

## **Poverty Alleviation Through Power-Sharing in Pakistan**

**Muhammad Mushtaq**

*PhD Scholar, Department of Political Science  
Bahauddin Zakariya University  
Multan, Pakistan*

E-mail: shaikh\_m\_Mushtaq@yahoo.com

**Syed Khawaja Alqama**

*Dean faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
Bahauddin Zakariya University  
Multan, Pakistan*

E-mail: dralqama@hotmail.com

### **Abstract**

The uneven distribution of poverty within Multi-ethnic postcolonial states is a common phenomenon. This unevenness is according to many a legacy of colonial rule that amalgamated diverse societies under a centralised apparatus of governance and adopted preferential policies towards certain groups.

In the post war era, wave of decolonisation resulted in various multi-ethnic states that remained unable to manage these regional disparities; the core developed at the cost of peripheries. The advantageous groups occupied the power and the rest suffered internal colonialism. The Evidence depicts that boundaries of ethnic groups and deprived regions coincide in various cases. The deprived communities lacked participation and power sharing due to the exclusive design of power structure inherited by dominant groups.

Centralisation of political power and disproportionate representation of various ethnic groups in national institutions discourages their effective participation in poverty alleviation programmes. So, I argue that the political incorporation and accommodation of ethnic identities is essential for effective poverty alleviation strategies.

Poverty is unevenly distributed in Pakistan. Balochis, Sindhis, and Siraikis reside in highly deprived regions contrary to Punjabis, Mohajirs, and Pashtuns that reside in relatively less deprived areas. The former communities remained marginalized and underdeveloped while Punjabis dominated and remained over represented in national institutions. Mohajirs and Pashtuns occupied the status of junior partners with them.

The paper suggests formal and informal power sharing mechanism to redress the imbalances between administrative units of the federation. It is argued that the effectiveness of poverty alleviation strategies lies in the inclusiveness of policy making and implementation.

**Keywords:** Poverty Power Sharing, Uneven Distribution, Pakistan

### **I. Introduction**

Poverty is a global phenomenon. Today, there are one billion people in the world who are living in extreme poverty and 2.6 billion people who live on less than \$ 2 a day. South Asia alone is home to more than one billion people who live on less than \$ 2 a day of which 437 million are extremely poor and survive on less than \$ 1 a day (Human Development in South Asia Report, 2006).

South Asia is situated in one the world’s poorest regions. It is poorer than even Sub-Saharan Africa. Report of Human Development in South Asia 2006 reveals that “South Asia remains the poorest region in the world. Its per capita income of US \$ 594 is below that of Sub-Saharan Africa (US\$ 601) and far below the developing country average of US\$ 1502. While its share in world’s population is 22 per cent, it contains more than 40 per cent of the world’s absolute poor”.

The report further explores that “Nearly 237 million people in the region are at risk of dying before the age of 40. There are over 867 million people with out access to basic sanitation, more than 400 million adults are unable to read or write, and 300 millions are undernourished”.

Despite introduction of various poverty reduction programmes i.e. Zakat Programmes, The Khushal Pakistan Programme, Peoples works Programme, Tameer-watan Programme etc., poverty has dramatically increased in Pakistan during the periods 1988-2004, with around 50 millions Pakistanis living below a subsistence poverty line. 45% of the Pakistan population does not have access to adequate health care, while 40% do not have adequate drinking water and 55% are denied sanitation facilities (Zaidi, S.A. 1999).

The interesting feature of Pakistan’s poverty is its uneven distribution. Boundaries of certain communities and deprived regions coincide in this case. Balochs, Sindhis, and Siraikis reside in highly deprived regions contrary to Punjabis, Mohajirs, and Pakhtuns that reside in relatively less deprived areas. The former communities remained marginalized and underdeveloped while Punjabis dominated and remained over represented in national institutions. Mohajirs and Pakhtuns have also managed their share in power structure at various junctures of Pakistani history.

