

**EXAMINING THE DEFENSE OF
BLASPHEMY LAWS IN PAKISTAN: THE
CASE OF TEHREEK-E-LABBAIK
PAKISTAN**

A Thesis

**Submitted to the Master's Study Program of Political Science at the
Faculty of Social Sciences in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of**

Master of Arts (M.A.)



by:

Hamad Shoukat

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UNIVERSITAS ISLAM INTERNASIONAL INDONESIA

DEPOK

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ABSTRACT

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The rise of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) from a small religious party to a political force in Pakistani politics has been rapid. TLP, a significant political group in favour of blasphemy laws, has rallied Pakistani citizens to mobilize under the banner of Bareilvi Islam. The political ascension of Bareilvi Islam in Pakistan is highly influenced by anti-blasphemy movements, particularly TLP's. The political interpretation of Bareilvi Islam by TLP has led to a transformation from an open religious culture into an exclusive and stringent religious affair centred on reverence for the Prophet Muhammad. This transformation has fueled a surge in anti-blasphemy action, as TLP follows a populist approach to build a support base for its cause. Critics of TLP's position are perceived as adversaries of Islam and the Prophet. The popularity of TLP can be attributed to the recognition of the hierarchy between religious leaders and their followers, the explosion of social media, and TLP's hypervigilant and proactive responses to global cases of blasphemy over the past decade. In this light, the study aims to gain a deeper understanding of TLP's engagement in Pakistani politics. The researcher will employ the library research and qualitative method to analyze documents such as articles, reports, books, and journals. Thematic analysis of data from various sources, including papers, speeches, and the media, will underscore religious discourse, blasphemy legislation, and social media mobilization. The TLP movement has become an essential chapter in the political history of Pakistan, reflecting the dynamism of the struggle to address the issue of blasphemy within the country.

Keywords: *Tehreek-E-Labbaik Pakistan, Blasphemy Laws, Bareilvi Islam, Populist Approach, Social Media Mobilization.*

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TABLE 1
IDEOLOGIES

ISLAMIC POLITICAL PARTIES AND THEIR

ABBREVIATION DIRECTORY

<i>TLP</i>	: <i>Tehreek-E-Labbaik Pakistan</i>
<i>JI</i>	: <i>Jamat-E-Islami</i>
<i>JUI</i>	: <i>Jamiat Ulma-E-Islam</i>
<i>MJAH</i>	: <i>Markaz Jamiat-E-Ahli Hadith</i>
<i>JUP</i>	: <i>Jamiat-E-Ulama Pakistan</i>
<i>ST</i>	: <i>Sunni Tehreek</i>
<i>SMT</i>	: <i>Social Movement Theory</i>
<i>RMT</i>	: <i>Resource Mobilization Theory</i>

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

After Pakistani governor Suleman Taseer criticized the nation's blasphemy legislation, a guard from the Punjab Elite Force assassinated him. The governor, who had just visited the president and minister of information, was being escorted by more than a dozen bodyguards at the time. After Taseer was hit, Qadri unloaded his pistol, reloaded it, and fired another burst of 30 rounds at him. Immediately after being hit, the governor fell on the roadside. Taseer had met a man in the market beforehand, and the police were looking for him, along with the guard. The governor was declared deceased upon arrival at the Federal Government Services Hospital.

The security detail was brought before the police to be questioned. At the Kohsar Market Islamabad, the assassination, the response, and the investigation continued to take center stage. Responding to Taseer's criticism of blasphemy legislation, Interior Minister Rehman Malik said he had been "instigated" to announce the governor's death. There were 184 documented incidents of blasphemy in Pakistan between 2014 and 2018, as stated in the 2020 annual report of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom. The case of Tasser is one of a number of blasphemy cases, which have never been more prevalent than now in every country that was part of the study. (Report, USC 2020).

