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From the Indus Valley Civilization to British Rule: Examining the Evolution of Governance of the Punjab and its Contemporary Implications

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Abstract

This research envisions the analytical discourse on the history of development and evolution of the Punjab Governance. Historically, the Indus Valley Civilization inceptioned the governance machinery in the Punjab that was subsequently developed by various indigenous and foreign powers. The qualitative data, collected through the Historical Research Methodology and analyzed by the tools of Chronological Mapping, unearthed the findings that the governance systems in the Punjab, developed by multiple powers, witnessed unprecedentedly meteoric development in the British Imperial Age. However, Punjab Governance, after the creation of Pakistan remained strangled under the shadow of stagnancy and inefficiency, putting the spanner in the wheels of this evolution. *Ipso facto*, to resuscitate the spirit of evolution and development of Punjab Governance, in order to meet modern standards, this research recommends the adherence to Data Science, the application of the City Governance Model, the utilization of the Pyramid Solution and the liberation of the Executive from politics.

Keywords: Evolution, Greeks, Imperialism, Indo-Scythians, Indus Valley, Mauryans, Mughals, Sikhs.



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Introduction

The history of the governance system of the Punjab displays a remarkable journey of evolution and development at the hands of multiple foreign and indigenous powers (Chakrabarty & Bhattacharya, 2018; Smith, 2016). The Punjab, famous as the Land of the historical Five Rivers, continued to remain a cultural and strategic hub for various foreign Empires: The Aryans, the Persians, the Greeks, the Mauryans, the Saracens, the Mughals, and most importantly the British suzerainty. The Punjab, the glorious and fertile region, was home to indigenous powers like the Indus Valley Civilization and the Sikh Dynasty during the Primitive and modern times respectively. Although each Empire and Civilization contributed generously to the development of the Punjab's administrative systems, the British Empire hitched the wagon of Punjab Governance to the star with the introduction of the unprecedented legal framework, administrative systems, development administration and governance systems (Talbot, 2017).

Unfortunately, despite witnessing burgeoned and snowballed transformation in the British Imperial era, the Punjab Governance struggled to evolve and develop after the inception of Pakistan, thanks to poor planning, ineffective models, antiquated administrative structures, outdated culture and dysfunctional systems (Ahmed, 2019; Khan, 2021; Iqbal & Raza, 2022). In this way, a thorough transformation of the existing administrative processes, structures, and systems is an urgent need of time to resuscitate the evolution and development of the Punjab Governance (Rizvi, 2020). By doing so, the governance model of Punjab can evolve into a more efficient and inclusive system capable of addressing the region's socio-economic challenges.

Literature Review

Spear (1961) introduces the governance model of the Mughals in the Punjab, steered by the *Mansabdari* and *Zabt* Reveue framework. He established that the revenue system during the Mughals was highly systemized, becoming a tool for economic prosperity. Singh (1997) sheds light on the centralized governance mechanism of the Ghaznavids. This governance system, presenting the outlook of Realism, focused on revenue generation and military expansion. Chandra (1997), provided valuable insights into the Governance model of the Delhi Sultan, dominated by the *Iqta* system. This decentralized model of the Delhi Sultanate delegated the administrative powers to the Governors, thereby resulting in enhanced revenue collection and better political stability. Grewal (1998) glorified the governance mechanism of the Sikh Dynasty, headed by Maharaja Ranjeet Singh who undertook various administrative reforms related to economic sustenance, infrastructural development, and military prowess. Further, Talbot (2021) presented his excellent analysis of the contours of the British Administration in the Punjab. He highlighted how the implementation of the Western Bureaucratic system, legal reforms, and infrastructural development during the British Age reshaped the fate of socio-economic development in the Punjab.

These eminent works collectively provided a comprehensive understanding of the evolution and legacy of the Punjab Governance, underscoring the influences and legacies left by successive ruling entities.

Research Methodology

The authors used Historical Research Methodology, a qualitative approach, to examine governance patterns of different civilizations and dynasties. With the help of this methodology, the researchers collected data from the document analysis of policy letters, quality books, digital databases, communiques of the Government (mainly of the British era present in the Archives Department in

Lahore) and colonial-era legislations. The Thematic Analysis Approach was employed by the researchers to categorize and analyze the data based on major themes like revenue systems, government offices, law enforcement, development, and administrative systems. The Comparative Analysis was conducted to compare the governance systems shaped by various powers. More importantly, the Chronological Mapping was utilized to evaluate the timeline of governance evolution in the Punjab. Data was finally cross-verified through the Triangulation Method and expert validation by historians. Due care was ensured to comply with the ethical considerations in the research process. However, the chief drawback of this research is that it is based primarily on secondary data.