The paper attempts to investigate the relationship between marginality and incidence of poverty in Pakistan. The next section presents an overview of the regional distribution of various communities. The subsequent sections, in turn, would examine the uneven distribution of poverty and marginality of deprived communities. Final section is reserved for some concluding comments.

## **II. Ethnic Composition of Pakistan**

Pakistan is one of the world’s most ethnically complex states. Each of its provinces is associated with a certain linguistic group; Punjab with Punjabis; Sindh with Sindhis; Balochistan with Balochis; and NWFP with Pashtuns. Ethnic and linguistic divisions are present within every federating unit. There is a quite significant number of Siraiki and Hindko speaking people in Punjab. Sindh is the most ethnically diverse province with a significant concentration of Mohajirs in urban centres that form the majority in Karachi, the provincial capital and the largest city of Pakistan. A considerable number of Pashtuns, Punjabis and Balochs also live in Sindh. NWFP is also no more homogenous province as it hosts Hindko speaking and Siraiki populations as well. Balochistan is the home province of Balochs and Pashtuns. There is also a considerable number of Siraikis and Sindhis in Balochistan as well.

According to the 1998 census report, Punjabis constitute 44.15% of the whole population of Pakistan; Pashto speaking Pashtuns 15.42%, Sindhis 14.1%, Siraikis 10.53%, Urdu speaking Mohajirs 7.57% and 4.66% are other minority groups that speak different languages.

**Table 1:** Linguistic/Ethnic Groups in Pakistan

<b>Ethnic/Linguistic Groups</b>	<b>Urdu</b>	<b>Punjabi</b>	<b>Sindhi</b>	<b>Pashto</b>	<b>Balochi</b>	<b>Siraiki</b>	<b>Others</b>
Share in National Population %	7.57	44.15	14.1	15.42	3.57	10.53	4.66

**Source:** Census Report of 1998, Government of Pakistan.

**Punjab** is quite a homogenous province. The Balochis are not visible in Punjab with the exception of Rajan Pur and D.G.Khan districts. The Sindhis are inconsiderable in number, the Urdu speaking population is scattered over the whole province with some concentration in the districts of Lahore, Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Bhakar, Kasur, Vehari, Multan, Lodhran, and Bahawalpur. A considerable Pakhtun population resides only in the districts of Mianwali, Rawalpindi, and Attack. Broadly

speaking, the province is predominantly Punjabi speaking with Siraiki speaking belt located in the southern Punjab. The Siraiki region includes the districts of Multan, Layyah, Rajan Pur, D.G.Khan, Rahimyar Khan, Bahawalpur, Muzafar Garh, Lodhran, and Bhakar.

**Sindh** is not only the host to the 1947 migrants from India (Mohajirs hereafter) but also a large population from Punjab and NWFP who migrated to Sindh for jobs. In rural Sindh, Sindhis are in majority. There is some Punjabi population in the districts of Mirpur Khas, Umerkot, Badin, and Sukkar. A significant Urdu speaking population (Mohajirs) is, generally, concentrated in towns and district headquarters in the districts of Sukkar, Mirpur Khas, Sanghar, Thatta, Hyderabad, Nawab Shah, and Noshero Feroze. Balochis, Pakhtuns, and Siraikis have insignificant population in rural Sindh.

**Table 2:** Ethnic Composition of Karachi (1998)

District	Urdu	Punjabi	Sindhi	Pashto	Balochi	Siraiki	Others
Karachi East	60.75	14.72	3.8	5.95	1.64	2.11	11.02
Karachi West	39.64	12.95	6	24.55	5.29	2.05	9.52
Karachi South	25.65	18.84	11.37	7.95	9.77	1.82	24.6
Karachi Central	73.57	8.63	1.59	4.56	0.77	2.3	8.58
Malir	15.87	17.46	25.08	20.67	8.51	2.36	10.06

**Source:** Census Reports 1998, Government of Pakistan.

Karachi-the capital of Sindh- has very complex ethnic composition. Each linguistic group of Pakistan is present with varying degree of concentration in Karachi. In short, rural Sindh is predominantly Sindhi speaking while urban Sindh is dominated by Urdu speaking community (Mohajirs).

