ANALYSING HOW MOHALLA COMMITTEES CONTRIBUTE TO MAINTAINING LAW AND ORDER, SHAPING SOCIOECONOMIC DYNAMICS, AND AUTONOMOUSLY ADDRESSING LOCAL ADMINISTRATIVE CHALLENGES: A CASE STUDY OF ORANGI TOWN, KARACHI

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Abstract

The research focuses on role of Mohalla committee in the maintenance of the security, management of socioeconomic statuses and the addressing of local management issues in Orangi Town, Karachi. Using a blend of quantitative, research was carried out among the residents and stakeholders through the surveys. The study showed significant links between socioeconomic situations, local boards and the provision of peace and security. The results shows that the socioeconomic issues and the governance limitations were crucial hindrance. The outcomes shows that a multidimensional strategy needs to be considered in local government and neighbourhood programs in informal settlements.

Keywords: Mohalla committee, Socioeconomic management, Local governance

1.   INTRODUCTION
1.1.   Background of the research problem

Karachi, the largest city and economic hub of Pakistan, faces a myriad of political, administrative, and socio-economic challenges that significantly impact its urban governance and development. The city's governance structure is marked by overlapping authorities among federal, provincial, and local governments. This fragmentation often results in confusion, inefficiency, and a lack of accountability. For instance, road construction within the same area may involve multiple levels of government, leading to delays, duplication of efforts, and misallocation of resources (Hasan, 2020). Additionally, the local government's limited authority and resources further exacerbate these issues, impeding their ability to effectively manage essential urban services such as sewage systems, street lighting, parks, and roads (Ahmed & Sohail, 2021).

The gap between the government and its citizens is particularly evident in the management of essential services, including sewerage, street lighting, and infrastructure development. Law and order, employment, and access to public services are persistently pressing issues that remain unresolved.

According to the 2020 census, around 60% of Orangi Town's population lives in informal settlements, where unemployment and poverty are pervasive, with almost one-fourth of the residents struggling to survive (Waseem, 2022). The high population density, which is two or more times greater than in other cities, exacerbates these challenges, placing immense pressure on housing, public transport, and service delivery (Ishaque, Mahesar, & Khan, 2018).

Major challenges in Orangi Town include garbage collection managed by the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board and the UC Office, street lighting managed by the UC Office, sewage and water supply managed by the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation, parks managed by the Karachi Municipal Corporation (KMC) and Town Municipal Office, and road and street maintenance overseen by KMC and the Town Municipal Corporation (TMC). Social development and resolution of issues are also critical, with some areas, such as Orangi Town Sector 15 A, having successfully managed these issues through the efforts of the Mohalla Committee. Because local conditions provide challenges in this regard, the role of the Mohalla Committees in combating these multiple issues necessitates an in-depth exploration of their impact on these issues – as related to maintaining law

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and order, dealing with socioeconomic factors, and in this case autonomously addressing local administrative issues.

1.2. Research significance and contribution

This study has serious implications for regulators since its outcomes will be of great essence to come up with future policies. Through examining the way in which the Orangi Town Mohalla committees' function in the areas of law and order, community development and local administration this study intends to draw the attention of those who are interested in the area about the inner workings of the local governance systems in informal urban settlements. The research findings will inform policymakers and urban planners as they are the tools for shaping the agenda and strategies that achieve the ultimate goals of the initiatives; thereby, guiding policy formulation to be more inclusive and responsive to the needs of the marginalised communities (Ahmed, 2023). In addition to this contribution to the literature by further developing the bottom-up model of governance, this investigation helps us to expand our knowledge in this area, revealing mechanisms of participation of civil society on the one hand and providing empirical evidence for the theories on the quality and forms of local governance and urban development in the context of the fast-growing cities in the South.