Governance of the Punjab in the Ancient Times:

Governance in this fertile land is not a new phenomenon. Due to its massive importance for the survival of human settlements, as evident from the availability of the great five rivers, this land has always been of keen interest to all the major civilizations of the region. This actually, propelled sound governance in the province for the ages. This province has once remained home to the Harappa Civilization. This province once appeared to be the torchbearer for the world due to the ancient Taxila University during the times of Chanakya (Singh, 1997). The Indus Valley Civilization also had a keen interest in this very area. The researcher will discuss the role of Ancient Empires, Dynasties, and Civilizations in the governance of the Punjab as seen in Table 1:

Table 1: The Ancient Powers and Governance of the Punjab

Empire/Dynasty/ Civilization	Origin and Governance Philosophy	Role in the evolution of Punjab Governance
Indus Valley Civilization	Origin: Indigenous civilization. Philosophy: Urban Planning and Egalitarianism	Pioneered City Planning Governance.
Vedic Period	Origin: Central Asia Philosophy: Dharma and Ritualism	Incepted the concept of devolution of powers through Tribal Governance. Systemized Agricultural Produce Tax.
Achaemenid Empire	Origin: Persia Philosophy: Imperial Administration and Zoroastrian Ethics	Introduced the Quasi-Federal Governance with Provincial Administration but Centralized Bureaucracy. It Structuralized the Taxation System
Macedonian Empire	Origin: Greece. Philosophy: Hellenistic Expansionism.	Established the Military Bureaucracy. It transformed the administration into an agent for city development and performance-based governance.
Mauryan Empire	Origin: Indigenous Indians. Philosophy: Dharma Governance	Engineered the Centralized Governance Model, Welfare Governance, Codified Laws, and Ethical Governance.

Indo-Greek Kingdom	Origin: Greco-Bactrian Philosophy: Cultural Syncretism & Greek Rationalism.	Integrated City State Model of Greece into the Indian Urban Governance. It developed a bilingual governance, advanced city planning model, codification of laws and development administration in the Punjab.
Indo-Scythians	Origin: Central Asia Philosophy: Nomadic Warrior Ethos & Cultural Adaptation.	Built a strong decentralized governance model with support from the Military and religious institutions (Buddhism and Hinduism). It structuralized trade and revenue systems.
Kushan Empire	Origin: Indo-European Philosophy: Trade, Buddhism & Multiculturalism	Commenced the Cosmopolitan Governance in Punjab. Started Imperial and Bureaucratic Governance. It also brought the Local government in the Punjab.
Gupta Empire	Origin: Indigenous Philosophy: Hindu Renaissance	Instituted the concept of administrative decentralization for the first time. It originated the concept of local governance, codified laws and intellectual governance.
Hephthalites Empire	Origin: Central Asia Philosophy: Warrior Expansionism & Regional Disruption	This era weakened the governance structure, caused anarchy and dismantled the existing administrative setup, thereby disrupting economic stability.

City Planning Governance under the Indus Valley Civilization:

The Indus Valley Civilization (3300–1300 BCE), being indigenous in nature flourished in present-day Pakistan and India. The Punjab was its important region. The Governance system in the era was highly decentralized. The ruling councils and trade guilds were used to manage the distribution of resources and enforce the law. This Civilization, as seen in the investigation of the Harappa sites (Possehl, 2002), introduced the governance for city planning, draining infrastructure, and advanced civic regulation system (Bhardwaj & Sharma, 2024; Olivelle, 2024).

The *Janapadas* Governance in the Vedic Era:

The Vedic era (c. 1500–500 BCE) introduced the governance system based on *Janapadas*, the tribal republics. The power was devolved to *Sabha* and *Samitti*, the tribal assemblies. The spiritual and military powers of the *Vedics* belonged to the *Rajas* (the Kings). The councils and religious advisors had the decision-making powers during the Vedic rule. Agricultural produce encompassed the chief source of revenue.

The *Satrapies* Governance in the Achaemenid Empire:

The Achaemenid Empire (6th–4th century BCE) belonged to Persia. It introduced the concept of Provincial Administration as it divided the Punjab into *Satrapies* (the provinces). This Empire introduced the taxation systems (Briant, 2002) and centralized bureaucracy, shaping the Punjab Governance into a systematic authority.

The Military Bureaucracy in the Macedonian Empire:

Originally from Greece, the Macedonian Empire (4th century BCE), engulfed the Punjab after the defeat of King Porus at the hands of Alexander in the Battle of the Hydaspes (modern-day Jhelum River) in the Jallalpur area of Pind Dadan Khan (Jhelum). This Empire introduced advanced military governance of the Greeks in the Punjab and spread the Hellenistic infrastructure and culture (Bosworth, 1988), thereby establishing a strong city development and performance-oriented governance model.

The Centralized Governance Model of the Mauryan Empire:

The Punjab became a key province of the Mauryan Empire (322–185 BCE). The Administrative system of the Empire was centralized in nature (Thapar, 2004), steered by *Kumaras*, the Royal Officials governing the districts and villages (Fitzpatrick, 2024). Chandragupta Maurya introduced law enforcement and taxation systems. Whereas, Ashoka's reign witnessed a governance model, based on Buddhism. His governance model focused on popular welfare and morality.

Decentralized Hybrid Military Governance Model of the Indo-Greek Kingdom:

The Indo-Greek Kingdom (2nd century BCE–1st century CE), stretching from modern-day Afghanistan to Pakistan, was a Hellenistic state founded by Demetrius I, a Greco-Bactrian King. The Indo-Greeks introduced a decentralized governance model steered by strong military rule. The *Strategos* (the Military Governors) used to govern the state. The kingdom blended the Indian and Greek cultures, military strategies, art, and governance (Bopearachchi, 1998). The kingdom introduced bilingual coinage, with Greek and *Prakrit* inscriptions delineating the Indo-Greek cultural integration. It provided the blend of the City State and Local Governance Model of the Greeks with the Indian Urban Governance. The Indo-Greek dynasty used phalanx tactics of the Greek and Indian war strategy of using elephants, thus showing the influence of each other. The Indo-Greek Kingdom succumbed to internal chaos and Scythian's inroads.