**Balochistan** is a heterogeneous province. Pushtuns are in overwhelming majority in the western Balochistan including the districts of Pishin, Killa Abdullah, Loralai, Killa Saifullah, Musakhel, Zhob, and Ziarat. In the Eastern Balochistan, Balochs form the majority in the districts of Chagi, Kohlu, Dera Bugti, Kalat, Khuzdar, Awaran, Kharan, Kech, Gawadar, and Panjgur. Still quite significant number of Sindhi speakers resides in the districts of Nasir Abad, Jaffar Abad, Lasbella, Jhal Magsi, Bolan and Sibi along Balochi speaking majorities. A considerable number of Siraikis also reside in districts of Jaffar Abad, Nasir Abad, Sibi, Bolan, and Jhal Magsi. Despite its heterogeneity, Balochistan is considered the homeland of Balochs.

**NWFP:** Although the census reports of NWFP reveal that Pushtuns are in a minority in the districts of Haripur, Abbotabad, D.I.Khan, Mansehra, Kohistan, and Chitral, NWFP is considered as an overwhelmingly Pashtun dominated province.

### **III. Uneven Distribution of Poverty in Pakistan**

All the Human Development Indicators seem to show that poverty is unevenly distributed among various regions and communities of Pakistan.

#### **a). Economic inequality in Pakistan**

There is great economic inequality across different geographical locations in Pakistan in terms of human development index, real GDP per capita, and unemployment rate etc. Indicators of economic development in the following table show that Balochistan is the poorest province of Pakistan. Rural Sindh and southern Punjab's poor performance is over shadowed by the better performance of urban Sindh and central Punjab.

**Table 3:** Economic Inequality in Pakistan

Name	Pakistan	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Balochistan	Islamabad
HDI	0.541	0.557	0.540	0.510	0.499	0.612
Real GDP per capita (PPPS) 1998	1715	1770	1804	1364	1677	1743
Adjusted GDP per capita (PPPS) Index	0.272	0.281	0.287	0.213	0.265	0.277
Unemployment rate	19.68	19.10	14.43	26.83	33.48	

Source: Pakistan National Human Development Report 2003

**b). Ranking of provinces by rural /urban Human Development Index**

Human Development Index based on various indicators shows that there lie gigantic imbalances between various regions of Pakistan. While urban Sindh is the most developed region of Pakistan, Rural Sindh is the least developed.

**Table 4:** Ranking by Human Development Index

Name / Area	HDI	Ranking
Sindh Urban	0.659	1
Punjab Urban	0.657	2
NWFP Urban	0.627	3
Balochistan Urban	0.591	4
Punjab Rural	0.517	5
NWFP Rural	0.489	6
Balochistan Rural	0.486	7
Sindh Rural	0.456	8

Source: National Human Development Report 2003

**c) Educational Inequality in Pakistan**

Education, which lies at the heart of every kind of human development, be that economic, social, political, determines the direction a country/region is heading to. Evidence seems to suggest that Balochistan is lagging far behind in terms of educational facilities. Sindh seems performing well, but it may be due to the Karachi factor--Karachi is the biggest and the most developed city of Pakistan. Punjab’s performance is above average.