1.3. Research Questions
i. How do Mohalla Committees in Orangi Town, Karachi contribute to maintaining law and order within their respective localities?
ii. What roles do Mohalla Committees play in shaping the socioeconomic dynamics of Orangi Town, Karachi, and how do they interact with other local stakeholders?
iii. How effectively do Mohalla Committees autonomously address local administrative challenges in Orangi Town, Karachi, and what factors contribute to their success or limitations in this regard?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Urban informal settlements, notably, Orangi Town in Karachi, have been the subject of multiple studies on the issue of community-owned initiatives as well as the emergence of participatory government whenever grassroots governance structures can be traced. Janssen, (2021) investigated the impact of local committees' existence in informal settlements. The study stated that these committees contributed to social cohesion and solving common problems. Their study highlighted the role of community partnership in the decision-making processes and the pertinence of establishing institutionalised support for such initiatives. Also, Farooq (2023) has shown that in such situations people who live in poor conditions or have no power are still able to work together and find things in their town that exist with the rest of the community. The topic of urban governance and public administration was researched by Naqvi, Poorthuis and Govind, (2021) concerning the level of effectiveness of the local administrative bodies in their quest to provide for the needs of informal settlements in Karachi. The findings pinpointed the inadequacy of local authorities to deliver basic services and build necessary infrastructural facilities amidst many urban areas' expanding scarce resources, thus, calling for innovative mechanisms in the regulation. Similarly, Khan, (2022); and Cheema, (2020) undertook a study focused on the urban governance models within South Asia and this shows that inclusion and community participation are key to inclusive development. Anwar et al., (2022) have investigated the socioeconomic aspect of people living in slums through studies that sought to determine the effect of the settlements on the lives of the residents. Fazal and Hotez, (2020) looked at the connection between the poor and urbanization in Karachi. The study concluded that those who lived in poor urban regions had too many social and economic problems. Through the research, the researcher highlighted the urgent need for well-focused interventions that furnish outcomes concerning alleviating poverty, unemployment, and access to vital services for the downtrodden (Ahmed and Khan, 2020).
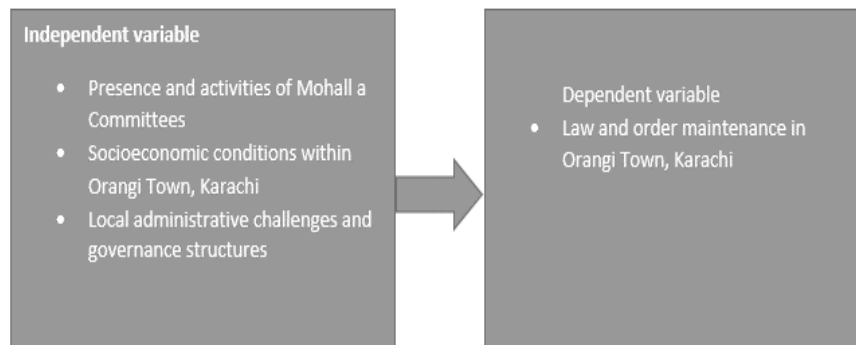
Ahmad and Bt. Abu Talib argued that community development initiatives in Pakistan require continues support from local government to boost local rural economies. Likewise, community-local government participatory development strategies can attain strong local ownership and empowerment among rural communities. Bennett (2002) reported empowerment as a tool to enhance local community (individuals as well as groups) capacities and assets. Improvement in community capacity is not only helpful to engage communities in development process, but also a source to influence local institutions decisions which affect their lives. Moreover, Narayan and Petesch (2002) illustrated that a communities are considered empowered if they participate in decision making activities, have capacity and resources to fulfil unmet needs and have access to timely and understandable information. The subsequent portion highlights each component and its contribution in rural development.

2.1. Conceptual framework

The first independent variable is the present and activities of Mohalla committees. The most crucial roles the groups assigned to every neighbourhood play are to make key decisions, settle problems and provide the needed services. A grasp of the boundaries and responsibilities of the Mohalla Committees is vital to evaluate the

role of grassroots structures of social governance in the betterment of local communities and unity (Ishaque, Mahesar and Khan, 2018). Next, socioeconomic features within Orangi Town independently represent one of the biggest areas of influence. That which will lift the level of life of residents, their access to basic facilities and the avenues for people's job creation impressively influence the social life of the people and enhance stability. The local administrative issues and government structures greatly influence the institutional environment surrounding the region (Jamal, 2019). Problems like bureaucratic incompetency, corruption, and limited accountability may put good governance as well as excellent service delivery on hold (Ahmed, 2023). The dependent variable in this study, law and order conservancy in Orangi Town, Karachi, exemplifies the outcome of different socio-political, public and institutional factors. It is a large field that includes providing for safety, deterring crime, and maintaining the functioning of justice within the local area.