The Semi-Feudal Governance Model during the Indo-Scythians Rule:

From Scythia, Central Asia, the Scythians (1st century BCE–1st century CE) established a nomadic but strong kingdom in today's areas of Afghanistan, India, and Pakistan. They raided India and replaced the Indo-Greek Kingdom. The Scythians modified the Mauryan and Hellenistic administrative models. They governed this region through the feudal system called *Satrap*, dividing the kingdom into powerful *Kshatrapas*, the provinces. The *Mahakshatrapas*, the local rulers were powerful but used to pay allegiance to the king, the real head of the Empire (Mukherjee, 1988). The Scythians believed in Realism, advocating strong military rule, Empire security, and territorial expansion. They patronised trade through the utilisation of the Silk Road.

The Concept of Cosmopolitan Governance Model in the Kushan Empire:

The Kushans (1st–3rd century CE), from Central Asia too, defeated the Scythians. They established a very strong bureaucratic system, marked with an Imperial orientation. Moreover, the Kushans harnessed the Silk Route for global connectivity and revenue generation, thereby giving effect to a very advanced taxation system. The Kushans patronized the religious institutions (of

Buddhism, Hinduism, and Zoroastrianism) and puissance local governance. Like their predecessors, they promoted trade through the Silk Road. They issued gold coins with a view to standardizing the commerce sector (Sims-Williams, 1998).

The Decentralised Feudal Administration during the Gupta Empire:

The Guptas (4th–6th Century CE), from the Scythian ancestry, defeated the Kushans and established their Empire. The Guptas developed a decentralized administrative model, with a highly empowered bureaucracy under the *Samantas*, (the local feudal rulers) (Khan, 2023). The administration promoted agriculture, taxation, and trade. During this period, the legal system was codified according to the Hindu legal traditions, emphasizing *dharma* and justice. Moreover, the Gupta era saw good progression in the fields of scientific learning and education, thereby etching the Golden Age of India.

The Anarchic Governance setup during the Hephthalite Empire:

The Hephthalites (5th–6th century CE), called the white Huns from Central Asia, defeated the Guptas and established their reign. They deviated from the classical Indian Political Systems and ruled through a tribal confederation instead of a centralized system, heavily based on military rule (Litvinsky, 1996). This era witnessed the dark phase of deviation from urban development and economic stability due to uninterrupted warfare. It was an anarchic governance.

Governance of the Punjab in the Medieval Era:

As seen in Table 2, the Medieval Punjab was governed by the Ummayyads, the Ghaznavids, the Ghurids and the Delhi Sultanate:

Table 2: Medieval Powers and Governance of the Punjab

Empire/Dynasty	Origin and Philosophy	Contribution to Punjab Governance
Umayyad Caliphate	Origin: Damascus Philosophy: Islamic Caliphate Model	Formed the Islamic governance with spiritual ethos. Started the taxation system based on <i>Zakat</i> , <i>Usher</i> , <i>Jizyah</i> etc. It brought the Islamic Criminal Justice system based on <i>Hadd</i> and <i>Tazir</i> .
Ghaznavid Period	Origin: Turko-Persian. Philosophy: Islamic <i>Shariah</i> Model.	It integrated the <i>Shariah</i> Model into Punjab Governance. However, the <i>Sultan</i> was the chief ruler of the Empire instead of the Caliph.
Ghurid Empire	Origin: Afghanistan Philosophy: Islamic <i>Shariah</i> Model	It further developed the Islamic <i>Shariah</i> Model of the Ghaznavids and structuralized the bureaucracy and <i>Iqta</i> Revenue System.
Delhi Sultanate	Origin: Afghanistan Philosophy: Islamic <i>Shariah</i> Model	Great administrators like Iltumish, Allaudin Khilji, and Sikandar Lodhi expanded the Punjab Governance with the implementation of unprecedented Price Control mechanism, Revenue Administration, Urban Development etc. The offices of <i>Wazirs</i> and <i>Qadis</i> played a great role in the Delhi Sultanate.

The Caliphate Model during the Umayyad Rule:

Muhammad Bin Qasim, an Arab general, intruded into Sindh and Southern Punjab in 711 AD on the direction of Waleed bin Abdul Malik (The Umayyad Caliph). This invasion established his rule in Multan, which he called 'The City of Gold'. The establishment of Muslim rule in the Punjab transformed the administrative, social, political, and religious landscape. The Islamic administrative, political, legal (Hadd and Tazir punishments) (Kennedy, 2004), economic, social, military, and cultural systems were introduced in this region. The institution of the mosque, the principle of *zakat*, and the element of spiritualism overhauled the governance and socio-economic order of the Punjab. The origination of the *Sufi* orders in the Subcontinent and mass-level conversions happened in the Subcontinent due to this rule. The Quran became the policy guide for future rulers and Empires. The Punjab was divided into administrative units called *Iqtas*, governed by an Amil, equal to the modern day Governor, due to the introduction to the principles of Islamic governance, the Ghaznavids, the Ghaurids, the Delhi Sultanate, the Mughals and the Durrani Empires saw the dawn of their rule in the Punjab. However, the indigenous Hindus established their parallel rules and nationalism in the future in the shape of the Marathas' rule, this competition kept on rolling until the creation of two sovereign states of Pakistan and India.