**Table 5:** Educational Inequalities in Pakistan

Educational Indicators	Pakistan/Overall	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Balochistan	Islamabad
Literacy Rate % (1998)	45	46	51	37	36	72
Enrolment Ratio% 1998	71	75	64	70	64	58
Educational Attainment Index	0.537	0.557	0.553	0.480	0.453	0.673
% Share of Private Educational Institutions 2000	100	68.55	17.39	11.83	1.38	0.84
% Share of Private Educational Enrolment 2000	100	63.31	22.65	11.62	1.67	0.73
% Share of Private Educational Teachers 2000	100	61.16	24.30	12.17	1.53	0.82
% Share of Population 1998) *	100	55.63	22.99	13.41	4.96	0.61

Sources: Federal Bureau of Statistics,  
Pakistan’s Census Report, 1998  
United Nations Development Program

Note: Federally Administered Areas (FATA) Comprises 2.4% population but is not included in this analysis. It is insignificant impact on population distribution if excluded.

**d) Inequality in Sources of Drinking Water**

Inequality is not restricted to economic aspect of life; it encompasses such aspects of social indicators as drinking water as well. Inequality also exists in such a basic necessity of life as drinking water among different regions of Pakistan. The disparity in availability of clean drinking water is visible in

table # 6. The table shows that three-fourths of the Balochistan’s population has no access to the better sources of drinking water.

**Table 6:** Ranking of rural/urban areas by sources of drinking water(By housing units)

Region/ Area	Better sources (Population %)	Less better sources (Population %)	Ranking
Punjab (U)	96%	4%	1
Punjab (R)	90.5%	9.5%	2
Sindh (U)	90.25%	(9.75)	3
NWFP (U)	77.7%	22.3%	4
Balochistan (U)	75%	25%	5
Sindh (R)	69%	31%	6
NWFP(R)	45%	55%	7
Balochistan (R)	24%	(76)	8

Source: Calculated from Pakistan Census Report, 1998.

### e) Rural / Urban distribution of housing units by lighting

The availability of electricity is one such socio-economic indicator, which has assumed the great importance in the present day world. It enables someone to live a relatively better life. Rural Balochistan and rural Sindh are at the bottom in the ranking according to the percentage of houses with availability of electricity.

**Table 7:** Distribution of Housing Units by Sources of Lighting

Administrative units	Electricity	Kerosene	Others	Ranking
NWFP (U)	95.6%	3.25%	3.15%	1
Punjab (U)	93.5%	5.5%	1%	2
Sindh (U)	93%	5.15%	1.85%	3
Balochistan (U)	85.4%	12.8%	1.8%	4
NWFP(R)	67.5%	28.75%	3.75%	5
Punjab(R)	63.35%	35.75	0.90%	6
Sindh(R)	52.6%	45%	2.4%	7
Balochistan(R)	36.9%	58.5%	4.6%	8

Source: Calculated from Pakistan Census Report, 1998.

### f) Housing Units by Sources of Cooking Fuel

The use of every day sources like gas in domestic and industrial sectors is one such principal indicator of economic development that its importance cannot be over emphasized. Gas facilities are also unevenly distributed among various regions. However, all rural regions have very limited access to gas facilities.

**Table 8:** Housing Units by Sources of Cooking Fuel

Region	Gas	Kerosene	Wood	Others	Ranking
Sindh (U)	70.17%	5.55%	21.41	2.32	1
Punjab (U)	52.10%	8.21%	36.56%	3.13%	2
NWFP (U)	45.62%	7.53%	43.64%	3.21%	3
Balochistan (U)	37.37%	5.92%	53.72%	2.99%	4
Sindh (R)	3.27%	3.14%	89.72%	3.86%	5
Balochistan(R)	2.91%	3.96%	88.56%	4.57%	6
Punjab (R)	2.65%	1.84%	82.15%	13.36%	7
NWFP(R)	2.63%	1.37%	91.69%	4.31%	8

Source: Calculated from Pakistan Census Report, 1998.

**g) Exposure to Media by Housing Units in Pakistan**

Media plays a very important role in the socio-economic progress of a society. Its coverage determines the number of people exposed to new and innovative ideas come through both print and electronic media. Again Balochistan is at the bottom in the ranking according to the exposure to media.