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

2.2. Hypotheses

H_1: There is a significant positive relationship between the Presence and activities of Mohalla Committees and Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town, Karachi

H_2: There is a significant positive relationship between Socioeconomic conditions within Orangi Town, Karachi and Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town, Karachi

H_3: There is a significant positive relationship between Local administrative challenges governance structures and Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town, Karachi

3. METHOD

The research data collection was done by using questionnaires which were distributed among the residents and stakeholders of Orangi Town, Karachi. 100 respondents were considered an adequate sample size hence ensuring an overall margin of error of plus or minus five percent of the community and a reflection of the diverse perspectives among the community. Close-ended questions with a Likert scale that were formulated to serve as the basis of quantitative data analysis were applied. Firstly, the actual sampling process started by identifying different neighbourhoods in Orangi town and sampling with concern to various population strata and geographic representation was of paramount importance. First, the questionnaire was distributed to the council members, community leaders and stakeholders who were engaged within the area to recommend proper areas where there is a combination of features such as different income/socioeconomic characteristics, infrastructure and community dynamics. Following this, a stratified sampling approach was applied to other participants following the definite criteria of strata which are related to age, gender, occupation and years in residence (Bhangu, Provost and Caduff, 2023). This tactic was adopted to deliver an optimum picture which depicts the sample concerning the demographic composition of Orangi and any difference in opinions as the result of various segments of the population. Furthermore, the data was examined using the SPSS. The descriptive statistics and frequency analysis were done to display responses to every question in the questionnaire. In the case of inferential statistics, two methods — correlation analysis and regression modelling — were used to discover relationships between different variables, with strong predictors provided for law-and-order conservation.

4. FINDINGS
4.1. Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics in appendix 2 reveal that a survey based on a Likert scale was carried out, wherein, the responses of each participant were rated on a scale from 1 to 5 and these were questioned from Q1 to Q11. The average scores for the consequences questions range from 3.36 to 3.79 this metric reflects the positiveness of the participants' impression, which made them feel better. Overall, the peak scores are shown for Q8 with the value of 3. 79, which translates to participants' responding to either agree or strongly to the statement in the question. In contrast to the upper average score for Q1, the lowest average score is seen in Q4 for 3 points. The

area of measures of central tendency is to check the median values of scored questions and it yields 3-4 so that a similar distribution of answers for these questions around the middle of the scale is visible. This contention is additionally reinforced by the modals with correspond to the frequency of majority which is 4 in most questions. Nevertheless, for Q9, the median answer is 3 showing the shift in the distribution of the answers for this certain question. Statistical data of the standard deviations gives information for how many responses are to the near-mean of each question. Higher SD values mean the responses to the survey are more variable, while lower values suggest common patterns in answers as opposed to individual distinctions (Oh and Pyrczak, 2023). Apart from this dataset, the standard deviation values vary from 0.89 to 1.

4.1: Descriptive Statistics

Items	Mean	Standard Error	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation	Sample Variance
Q1	3.370	0.102	3.500	4.000	1.022	1.044
Q2	3.640	0.106	4.000	4.000	1.059	1.122
Q3	3.510	0.107	4.000	4.000	1.068	1.141
Q4	3.360	0.108	4.000	4.000	1.078	1.162
Q5	3.660	0.123	4.000	4.000	1.233	1.520
Q6	3.630	0.106	4.000	4.000	1.060	1.124
Q7	3.670	0.089	4.000	4.000	0.888	0.789
Q8	3.790	0.102	4.000	4.000	1.018	1.036
Q9	3.500	0.092	3.000	3.000	0.916	0.838
Q10	3.780	0.091	4.000	4.000	0.905	0.820
Q11	3.780	0.091	4.000	4.000	0.905	0.820

4.2. Correlation analysis

The analysis of correlation as shown in Appendix 3 shows the strength and direction of the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables. The P value of Presence and Activities of Mohalla Committees is 0.611 which shows a positive and significant relation with law-and-order maintenance in Orangi town Karachi. The P value of Socioeconomic conditions within Orangi Town Karachi is 0.965 which shows a positive and significant relation with law-and-order maintenance in Orangi Town Karachi. The P value of Local administrative challenges and governance structures is 0.989 which shows a positive and significant relation with law-and-order maintenance in Orangi town Karachi.

4.2: Correlation Analysis

		Presenceandacti vitiesofMohalla Committees	Socioeconomicc onditionswithin OrangiTownKar achi	Localadministra tivechallengesan dgovernancestru ctures
Presence and activities of Mohalla Committees	Pearson Correlation	1	.653**	.617**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	100	100	100
Socioeconomic conditions within Orangi Town Karachi	Pearson Correlation	.653**	1	.967**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	100	100	100
Local administrative challenges and governance structures	Pearson Correlation	.617**	.967**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	100	100	100
Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town Karachi	Pearson Correlation	.611**	.965**	.989**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000
	N	100	100	100

		Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town Karachi
Presence and activities of Mohalla Committees	Pearson Correlation	.611
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100
Socioeconomic conditions within Orangi Town Karachi	Pearson Correlation	.965**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100
Local administrative challenges and governance structures	Pearson Correlation	.989**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100
Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town Karachi	Pearson Correlation	1**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	100