In the modern history of religion and politics in Pakistan, anti-blasphemy activity stands out. Religious nationalism and the incorporation of religious parties into Pakistan's election process form the basis of the country's contemporary political culture. Cleric Khadim Hussain Rizvi established the emerging religiopolitical party, that is Tehreek Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), in August 2015. Rizvi belonged to the Barelvi Party. In the latter part of the 19th century, in the Indian city of Bareilly, a reformist movement known as Barelvi emerged within Sunni Islam. Barelvi's influence is one of several reasons for this theological change (Sanyal, U. 2012). Barelvi Muslims claim to be the incarnation of Sufi Islam, which seeks to advance the path of devotion to the Prophet Muhammad as a means of fostering love for the Divine (Philippon, A. 2014).

According to several scholars, Barelvi is a neo-Sufi school that incorporates classic Islamic beliefs. Moreover, it seems that the Deobandi school of thought is opposed by the Barelvi school of Islam (Akhtar, M., kahan, D., & Mukhtar, A. 2022). In pre-independence India,

there also emerged Sunni reformists from the Deobandi school of thought. They were inspired by Wahhabism's austere Islamic philosophy, and they condemned Sufi rites. For the Barelvi people of modern-day Pakistan, the most prominent religious political party is TLP. With "2.2 million votes", TLP became the fifth-largest political party in the nation in the 2018 general elections, proving its popularity (Report, ECP. 2019). TLP's capacity to rally huge crowds for anti-blasphemy rallies in Pakistan in recent years has also contributed to their rise to prominence in Pakistani politics.

This study's primary objective is to investigate the factors contributing to TLP's widespread support and electoral success. There have been revolutionary shifts in Pakistani society's outlook throughout the last forty years, especially after the Islamization campaign in the 1980s during General Zia-ul-Haq's tyrannical rule. Crucially, mainstream Sufi-Sunni Islam has undergone a dramatic metamorphosis into an austere and dogmatic religious tradition.

I argue that in its constant interaction and counter-dialogue with more conventional schools of thought, including the Deobandi school of thought, the neo-Sufi Barelvi school of thought has recognized the influence of orthodox Islam. As a result, TLP's political strategy in Pakistan has turned its attention to anti-blasphemy, which has conventionally altered popular Sufism (Samin, N. 2022). TLP's appreciation of blasphemy as a sign of reverence for the Prophet enables it to preserve the Sufi emphasis on feelings in the contemporary day. TLP's success as an anti-blasphemy political party is a glaring example of the effects of emotional repertoires that incite rage from TLP believers against the Prophet's blasphemy since they profess to revere his figure. In addition to Barelvi's impact, the nation's anti-blasphemy laws have contributed to the legitimacy of extreme anti-blasphemy advocacy. Since the government enacted anti-blasphemy legislation, there has been a discernible increase in extrajudicial murders in Pakistan related to blasphemy (Saiya, N. 2017). TLP is an outgrowth of the emerging Barelvi religious culture, which views the anti-blasphemy vigilantes as heroes. (Interview, Al-Jazeera. 2019).

I make the case that TLP's ascent represents a noteworthy shift in Pakistan's political and religious environment. In fact, TLP managed to get only three seats in the Sindh provincial parliament and none in the provincial legislatures of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, or Balochistan. It also failed to secure any seats in the national assembly. Nevertheless, it demonstrated its popularity as a growing Islamist party in Pakistan by garnering 4.4 million votes in the 2018 general elections, making it the country's fifth-largest party in terms of votes (Statistical Report, ECP, 2019).

In Pakistan's national elections, Islamist parties have never taken the majority. Because it is stated in Pakistan's official ideology and constitution that God is the sovereign, their

influence remained in their capacity to use street power to demand the establishment of Islamic rule in God's state. TLP is significant because it has shown support in Punjab and Sindh provinces, which together account for around 70 percent of Pakistan's total population. These provinces, influenced by Sufi Islam, resisted the harsh Islamist ideology of political Islamists including as Jamat-i-Islami and Jamiat Ulama Islam, as well as Jihadist groups like the Tehreek Taliban Pakistan.