The *Shahiyat* Governance in the Ghaznavid Period

In the days of Ghaznavid rule (10th-12th Century), today's Punjab Province was segmented into *Shahiyat* (local expression for kingships) or *Subas* (indigenous word for provinces). The governance of each administrative unit or province was steered by the Governor, appointed by the Ghaznavid Ruler. These Governors in the Punjab Province used to implement policies concerning revenue administration, internal security, and governance tasks (Meyerovitch, 2002). The revenue administration was heavily based on tribute-based taxation. The Ghaznavid Empire established Islamic *Shariah* governance with a blend of Persian influence. Mahmood Ghaznavi fortified the cities for defence purposes (Bosworth, 1977) and promoted trade. This administration, to be brief, was military-dominated.

The Islamic *Shariah* Model of the Ghurid Empire:

Belonged to Ghor (Afghanistan), the Ghurid Empire (12th century CE) established the Islamic *Shariah* model of Governance, led by the *Walis* (the Governors). It not only established the Islamic the Judicial System but also gave away the preceding tribute based revenue administration. The Ghurids structuralised the bureaucracy and established the *Iqta* model of the revenue system. They focused primarily on infrastructural development and trade.

Military- Feudal *Iqta* System in the Delhi Sultanate:

In the second Battle of Tarain (1192) against Prithviraj Chauhan, Muhammad Ghori established his Sultanate in Delhi. During the times of the Delhi Sultanate, the Punjab was under the control of Delhi. Muhammad Ghori did not have an heir, after his assassination in 1206, the Delhi Sultanate passed through five successive dynasties:

- Mamluk (Slave) Dynasty (1206-1290), established by Qutb Ud Din Aibak, Muhammad Ghori's general. Its famous ruler Iltumish introduced centralized administration and the *Iqta* System
- Khilji Dynasty (1290-1320) established by Jalal Ud Din Khilji. Allaudin Khilji in this dynasty introduced market reforms and economic control.
- Tughlaq Dynasty (1320-1414), established by Ghiyas Ud Din Tughlaq. Muhammad Bin Tughlaq introduced monetary and fiscal reforms.
- Sayyid Dynasty (1414-1451), established by Khusro Khan.
- Lodhi Dynasty (1451-1526), founded by Bahlul Lodhi. Sikandar Lodhi in the Lodhi dynasty introduced agricultural and urban reforms.

Overall, the Delhi Sultanate was systematically divided into *Iqtas* (word synonym with Provinces or states of the modern age). Being appointed by the *Sultan*, the head of the Empire, the officers termed *Iqtas* or *Amir* used to govern each province. It was a military-centered model due to the looming threat of the Mongols. Similarly, the Punjab was governed by the *Amir* or *Iqta*. They had the administrative functions of revenue generation, law and order, and security of the province (Sharma, 2022). They had great powers in the field of governance. Above and beyond that, under the matrix of the Khilji Dynasty, the Punjab replicated the Persian system of governance. There Khiljis ruled over their dynasty, operated from Delhi in the 13th and 14th centuries (Jackson, 2014). The Punjab, being the province of the Delhi Sultanate followed the governance structure of the capital Delhi (Malik, 2004). Firstly, being the *Subah* (Province), the Punjab was ruled over by the *Amir* (Governor), appointed by the *Sultan* of Delhi. Secondly, the Governor did work as today's Civil Servants do. He implemented the public policy and directions received from the Central Government (Jackson, 1999). He had the responsibility of steering tax collection, protecting

sovereignty, safeguarding the Empire, ensuring popular welfare, maintaining law and order, and running the administrative departments for smooth governance. Thirdly, the system, spearheaded by the Governor, had a hierarchical model (Malik, 2004). The Governor was aided by his *Wazirs* (Ministers), Revenue Officers (called *Diwans*), and Military Commanders (*Amirs*). These officers were used to assist the Governor of the Punjab in public policy implementation. The Revenue Officers used to estimate and collect the agricultural tax, including land and product taxes. The Military Officers did patronage of the Police for the maintenance of law and order and security in the province. Fourthly, this province of Punjab had a Legal system, based on the injunctions of Islamic law. The *Shariah* laws were implemented by the *Qadis* (Judges) in the administration of justice on commercial law, Law of Torts, Law of Contracts, Criminal Law, Revenue Laws family laws, etc. Fifthly, the Province of the Punjab was further divided into smaller units or districts. The local administrators used to present their compliance reports to the Governor on the issues of local government and Public Administration (Malik, 2004). Sixthly, the Khilji Rule was marked by massive economic progression and reform measures.

Governance of the Punjab in the Early Modern Era:

During the early modern era, the Governance of the Punjab was steered by the Mughal and the Durrani Empires:

The Centralised Imperial Administrative System in the Mughal Empire:

The Mughals developed the governance model of the Delhi Sultanate into a highly Centralised Imperial Administrative System. Like the Khiljis, the Mughals divided their Empire into *Subas* (the Provinces). However, each province was governed by a powerful *Subahdar* (the Governor), appointed by the Mughal Monarch. Similarly, the *Subahdar* of the Punjab was assisted administratively by *Faujdars* (The Military Officers) and the *Diwans* (Revenue Officers). The Revenue generation system of the Mughals called as ‘*Zabt* system’ worked very well in the Punjab. During the Mughals who had a centralized system of governance, the Punjab being an important province of the great Empire, also had a sound system of administration (Spear, 1961). Firstly, the Punjab region was then called the *Suba* (Province) of Lahore, as it was the then capital of today’s Punjab areas. Secondly, the *Subahdar* of Lahore *Suba* was the head of the civil and military domains, of law and order, administration, and revenue generation. The *Faujdars* and the *Diwans* aided the *Subahdar* on military and revenue matters respectively. Thirdly, for effective administration, Lahore *Subah* was subdivided into Divisions that were headed by the *Sadar* (word synonym with today’s Commissioner). These Divisions were further divided into Districts, headed by *Subahdari* (District Head). The Districts were divided into Sub-Districts. This system of division of province and appointed officers at the Divisional, Districts, and Sub-Districts levels of hierarchy is in practice in today’s Punjab Province Governance. Fourthly, the *Zabt* System, the model of estimating and levying the agricultural tax on land, income, and products, was in vogue. Fifthly, the Judicial system of Lahore *Subah*, in consonance with the *Shariah* (Islamic Laws), was steered by the *Qadis* (Judges) in the civil and criminal administration of Justice. Sixthly, there was an excellent development administration of Lahore *Subah* where trade, commerce, culture, minor art, architecture, and welfare touched the meridian of glory (Spear, 1961). Seventhly, The Governor used to appoint the local government officers to provide the most fundamental services for the general populace of the Empire. The Mughal rule, to clinch, presented a cultural fusion of Islamic, Persian, and Indian traditions (Richards, 1993). Unfortunately, the Mughal glory, with time, driven by the cruel swirling winds of manifold incidents and factors, withered on the vine (Spear, 1961).

The *Subedari* System in the Durrani Empire:

The Durrani Empire was short-lived and confined to the areas of Lahore, Multan, and Peshawar. The governance in the Durrani Empire was weak, steered by *Subedars* (Governors) like Jahan Khan or Najib ud Daula who failed to establish control. The Durrani rule was marked by military orientation, heavy taxation, and resistance from the Sikhs (who ultimately replaced the Durrani)

The Punjab Governance in the Modern Era:

The Punjab was ruled by the Sikhs and the British after the 19th Century:

The Centralised *Durbar* Administrative Model of the Sikh Empire:

It would be a great injustice and intellectual dishonesty if we did not recognize the services of the Sikh Empire for the Punjab Province. Under the leadership of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Sikh Empire centralized the administration of Punjab (Spear, 1961). His *Durbar* rule was well organized and blended with the Sikh, Mughal, and Persian principles. He divided the Punjab into *Sarkars* (Divisions), headed by the *Sarkaridar* (Synonym of Governor). *Sarkaridars* were aided by *Faujdar*s and *Diwans*, on the matters of military and revenue administration respectively. Ranjit Singh's administration was marked by the facilitation of trade, and encouragement of commerce, and the Empire witnessed a boom in infrastructural development. He developed architecture and rendered great services to the province of Punjab (Spear, 1961). His Army was highly advanced, transformed by European battlefield skills and tactics. His centralized rule was marked by meritocracy (Singh, 2008), secularism and freedom. His taxation policy on agricultural produce was genuine and equitable.

The Golden Age of the Civil Service in the British Empire:

Concerning the evolution of the Governance system of the Punjab under British rule, it should be depicted with no qualms that the Punjab came under direct control of the British East India Company in 1849 after the success of the British in the Second Anglo-Sikh War. The consolidation of British control over the Punjab revolutionized the governance of the Province unprecedentedly (Talbot, 2021). The British introduced the system of governance for provincial administration. They enacted unprecedented laws for the Punjab that are still in practice in the Punjab Province. Soon after this Triumph, the British Government resorted to revolutionizing the governance and development of the Province and concluded the Lahore *Durbar* System of Sikh Rule. The British Government properly divided the Province into Divisions, Districts, and Tehsils for effective governance. It introduced the Permanent Settlement System for land revenue administration, replacing the *Zabt* System of the Mughals Mughal. It established a structured British Indian Civil Service (ICS) governance model, enabling the British Officers to govern the departments and field administration. Following were the salient features of the governance of the Punjab during the regime of the British suzerainty.

The Chief Commissioner: Chief of the Province.

Firstly, Punjab was governed by the Chief Commissioner, who would report to his competent authority i.e. The Governor General of India. The Chief Commissioner was the highest post in the provincial hierarchy of the Punjab. That post consolidated the British rule in the Punjab until 1857. Later on, in 1858, after the War of Independence (Called *Sepoy* Mutiny by the British Government), the rule of the East India Company came to a cessation, replaced by the British Crown. The Office of Chief Commissioner was abolished and a three-member Board of

Administration, headed by the President, took the lead in administering the Punjab in the civil and military domains of governance. Subsequently, the Board of Administration was ceased in 1861. Now the Punjab had assumed the higher status of Lieutenant Governorship, headed by the superior, powerful head of the Punjab.