**Table 9:** Exposure of Media by Housing Units in Pakistan

Province	Television	Radio	Newspaper	Ranking
Sindh	41.87%	29.75%	28.83%	1
Punjab	36.70%	18.00%	19.90%	2
NWFP	24.60%	27.40%	13.20%	3
Balochistan	15%	39%	Data is not Available	4

Source: Calculated from Pakistan Census Report, 1998.

**h).Percentage of Population below the Poverty Line**

The following table indicates that almost half of the population of Balochistan is under poverty line. Punjab and NWFP have less percentage of the poor than Sindh. Rural Sindh has a larger share in poor population of Sindh.

**Table 10:** Percentage of Population below the Poverty Line

Province	Overall	Provincial Capital	Large Cities	Small Cities and Towns	Rural Areas
Punjab	26	19	21	42	24
Sindh	31	11	20	38	38
NWFP	29	28	–	41	28
Balochistan	48	16	–	41	52

Source: Haroon Jamal, *The Pakistan Development Review* 44: 1 (Spring 2005) pp. 37–550

**i) Social Development Ranking Districts of Pakistan: Share of Provinces**

A social development ranking of districts in Pakistan indicates that 22 out of 25 districts of Balochistan fall in bottom quartile according to development level. Majority of the districts of Sindh lie in the third and fourth quartile. Punjab has greater share in top quartile.

**Table 11:** Social Development Ranking

Quartile	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Balochistan	Total
Top Q	7	1	1	1	10
Second Q	11	2	7	1	21
Third Q	9	6	9	1	25
Bottom Q	7	7	2	22	38

Source: Developed from, Social Development Ranking of Districts of Pakistan.(1996), SPDC Research Report. No 12

**Social Development Ranking within Punjab**

Although Punjab has performed well in the above-mentioned ranking, yet there are uneven developmental patterns within Punjab also. Southern Punjab, the homeland of Siraikis, has larger share (5 out of 7) in the least developed districts of Punjab.

**Table 12:** Social Development Ranking within Punjab

Quartile	Upper Punjab	Southern Punjab	Total
Top Q	7	0	7
Second Q	8	3	11
Third Q	8	1	9
Bottom Q	2	5	7

**Source:** Developed from, Social Development Ranking of Districts of Pakistan. (1996), SPDC Research Report. No 12

The evidence suggests that Balochs, Sindhis, and Siraikis who live in Balochistan, rural Sindh, and southern Punjab are poorer and have relatively less access to sources of better and decent life. As the next section would reveal, the above-mentioned communities have less representation in national institutions. So, it seems that there is some connection between their marginality and underdevelopment.

#### IV. Regional Disparities and Representation in Pakistan

Like other colonies, British amalgamated diverse societies in sub-continent under the centralised apparatus of governance and introduced preferential policies towards certain communities and regions. This strategy resulted in uneven development and regional disparities. Pakistan inherited these regional imbalances; and remained unable to manage this problem due to the exclusive design of the power structure.

##### Dimensions of Political Inequality

Political inequalities in Pakistan can be divided in three broader categories:

- a. Inequality in Political Positions
- b. Inequality and Representation in Civil Bureaucracy
- c. Inequality and Representation in Military

##### a. Inequality in Political Positions

Our analysis for the period 1972-2007 suggests the marginalisation of Balochs. The table #13 indicates that only one Baloch leader, Mir Zafarullah Jamali, got the office of Prime Minister after the election of 2002 and was soon replaced by the same party's Prime Minister from Punjab. Since Siraikis remained underrepresented in key portfolios, Sindhis managed to acquire more than their share.