Because of its alleged Sufi ties, TLP can mobilize the Barelvi community in Punjab and Sindh to stage massive rallies in the streets and put pressure on the government to abide by their demands about anti-blasphemy laws. As was already noted, TLP showed great promise as a political force in the 2018 general elections. The party used incredible street force to accomplish its goals. Over the last four years, the Barelvi discourse, as embodied by TLP, has attained a level of political relevance never seen. The Pakistani parliament's 2017 presentation of the Khatam-e-Nabuwat bill, which TLP strongly condemned, is the cause for the party's rising popularity in the nation. The party protested the legislation and the Supreme Court of Pakistan's decision to acquit Asia Bibibi, a Christian lady convicted of blasphemy, by staging a three-week sit-in at the Faizabad intersection in Islamabad.

In 2011, TLP also backed Salman Taseer, the Punjab governor, in his assassination. Taseer has advocated loudly for the country's antiquated blasphemy laws to be updated. Mumtaz Qadri, Taseer's personal bodyguard and trained commando, assassinated him under the excuse of being against blasphemy. TLP began violent demonstrations around the country in 2016 when the Supreme Court of Pakistan ordered Qadri's death on the grounds that he had killed Mr. Taseer. Subsequently, TLP exerted pressure on the government to remove the French ambassador, citing France's backing of *Charlie Hebdo*, a weekly humorous journal that included cartoons of the Prophet.

Pakistan's blasphemy laws have garnered attention because of their propensity to be used by conservative factions within the community to suppress and victimize religious minorities, including Ahmadis, Christians, Hindus, and Shias. Blasphemy laws provide legal protection for the problem of blasphemy; however, they have been subject to criticism from human rights advocates, liberal groups, and minority religious communities in Pakistan on several occasions. Despite this, Barelvi Muslims are the dominant religion in Pakistan, and the voices of these communities have consistently impeded discussions over anti-blasphemy laws. This illustrates the emotive significance of the Prophet Muhammad problem (Sanyal, U. 2012).

Moreover, TLP presents itself as a religiopolitical group that resists denigration of Islam in particular. TLP's anti-blasphemy goal is universally supported by the other Barelvi political

and religious parties, including Dawat-e-Islami (Invitation to Islam), Sunni Tehreek (ST, The Sunni Movement), and Sunni Ittehad Council (The Council of Sunni Unity). TLP serves as a platform from which the whole Sunni Barelvi community in Pakistan can mobilize support for the fight against Islamophobia. All this makes TLP a political phenomenon that is perhaps like nothing Pakistan has seen before and certainly marks the first time in this country's history that a religious party — one devoted to the Barelvi faith — has managed to poll more votes than any other Islamist party in general elections. It has also mobilized massive crowds in Punjab and other major cities. Besides the Barelvi, the anti-blasphemy law in the country has given legitimacy to extreme anti-blasphemy action. Since the passage of anti-blasphemy laws, there has been an increase in the number of people extrajudicially executed for blasphemy. Antiblephemy vigilantes are seen as heroes within the emerging Barelvi religious culture, and this is what gave birth to the TLP.

The purpose of this study is to look at the TLP's rising popularity among the public, which the party has achieved by promoting an antiblasphemy narrative. This paper provides an investigation of the popular religious culture emerging in Pakistan in the shape of Barelvi Islam, where the strict anti-blasphemy agenda of TLP has gained legitimacy, to understand the success of TLP and its social repercussions. This legitimacy enables TLP's populist agenda to be served by religious language that is binary and pits "us" against "them". In short, the present study tries to encapsulate most of the significant effects created by TLP in social narratives, legal concerns, and other related domains by studying these interrelated fields.

Problem Statement

The most debated topic under the blasphemy laws of Pakistan is whether they are set in the right way because most people use them to persecute groups such as minorities and suppress any opinion that they do not like. TLP stands for Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan, and this organization has come up as the worst example of this problem. It has drawn controversies concerning the legal oppression of free speech and assembly through violent prosecutions by TLP.