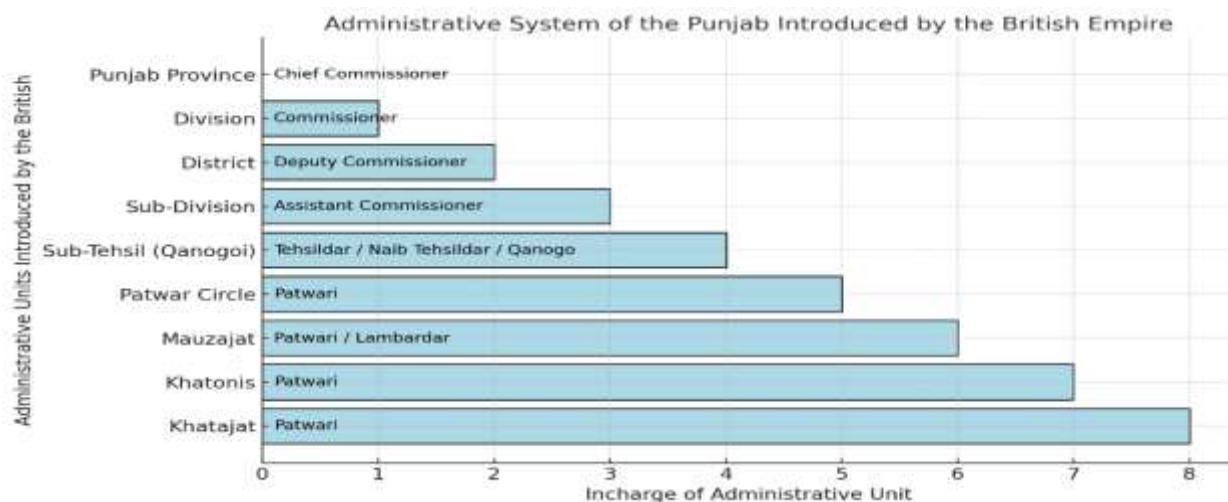
The Punjab Legislative Council:

In 1897, the Punjab Legislative Council was established by the British Government with the vision of ensuring representation to the indigenous populace of the Punjab. The council formed a blend of official and non-official members, to bridge the gap between the British and the residents. *Albeit*, the Council represented the British Majority and the locals were primarily the feudal lords and Indian elites (Talbot, 2021).

Hierarchical Segmentation and Administration of the Punjab.

They made the Punjab Civil Secretariat, established Departments, and divided the province into a following trickle-down pattern: Divisions, Districts, Sub-divisions, *Qanogois* (Sub tehsils) *Patwar* circles (Sub-tehsils are divided into *Patwar* circles), *Mauzajat* (*Patwar* Circles are divided into *Mauzajat*) and *Khatajat* (*Mauzajat* are divided into family areas called *Khatonis* and land numbers called *Khasrajat*) as depicted in Graph 1. The Division was led by the Commissioner, the District by the Deputy Commissioner (Khan, 2023), the Sub-Division by the Assistant Commissioner, the Sub-Tehsil, or *Qanogoi* by Tehsil aided by *Naib Tehsildars* and *Qanogos*, the *Patwar* Circles, *Mauzajat*, *Khatonis* and *Khatajat* by *Patwari* assisted by the *Lambardar* or the Village Officer. The Divisional Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and Assistant Commissioners had the judicial, criminal, revenue, civil, and many other powers provided by the laws of the Land. The British made the Punjab Civil Secretariat and established the Provincial Governance Departments. They constructed the houses and offices of Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners, Hill Torrent Officers, District, and *Tehsil* Officers.

Graph 1: Administrative System of Punjab during the British Empire



Reforms by the British Government in the Punjab.

To win public support, The British revolutionized the educational, health, infrastructural, and communicational sectors of the Punjab. They introduced an efficient system of governance for the Punjab. The British protected the Mughal Legacy and made new gardens and parks. However, they abolished the Mughal *Zabt* Revenue System and introduced unprecedented land revenue

administration. Some of the great splendours of the British Governance for the Punjab include the following:

- **Educational Institutions:** In Punjab, the British Government made King Edward Medical University in Lahore in 1860, the Government College University in Lahore in 1864, Forman Christian College in Lahore in 1864, the Punjab University in Lahore in 1882, the Aitchison College in Lahore in 1886, Islamia College in Lahore in 1892, Government College in Faisalabad in 1897, Islamia College Civil Lines in Lahore in 1913 and Punjab Engineering College in Lahore in 1921
- **Government Infrastructure:** The British Government constructed the following infrastructure in Punjab: The High Court building in Lahore in 1889, the Punjab Civil Secretariat building in Lahore, Montgomery Hall in Lahore, Masonic Hall in Lahore, Punjab Assembly Building, District Court House in each district, GPO buildings in Lahore and Murree.
- **Places for leisure:** For the leisure and enjoyment of the Community, the British Government constructed the erstwhile Lawrence Gardens in Lahore, the Lahore Zoo in 1872, the Rawalpindi Club, the Chenab Club in Faisalabad and the Lahore Gymkhana Club. The British also constructed the Clock Tower in Faisalabad
- **Railways and Infrastructure:** The British Government constructed the Railways System and its infrastructure in the Punjab (Metcalf & Metcalf, 2006). It constructed Railway Stations in the following cities: Lahore, Rawalpindi, Multan, Jhang, Faisalabad, and many other places.
- **Canals and Barrages:** The British revolutionized the agriculture of the Punjab through the construction of extremely ambitious projects. They made the following canals that gave a boom to agricultural activity, as seen in Table 3:

Table 3: Canal Projects in the Punjab by the British

Name of Canal Project	Source of river	Irrigational impact on
Upper Bari Doab Canal in 1859	Ravi River	Lahore and Amritsar
Sirhind Canal in 1882	Sutlej River(Ropar Headworks)	Lodhiana, Ferozpur and Patiala
Sidhnai Canal in 1886	Sutlej River	Multan and Khanewal
Lower Chenab Canal in 1892	Chenab River(Khanki Headworks)	Lyallpur, Jhang and Sheikhupura
Lower Jhelum Canal in 1901	Jhelum River(Rasul Barrage)	Shahpur, Sargodha and Mandi Bahauddin
Lower Bari Doab Canal in 1913	Ravi River(Balloki Headworks)	Montgomery and Multan
Upper Chenab Canal in 1915	Chenab River(Maralla Headworks)	Gujranwala, Sialkot and Sheikhupura
Upper Jhelum Canal in 1919	Jhelum River(Mangla Headworks)	Gujrat, Mandi Bahauddin and Western Punjab
Sutlej Valley Project(1921- 1932)	Pakpattan Canal, Panjnad Canal, Eastern Sadiqia Canal	Bahawalpur and Bahawalnagar
The Triple Canal Project in the 1930s	This project linked three very important Canals: Upper Jhelum Canal, Upper Chenab Canal and Lower Bari Doab Canal.	It linked the Ravi, the Jhelum and the Chenab to optimize the water distribution as the Jhelum had excessive water while the others did not have much. This Project diverted the Jhelum's water to Chenab to use surplus water, the Chenab's water to Ravi to sustain agriculture in Central Punjab (like Lyallpur and Montgomery) and Ravi's water to Lower Bari Doab to sustain South Punjab's agriculture. These Canals not only developed new Canal Colonies like Lyallpur, Montgomery, and Multan but also increased cotton, wheat and sugarcane production in the Punjab.

- **Rest Houses for Officers:** The British Government constructed the Murree Government House, Shalimar Bagh Rest House in Lahore, Jallo Park Rest House in Lahore and many irrigational rest houses and circuit houses in almost every district of the Punjab.
- **Cities and Towns:** Erstwhile Lyallpur, named after Sir James Broadwood Lyall, and erstwhile Montgomery, named after Sir Robert Montgomery were the splendid works for the construction of layout plans and development of cities in the Punjab

- **Hospitals made by the British:** For better health services delivery, the British Government established Mayo Hospital in Lahore in 1871, Lady Aitchison Hospital in Lahore in 1886, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, in Lahore(Named after Sir Ganga Ram, a kind Philanthropist), Rawalpindi General Hospital, Civil Hospital in Multan, Mayo Hospital in Jhelum(in the memory of Lord Mayo, the British Viceroy of India), Victoria Hospital in Bahawalpur, Montgomery Victoria Hospital in erstwhile Montgomery(Now Sahiwal) and Campbellpur Hospital in erstwhile Campbellpur (Now Attock)
- **Famous Forts for defence:** For an excellent defence of the state the British constructed or established the following famous forts: Lahore Fort(Was made by the Mughals, but repaired and modified by the British), Gobindgarh Fort(Made by Maharaja Ranjit Singh, but used by the British), Attock Fort, Derawar Fort(It was built by the Nawabs of Bahawalpur but maintained by the British), Multan Fort(Made in ancient time, but it was modified by the British), Bhakkar Fort, Mian Mir's Fort, Phillaur Fort and the Shahpur Fort in Sargodha.
- **Military Reforms:** The British revolutionized the Army in the Punjab. It formed the 1st Punjab Unit of the Army and divided the forces into proper cavalry, infantry etc. For the fortification of cities in the Punjab, the British Government constructed Cantonments in the cities of Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Multan. For advanced security of the state, the British made camping grounds in Jullundur, Ferozpur, Ambala, and many other areas (Shahrukh et al., 2022). The development of infrastructure like roads, telegraph lines, and railways facilitated the movement of the British Army troops in the Punjab. To keep up the professionalism in the armed forces, the Punjab Frontier Crimes Regulation (1872) was introduced.

Revolutionizing the Administrative law and governance:

To revolutionize the governance of Punjab the British Government introduced the following laws (Talbot, 2021): the Indian Penal Code enacted in 1860 on criminal law(The British Parliament, 1860), the Punjab Land Revenue Act enacted in 1887 for revenue administration, Punjab Municipal Act enacted in 1867 for local governance, the Punjab Education Act enacted in 1884 for regulating educational institutions, the Police Act enacted in 1861 for the Police administration, the Punjab Tenancy Act 1887 for tenant-landlord laws, Indian Forest Act 1878 for forest protection, the Punjab Public Works Act for communication and works purpose, the Punjab Excise Act for regulating the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages, Indian Railways Act 1890 for regulating the Railway Services, etc. Most of the Punjab Governance laws were enacted in the tenure of the British Government like Colonization of Government Land Act 1912 (The British Parliament, 1912), CPC 1908 (The British Parliament, 1908), CRPC 1898 (The British Parliament, 1898), Registration Act 1908 (The British Parliament, 1908), and PPC 1860, etc. Moreover, the British established an excellent Judicial System in the Subcontinent. The courts of District and Sessions, Additional Sessions and Civil Judges were incepted by the British Government. It should be depicted with no hesitation that the British Government has revolutionized the governance of the Punjab due to the aforementioned facts. Now it is our responsibility to revive that developmental spirit.

