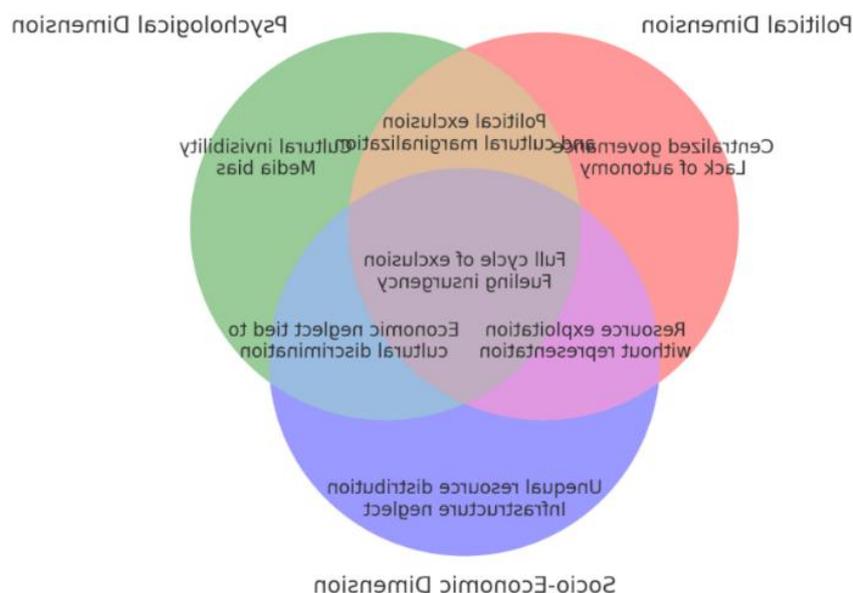
Notes: "Mean Severity" is the average perceived intensity reported on a five-point scale in interviews/field notes.

Analysis

All three dimensions are salient and high-severity (means ≥ 4.1/5), with political exclusion (86%, 4.3) slightly outpacing socio-economic (84%, 4.2) and psychological (80%, 4.1). The ordering matters analytically: political structures (who decides, who benefits) set the frame within which socio-economic outcomes (who works, who earns, who is displaced) unfold; psychological effects (who is seen, whose history counts) then amplify grievances and shape identity-driven mobilization. District clustering is consistent with this logic: coastal districts emphasize economic exclusion; southern cultural hubs emphasize identity/recognition; the capital corridor focuses on representation and policy control.

Discussion

The dimensional analysis clarifies why narrow, single-track remedies underperform. Security crackdowns ignore psychological injury; standalone jobs programs ignore political authorship and local control; symbolic inclusion without material

dividends rings hollow. Durable de-escalation, therefore, requires synchronized reforms: (i) political—credible provincial authority over resource governance and project oversight; (ii) socio-economic—local content/hiring mandates, compensation and community benefit agreements, service equity; (iii) psychological/cultural—curricular

inclusion, language support, and fair media representation. The implication is straightforward: addressing any one dimension without the others leaves the conflict system intact.

Table 4: Patterns of Neglect in Policy and Practice

Policy/Practice Issue	Respondents Reporting	% of Total (n=300)	Key Examples from Data
Centralized decision-making	234	78%	CPEC planning in Islamabad without Quetta's input.
Lack of provincial autonomy	216	72%	Limited legislative control over resources and projects.
Underrepresentation in national policy	210	70%	Minimal Baloch presence in federal ministries.
Development without local consultation	195	65%	Rural road projects bypassing villages most in need.

Analysis

The majority of respondents (78%) reported centralized decision-making as a defining feature of governance in Balochistan, reinforcing the perception of policy alienation. The lack of autonomy (72%) was seen as a structural barrier to self-determination. Underrepresentation in national policy forums (70%) further entrenches feelings of exclusion, while a significant proportion (65%) identified development without local consultation as evidence of disregard for local needs.

Discussion

The findings confirm that political neglect is systemic rather than incidental. Respondents view the political structure as designed to prioritize federal interests over provincial well-being. This aligns with academic accounts that describe Balochistan's governance as a case of "institutionalized marginalization" (Akhtar, 2019), in which autonomy is undermined by centralization. The lack of consultation in development feeds into insurgent narratives portraying the state as an external exploiter rather than a partner in progress.

Table 5: Baloch Perceptions of the Central Govt

Perception	Respondents Reporting	% of Total (n=300)	Key Examples from Data
Central Govt values land/resources over people	240	80%	Gwadar port benefits outsiders; locals excluded from benefits.
Cultural invisibility	225	75%	Baloch history absent from curricula; underrepresentation in media.
Security-first approach over dialogue	204	68%	Military operations prioritized over negotiation.
Distrust from historical grievances	216	72%	Memory of 1970s and 2000s military crackdowns still strong.

Analysis

Perceptions data reveal deep symbolic and emotional alienation. The view that the state prioritizes resources over people is near-universal (80%). Cultural invisibility (75%) reflects an entrenched sense of erasure. The security-first approach (68%) reinforces the portrayal of the state as coercive, while historical distrust (72%) shows how past events still shape present attitudes.

Perceptions are not purely reactive but are rooted in long-term historical processes. Cultural invisibility is especially significant because it connects psychological marginalization to political resistance. This aligns with post-colonial identity theory (Fanon, 1963), which suggests that the denial of cultural identity fuels oppositional politics. Insurgent propaganda gains credibility when state actions confirm these perceptions of neglect and hostility.