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.3. Regression analysis

By analysing the model summary as shown in Appendix 4, it was concluded that it has a very good explanatory factor, illustrated by the high R-square value of 0. 980, which may imply that in the last equation, independent variables, encompassing 98% of deviation, tend to be essential predictors of the dependent variable. Besides, the sample F ratio of 1567.382 shows that it is highly significant, which is evidence that the regression model is a good model for the data. The ANOVA table found a significance of the regression model again, expressed by a significant value of F which was 1567. Therefore, the F-test statistic shows the correlation between the independent and dependent variables is significant in our model compared with the null hypothesis, where all regression coefficients are equal to zero. Through a close look at the analysis of independent variables, it is apparent that all three predictors which completely include the presence and operations of the Mohalla committees, the socioeconomic standards of the Orangi town, Karachi, and the challenge of the local administration and rules in places are the key factors that have an impact that is statistically significant when its comes to the maintenance of the rule of law.

Table 4.3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.990ª	.980	.979	.1433	.980	1567.832	3

Model	Change Statistics	
	df2	Sig. F Change
1	96ª	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Local administrative challenges and governance structures, Presence and activities of Mohalla Committees, Socio economic conditions within Orangi Town Karachi

Table 4.4: ANOVAª

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	96.602	3	32.201	1567.832	.000ᵇ
	Residual	1.972	96	.021		
	Total	98.573	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town Karachi
b. Predictors: (Constant), Local administrative challenges and governance structures, Presence and activities of Mohalla Committees, Socio economic conditions within Orangi Town Karachi

Table 4.5: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.066	.034		-1.922	.058
	Presence and activities of Mohalla Committees	-.016	.024	-.013	-.656	.513
	Socio economic conditions within Orangi Town Karachi	.144	.060	.142	2.406	.018
	Local administrative challenges and governance structures	.842	.056	.860	15.138	.000

5.   DISCUSSION
5.1.   H1- There is a significant positive relationship between the Presence and activities of Mohalla Committees and Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town, Karachi

The acceptance of this hypothesis shows that Mohalla Committees serve other purposes related to social capital, community engagement, and neighbourhood problem-solving and their existence did seem to have a great influence on keeping law and order. It thus brings out the essence of understanding the nuance of factors that affect community safety and the limitations of getting grassroots-driven initiatives to deal with complex urban challenges (Jamal, 2019). Moving forward, it calls for a holistic approach to integrate community-driven initiatives into larger governance reforms and socioeconomic interventions towards creating safer and more resilient urban environments.

5.2.   H2- There is a significant positive relationship between Socioeconomic conditions within Orangi Town, Karachi and Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town, Karachi

Hypothesis 2 acceptance is shown from the findings and shows that areas with better socioeconomic indicators, such as higher income levels, more improved access to education, and better infrastructural facilities, tend to display improved law and order outcomes. Such findings enhance the need for levelling the socio-economic disparities and investments in initiatives for community development to help build public safety and well-being in urban informal settlements such as Orangi Town. This will be done through the improvement of living conditions and economic opportunity for the residents, making it contribute to creating safer, more resilient communities (Ahmed, 2023).

5.3.   H3- There is a significant positive relationship between Local administrative challenges and governance structures and Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town, Karachi

For Hypothesis 3, the correlation analysis confirmed that there exists a positive and significant relationship between the two variables of local administrative challenges and governance structures in the maintenance of law and order. The evidence indicates that "the more sound the governance mechanisms present in a city, the better the law and order in the region, and thus governance is playing a pivotal role in creating safety for the general public and maintenance of sociable order in an area (Bhangu, Provost and Caduff, 2023)." Therefore, there is the requirement to "cure the problem of bureaucratic inefficiencies, by way of increasing transparency and accountability" as well as enhancing "administrative capabilities at the local level so that a meaningful environment for law enforcement and community partnership can be made available."

6.   CONCLUSION

The analysis revealed complicated notions of how to maintain law and order in Orangi Town, Karachi and the factors that usually lead to an unsafe environment. Under the circumstances, the Mohalla Committees and all their related activities were found to be the key predictors. The result emphasised the role of socioeconomic conditions and local administration problems which are the main hurdles in maintaining a law-and-order environment. Even more than this, beyond law-and-order maintenance, better socioeconomic conditions can be associated with efficient governance mechanisms that could be attributed to the bureaucracy being improved significantly which made the problem of poor, unemployed, and corrupted people in urban informal settlements to be history books. On top of that, the particularity of ethnicity space has a severe limitation and cannot be perforce generalized to other slums/areas without further validation. Besides the constraints outlined above, the findings still assist the growth of urban administration and community security research field. Future research should implement long-term designs and extend their account to more variables to develop a comprehensive model of the regulation and maintenance of order in the urban areas based on obtained results.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1. Enhance the Role of Mohalla Committees

- **Expansion of Responsibilities**: Define and expand Mohalla Committees' roles to include garbage collection, street lighting, sewerage maintenance, and law and order issues.
- **Collaboration with Local Authorities**: Establish and formalize collaboration with relevant departments, including the Police Department and municipal services, for effective issue resolution.
- **Capacity Building**: Provide training and resources to improve Mohalla Committees' operational capacity.