The landscape of the Punjab Governance after 1947:

The British Government, followed by the 1935 Act strengthened the Civil Service of the Punjab, driven by the concept of federalism. Similarly, after the inception of Pakistan, the governance of the Punjab went through various reforms as well. The Provincial Civil Service was introduced in 1947 at the Provincial level and the District Management Group (DMG) and All Pakistan Unified Group (APUG) were introduced at the Federal level of Governance. All laws and systems of

administration of the British were replicated by the Governments of Pakistan and the Punjab Province. Provincial Services were later divided into two groups i.e. PCS and PSS (Punjab Secretariat Service), for field and secretariat administration respectively. The Devolution of Power by General Pervaiz Musharraf, the President of Pakistan revolutionized the local governance of the Punjab Province with the introduction of strong DCO and Nazim office and three tiers of governance in the Punjab. The Punjab Province saw a major transformation of the Provincial Management Service in 2004 in which the PCS and PSS groups were merged and examination criteria improved to provide the best human resource to the Province. Currently, there have been thirteen batches of the PMS cadre in the Punjab. The Punjab Governance has, despite these efforts, not been able to bask in the sunshine of transformation and efficiency due to heterogeneous problems. The Punjab Governance, during these days, is entangled in the web of corruption, caught up in the snag of politicisation, enmeshed in the traditional approach. The efficiency of Punjab's governance system is barricaded by bureaucratic inefficiencies, outdated laws, poor reliance on data science, rule-based orientation, and over-dependence on lower staff. There is a lack of synthesis between the field formation and the Departments. Lack of promotion, posting, transfer and performance audit criteria. Fleeting motivation, frequent judicial interventions, external accountability, selective justice, antiquated communication models, dysfunctional hierarchical structures, and provincial-federal rift have placed the cart of governance of Punjab in stagnancy. Antiquated procedures, systems, and structures are fanning the flames of inefficiency in the Punjab.

To clinch, the Punjab Governance evolved to the modern standards during the British Empire but failed to transform with the standards of global governance and New Public Management.

Findings

Governance in the Punjab is indebted to various powers. It was inceptioned by the Indus Valley Civilisation as an agent for urban planning. The Punjab Governance, in the next stage, was transformed into tribal governance with systemized agricultural taxation by the Vedics. It was developed into a Quasi-Federal Governance system, with centralized bureaucracy by the Achaemenid Empire. It further became an agent for city development military bureaucracy by the Macedonian Empire. The Mauryans introduced the concepts of welfare governance, codification of laws and ethical administration. The Indo-Greeks integrated the City Governance Model of Greece into Indian Urban Governance. The invasion of the Subcontinent by the Ummayyad Empire paved the way for the Islamisation of the indigenous governance model of the Punjab, introducing the Ghaznavids, Ghaurids and the Mughals. These Empires honed the governance pillar and touched the glory in the fields of art and literature. Then the Sikh dynasty revolutionized the military and governance segments of the Punjab. However, the British Empire made an unprecedentedly huge contribution to the governance of the Punjab. It instilled new culture, advanced systems, laws, structures, and paradigms into the Punjab Governance. As ill luck would have it, the governance after the inception of Pakistan failed to evolve with modern trends and needs. It has fallen victim to politicization, external accountability mechanisms, antiquated approaches, and other uncountable quandaries.

Conclusion

Punjab's administrative system has evolved from the ancient model of tribal governance to a highly systematic and organized bureaucratic system. Various civilizations and Empires have dominated this region of the world (the Punjab), leaving indelible in the legacy of its governance pillar. The Punjab governance, in the annals of history, remained heavily dominated by the Greek, Persian, Central Asian, and Indian powers. In the Medieval Age, the Punjab Governance was steered under the matrix of the Saracens and Muslim Empires. During the early Modern Age and Modern Age, the Mughals and Sikhs revolutionized the governance systems of the Punjab respectively. However, the Punjab Governance marked its heyday during the British Era. Unfortunately, the Punjab Governance plumbed the depth of despair in the post-1947 era. The time has come that Punjab should move with the tides and bask in the sunshine of unprecedented transformation to meet the global governance trends and goals.

Recommendations:

To liberate the current governance model from heterogeneous strangulation, the Government of Punjab should be reformed with the following measures:

- Make Data Science Department to gather and evaluate information on governance trends and issues for productive policy-making and effective policy implementation in all the sectors of administration (Ahmad & Sharoon, 2025).
- Develop a governance model based on devolution of power to the tehsils of the Punjab. The City Governance model is a *sine qua non* for transforming Punjab's administrative system (Khalid & Sharoon, 2024).
- The implementation of the Pyramid Model is an urgent need for time to transform the structures, systems, procedures, culture, and legal framework of the governance of the Punjab in five stages (Sharoon, 2024). The first stage requires rooting out the predicaments of the Punjab Governance in the shape of eradicating the administrative evils, deconstructing the existing service model, S.O. Ps reformation, and transformation of the administrative paradigm and overhauling of the field formation, the backbone of the Punjab Administration. The second stage, after eradication of the existing hurdles faced by Governance, introduces the Ethical Code, a set of practicable ethical values of governance. This Ethical Code is essential for the moral development of the young officers who can therefore contribute to the welfare of the people. The third Stage provides a prologue of the strategy of increasing revenues for administrative development and development administration. The fourth Stage enunciates a certain set of principles, based on the disciplines of IT for the digitization of the Governance of the Punjab. Finally, there is a dire need for building such a high level of governance that all the specialized sectors such as education, health, etc. receive quality, specialized, devolved governance models for excellent development. This Pyramid Model is the chief architect of the transformation of the governance of Punjab for efficiency.
- Complete separation of Politics from Administration
- Introduction to a merit-based, performance-oriented quantitative model of administration.

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