**Table 13:** Ethnic origins of Political Positions (1972-2007)

Incumbent	Punjabi	Siraiki	Mohajir(Urdu)	Sindhi	Pashtun	Baloch	Total
President	3	1	1	1	1	-	7
Prime Minister	5	1	-	5	-	1	12
Foreign Minister	3	-	2	1	1	-	7
Defence Minister	4	-	-	7	1	-	12
Finance Minister	7	1	-	1	2	-	11
Interior Minister	5	-	-	2	4	-	11
Total	27	3	3	17	9	1	60
%Share in positions	45	5	5	28.4	15	1.6	100
%Share in population	44.15	10.53	7.57	14.1	15.42	3.57	*95.34

**Source:** Borrowed data from Mehtab Ali Shah, The Foreign Policy of Pakistan: Ethnic Impacts on Diplomacy, 1971-1994, pp 222-226, then calculated and tabulated self.

**Note:** \* Remaining 4.66% of the population speaks other languages.

The posts of senior diplomats are considered as privileges. Table 14 shows the overrepresentation of three relatively dominant groups i.e. Punjabis, Mohajirs, and Pashtuns. While Baloch and Siraikis have no representation, Sindhis are also underrepresented here.

**Table 14:** Ethnic Origins of Senior Diplomats posted abroad (1971-1997)

Incumbent	Punjabi	Siraikii	Mohajir	Sindhi	Pashtun	Baloch	Total
Ambassador to Washington	6	-	4	1	-	-	11
Ambassador to Moscow	5	-	2	-	-	-	7
Ambassador to London	8	-	1	-	2	-	11
Ambassador to New Delhi	6	-	-	-	2	-	8
Ambassador to Beijing	2	-	3	-	2	-	7
Ambassador to Kabul	5	-	-	-	3	-	8
Ambassador to Tehran	6	-	1	1	4	-	12
Ambassador to Riyadh	7	-	-	-	1	-	8
Total	45	0	11	2	14	0	72
% Share in Positions	62.5	0	15.3	2.8	19.4	0	100
%Share in Population	44.15	10.53	7.57	14.1	15.42	3.57	95.34*

**Source:** Borrowed data from Mehtab Ali Shah, *The Foreign Policy of Pakistan: Ethnic Impacts on Diplomacy, 1971-1994*, pp 222-226, then calculated and tabulated self.

**Note:** \* Remaining 4.66% of the population speaks other languages.

### b. Inequality and Representation in Civil Bureaucracy

Mohajirs enjoyed overrepresentation in civil bureaucracy through out Pakistan’s history. Although they are still over represented but there is gradual decline in their position.

Samad (1995) shows that despite their small number (7.57% in west Pakistan) they had 26.8% representation in West Pakistan civil bureaucracy.

**Table 15:** Ethnic Representation in the civil service of West Pakistan (Now Pakistan)

Mother tongue	Punjabi	Pashtun	Urdu	Sindhi	Baloch	Others
%Representation (1960s)	51	9.40	26.80	8.63	0.50	6.67
% Population (1960s)	66.39	8.47	7.57	12.59	2.49	2.37

**Source:** Obtained from (a nation in turmoil, Yunas Samad, 1995, p. 195)

The study of 1970s indicates the continuity of established trends in representation in civil bureaucracy. Table 6 shows the under representation of Baloch and Sindhis and the continued overrepresentation of the Mohajirs, while the Punjabis were some what underrepresented in relation to their share of population.

Charles H. Kennedy’s work on “Bureaucracy in Pakistan” is one the most systematic empirical studies. This study also indicates that Balochistan (homeland of Balochs) and Rural Sindh (predominately Sindhis region) are least represented in civil bureaucracy. On the other hand, the Urban Sindh (Karachi, Hyderabad, and Sukkar), the Mohajirs are in majority in this region, and are over represented. Punjab and NWFP, the homelands of Punjabis and Pashtuns respectively, have representation according to their share.