7.2. Policy for Local Leadership Emergence and Election

- **Transparent Election Procedures**: Create transparent processes for electing local leaders, including:
  - **Community Nominations**: Allow community-based nominations.
  - **Secure Voting Methods**: Implement secure voting methods, such as community meetings or electronic voting.
  - **Regular Updates**: Keep residents informed about elections.

7.3. Fund Collection and Expenditure Management

- **Structured Financial Framework**: Develop a financial framework for Mohalla Committees:
  - **Fundraising Guidelines**: Set guidelines for fundraising and reporting.
  - **Expenditure Tracking**: Track and audit expenditures.
  - **Public Reporting**: Require transparent financial reporting to the community.

7.4. Use of Technology for Public Communication

- **Citizen Portal**: Implement a citizen portal for communication:
  - **Issue Reporting**: Allow residents to report and track issues.
  - **Feedback Mechanisms**: Provide tools for feedback.
  - **Information Access**: Offer access to service information and committee activities.
- **Mobile Apps and Online Platforms**: Introduce technology to enhance engagement:
  - **Service Requests**: Enable service requests and tracking.
  - **Real-Time Updates**: Provide updates on services and activities.
  - **Community Engagement**: Use technology for resident input and engagement.

7.5. Liaison with Various Departments

- **Local Government Agencies**: Establish formal liaison with municipal departments for coordination on:
  - **Garbage Collection**: Coordinate with waste management services to ensure effective collection and disposal.
  - **Street Lighting**: Work with the electrical department to address lighting issues and maintenance.
  - **Sewerage**: Collaborate with the sewerage department for infrastructure maintenance and repairs.
- **Law Enforcement**: Partner with the Police Department to:
  - **Law and Order**: Develop strategies for maintaining public safety and addressing crime.
  - **Community Policing**: Implement community policing initiatives and programs.
- **Public Works**: Liaise with the Public Works Department for:
  - **Infrastructure Projects**: Coordinate on local infrastructure improvements and repairs with the support of UC.
  - **Maintenance Services**: Address maintenance needs and service requests.
- **Health and Social Services**: Work with health and social service departments to:
  - **Community Health**: Address public health issues and promote health services.
  - **Social Welfare**: Coordinate social welfare programs and support services.
- **Education and Youth Services**: Collaborate with educational and youth services departments to:
  - **Educational Programs**: Support local schools and educational initiatives.
  - **Youth Engagement**: Develop programs and activities for youth engagement and development.

7.6. Public Engagement and Trust Building

- **Community Involvement**: Engage residents in decision-making:
  - **Regular Consultations**: Conduct community consultations and feedback sessions.
  - **Transparency**: Maintain transparency in decision-making and implementation.

      o **Recognition and Resources**: Provide recognition and resources to Mohalla Committees to build credibility and effectiveness.

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Appendix

1- Questionnaire

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Presence and activities of Mohalla Committees					
The Mohalla Committee in my locality effectively communicates with residents regarding security concerns.					
The Mohalla Committee organizes regular meetings to address community issues and concerns.					
Residents feel empowered to participate in decision-making processes led by the Mohalla Committee.					
Socioeconomic conditions within Orangi Town, Karachi:					
Economic opportunities are accessible and evenly distributed across different neighbourhoods within Orangi Town.					
Social services such as education and healthcare are adequately provided for all residents of Orangi Town.					
There is a noticeable improvement in infrastructure and living standards in Orangi Town over the past few years.					
Local administrative challenges and governance structures:					
Local authorities effectively respond to complaints and requests submitted by residents of Orangi Town.					
Transparency and accountability are maintained in the allocation and utilization of public resources within Orangi Town.					
Residents have confidence in the ability of local administrative bodies to address pressing issues and deliver effective governance.					
Law and order maintenance in Orangi Town, Karachi:					
Residents feel safe walking alone in their neighborhood during the day.					
Incidents of theft, vandalism, and other crimes are promptly reported and effectively addressed by law enforcement authorities in Orangi Town.					
There is a visible police presence in Orangi Town, which contributes to deterring criminal activities and ensuring public safety.					