Discussion

Table 6: Mega-Projects and the Exclusion Paradigm (CPEC Case Study)

Issue	Respondents Reporting	% of Total (n=300)	Key Examples from Data
Jobs going to non-locals	246	82%	Chinese and Punjab labor hired over Baloch workers.
Displacement without compensation	195	65%	Fishing communities relocated for port expansion without fair payments.
Lack of local business integration	210	70%	No supply contracts for local traders in Gwadar projects.
Environmental neglect	180	60%	Gwadar water shortages worsened by construction activity.

Analysis

The economic exclusion from mega-projects like CPEC is perceived as deliberate rather than incidental. The most reported issue is employment discrimination (82%). Displacement without compensation (65%) and lack of business integration (70%) further alienate local communities. Environmental neglect (60%) compounds these grievances, creating an impression of development as extractive and destructive.

Discussion

Mega-projects symbolize the broader developmental ignorance in Balochistan. Rather than functioning as tools of integration, they often reinforce alienation. This aligns with dependency theory (Frank, 1969), which argues that development in peripheral regions is structured to benefit the core at the expense of the periphery. In the Baloch case, CPEC is framed by insurgents as the ultimate example of resource plunder.

10. Recommendations to Address Ignorance and Promote Peace in Balochistan

1. Constitutional "Balochistan Partnership Clause"

Amend the Constitution to create a binding Partnership Clause requiring federal–provincial co-signature on all decisions affecting Balochistan's land, resources, or security strategy.

- Counters 70+ years of unilateral decision-making (from the 1948 accession to CPEC planning).
- Establishes a *legal veto* for the province over exploitative or non-consensual projects.

2. "Historical Memory" Integration in Education

Mandate that national and provincial curricula include Balochistan's political, cultural, and economic history, developed in collaboration with local historians.

- Confronts the erasure that began with One Unit (1955–1970).
- Encourages inter-provincial empathy by teaching all Pakistanis the Baloch experience.

3. Resource Royalty Model with Local Equity Shares

Transform resource governance by giving 20–25% direct equity shares in all mining, energy, and port ventures to local communities through trust funds.

- Inspired by indigenous royalty systems in Canada and Australia.

- Shifts the economic narrative from *extraction* to *shared ownership*.

Balochistan Diaspora Co-Development Program
Launch a targeted program to involve the Baloch diaspora (in Gulf states, Europe) in skill transfer, joint ventures, and cultural promotion.

- Turns a historically disconnected diaspora into active stakeholders.
- Counters narratives of exile and alienation with visible partnership.

5. Provincial Control Over Mega-Project Employment
Make it legally binding that all CPEC contracts in Balochistan include a 70% Baloch workforce quota for non-specialized roles and 60% for specialized roles, with mandatory training programs.

- Directly responds to outsider labor dominance since Gwadar's development began.

6. Truth, Reconciliation, and Resource Audit Commission
Create a hybrid body to investigate historical political dismissals, military operations, and revenue misallocations from 1948 to present.

- Issues public reports and recommendations.
- Builds trust through transparency and reparations.

7. Participatory Sovereign Development Fund
Create a Balochistan-specific sovereign wealth fund from gas, gold, and port revenues — managed by a board elected directly by provincial citizens.

- Prevents diversion of local wealth.
- Funds targeted investments in health, education, and cultural preservation.

8. Cultural Economy and Language Rights Act
Pass a provincial act to fund Balochi and Brahui media, literature, and film, while requiring these languages in public signage and official communication within the province.

- Counters cultural invisibility in national narratives.
- Generates economic opportunities in the creative sector.

9. Peace-Building Through Civil–Security Integration
Replace ad-hoc security interventions with permanent district peace councils comprising elected officials, community elders, civil society, and security representatives.

- Ensures grievances are addressed before they escalate into insurgency.
- Reinforces local agency in governance and conflict resolution.

Conclusion
The results of this research indicate that it is impossible to interpret the insurgency of the Baloch exclusively as a security phenomenon; on the contrary, it represents the incorporated political, cultural, and socio-economic marginalization that can be viewed as a systemic form of ignorance. This ignorance is not the passive one but the programmed one, and it comes in the form of concentrated decision-making, underrepresentation of Baloch in national institutions, sanitization of Baloch history and language, and economic ventures that exploit the resources but disregard the local populations.

These trends have been persistent since the accession of the province in 1948, resulting in a profound sense of alienation and mistrust that tends to feed the perception that the state only cares about the strategic location of Balochistan and the wealth of its natural resources. The study also finds that this sidelining contributes to what might be called the ignorance-resistance loop: to the extent that communities are marginalized in governance and culture and economic roles, the more the insurgent discourse will appeal as a means of dignity and statehood.

The political alienation is a contributing factor to the cultural invisibility, and the latter is supported by the dispossession economically—a three-dimensional constructed structure of grievances that can be actively mobilized by actors of insurgencies. This is a self-enforcing pattern, in the sense that the state reactions tending towards coercion instead of dialogue tend to bolster the insurgent arguments and inflame the cycle of violence instead of ending it.

To end this cycle, there needs to be a paradigm shift, at the state level, from ignorance to engagement. The recommendations of the study address everything, including the constitutional protections, the right of participation in government, cultural participations, proportionate distribution of resources, and trust-building institutions, not only remedial but also transformatory, aiming to transform years of structural failures. When put into practice in good faith, such actions may promote real political inclusion, safeguarding of cultural

heritage, and a disposition whereby economic evolutions are an opportunity to help all groups that have been left behind in the past. Such extensive and historically knowledgeable practice is the only option left to reach a state of sustainable peace and integration in Balochistan and make the province a blueprint of participatory federalism instead of a representation of alienation.

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