**Table 16:** Regional Representation of Federal Bureaucracy (1973-83)

Region	Quota	All (1973)	Gazetted (1973)	All(1983)	Gazetted (1983)
Punjab	50.00	49.20	53.5	54.9	55.80
NWFP	11.50	10.50	7.00	13.4	11.60
Urban Sindh	7.60	30.10	33.50	17.4	20.20
Rural Sindh	11.40	3.01	2.70	5.4	5.10
Balochistan	3.50	2.50	1.50	3.4	3.10
Northern areas	4.00	2.60	1.30	3.6	3.40
Azad Kashmir	2.00	1.80	0.50	1.9	0.90
Total	100	84,749	6,011	134,310	11, 816

**Source:** Obtained from Charles H. Kennedy, 1987.

**Note:** Quota roughly represents the %share of population (Islamabad is included in Punjab; urban Sind is composed of Karachi, Hyderabad, and Sukkar)

### c. Inequality and Representation in Military

Pakistan remained unable to develop a democratic system of governance, so the military played a vital role through out history. While it ruled directly during Ayub Khan Period 1958-1969, Zia-ul-Haq regime 1977-88, and Pervez Musharaf period 1999-2008, it also remained influential during civilian interludes.

There is lack of information about the ethnic origins of military personnel in Pakistan. However, data on the ethnic division of military pensioners, given in Table# 17, confirms the over representation of Punjab, the homeland of Punjabis, and NWFP, the homeland of Pashtuns. It is pertinent to point out that ‘the concentration of ex-servicemen in Sindh is in two districts, Karachi and Hyderabad, and ‘the greater share of Sindhi officers shown here does not mean that these are all ethnic Sindhis. It refers to the induction of new Sindhis, or migrants from Muslim minority provinces in India, popularly known as Mohajirs, most of who settled in Sindh (Siddiqua, A. 2007).

**Table 17:** Administrative/Ethnic Division of Military Pensioners

Administrative Unit	Punjab	Sindh	NWFP	Balochistan	Islamabad	N/Areas	AJ & K
Officer Cadre	70%	14%	8%	1%	5%	0%	2%
JCOs & Other ranks	71%	4%	12%	0%	1%	3%	9%
Share of Population	55.63%	22.99%	13.41%	4.96%	0.61%	---	----

**Source:** Obtained from Ayesha Siddiqua, Military INC., 2007.

The comparative analysis of the amount of military and civilian pension is shown in Table # 18. The amount depicts the gravity of the loss of non-existence in military for certain segments.

**Table 18:** Comparative sizes of military and civilian pensions

Year	Military Pension (Rs.Billions)	Civil Pensions (Rs.Billions)
2001-02	26.415	5.393
2002-03	33.494	6.130
2003-04	30.826	6.372
2004-05	30.181	6.156

**Source:** Obtained From Ayesha Siddiqua, Military INC., 2007.

## V. Conclusion

The main focus of this study was to explore the connection between poverty and lack of Power-sharing in Pakistan. The paper suggests that Punjabis in Punjab, Siraikis in Southern Punjab, Sindhis in rural Sindh, Mohajirs in urban Sindh, Pashtuns in NWFP, and Balochis are in majority in Balochistan.

We found that there are quite significant regional disparities in terms of social development in Pakistan. Balochistan, rural Sindh, and southern Punjab are relatively underdeveloped. The three communities (Balochs, Sindhis, and Siraikis) that reside in these regions have less access to power. They have least representation in military and civil bureaucracy – institutions that have greater influence in Pakistani politics. Additionally, these marginalized communities have also limited access to political positions.

Therefore, the evidence seems to suggest that there is some relationship between the underdevelopment of these regions and the exclusion of Balochis, Sindhis, and Siraikis from power structure of Pakistan. It appears that the marginality of deprived communities has restricted them from effective participation in policymaking and implementation of poverty alleviation programmes. So, this study suggests that effectiveness of poverty alleviation programmes lies in the inclusion of the marginalized communities. Hence, power sharing is the key to success in poverty alleviation programmes in Pakistan and elsewhere.

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