The anti-blasphemy laws in Pakistan, especially Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code, prohibit acts that defile the Quran as well as the utterance of words prosecutable under Section 295 that are repulsive to the Holy Prophet of Islam. These laws have been applied on people from different religions, especially the marginalized religions, this has seen people being charged falsely with the help of the laws and being punished severely, including being condemned to death. On one hand, there are supporters of these laws who take the position that

such laws are necessary for ensuring law and order and to prevent issues of religious conflict. On the other hand, there are critics who are of the view that many of these laws are used as a tool to oppress religious minorities and check people's freedom of speech.

The case of TLP is specifically with the coalition. The party was also criticized for using violent force and threats to implement blasphemy laws in Pakistan. TLP organized protests in 2017 against the release of a Christian woman accused of blasphemy, leading to the burning of property and death of some people. This incident brought a very sensitive aspect that allows religious parties like TLP to form blasphemy laws in Pakistan.

The question that arises is whether blasphemy laws should be defended in Pakistan or need reforms in order not to be exploited by people and thus violate the right of the citizens of the Islamic state to freedom of religion? There are those who still stand and advocate for the defense of the laws today with the reason that they offer legal grounds for addressing religious complaints and preserving the holiness of religious scriptures. On the other hand, activists for reform believe that the laws are abused to oppress religious minorities and inhibit freedom of speech and that by reforming them, people's religious rights will be protected from persecution.

Research Authenticity

The non-fiction characteristic of this work is most effectively rooted in its accuracy, seeing as the interferential relationships between states, social structures, and individuals are clearly illustrated here in blasphemy in Pakistan. Hence, this study tests the findings based on the standards of relevancy and credibility within Pakistan's sociopolitical context while examining the continuous support of the public toward TLP and the general nature of TLP activists impacting the power struggles between the civilian and military government in Pakistan. Another fact is that this study does not have bias implication, which consequently makes it possible to have the consideration of sides and aspects of the issue with the present and perspective society. In this study, all aspects of TLP are discussed in detail – its complete profile, including propaganda and its effect on shaping the social construction of blasphemy laws in the eyes of the public as well as the political and economic factors that went into the formulation of these laws and the impact that TLP holds in terms of its influence on the general sociopolitical and economic structure of Pakistan, especially in its relation to the military.

Objectives

The overarching goal of this study is to deconstruct the web of influences that shape public opinion and policy on blasphemy laws in Pakistan, with a particular emphasis on TLP.

The first purpose of the study is to scrutinize the technique that TLP applies during its rallying for backing and influence through concentrating on the approaches that it applies in respect to laws and public opinion. Secondly, the measure which is to be undertaken is the exploration of the phenomenon's origin, which lies in the various political and economic aspects that have encouraged the populace of Pakistan to substantially support the antiblasphemy laws of the country. This study attempts to fill the gap in perceptions of the social and political consequences of TLP by looking into different effect domains in detail. Through library research (this will be explained further in Chapter Three), I plan to analyze the complexity of TLP's campaign for and promotion of blasphemy laws in Pakistan using as examples for scholars, decision makers, as well as the stakeholders, to fully understand the intricacy of this issue.

Research Significance

This study is of the utmost significance and the possible dynamics of blasphemy laws indeed reveal the complex relationships between religious sociocultural movements and governmental policies. That is the problem that is addressed by the retracement of Tehreek-e-Labaik's strong influence and its campaigns, which provide a very clear view about it in the country. Capturing what is at play here is fundamental for state agents, academics and ordinary citizens in their quest for a deeper grasp of the dynamics that efficiently affect the legal framework, especially regarding topics as controversial as blasphemy laws. Besides, TLP has earned massive support among the Pakistani people, as the study recognizes.

By utilizing a religious rhetorical style, this group's far-from-peaceful approach to politics succeeds because it is the point that is consistent with what a relevant majority of the society believes. Investigating the evidence of such a support draws the complicated public opinions of the issue at large, illustrates the ineptitude and shortcomings of the parliamentary parties to address public concerns about blasphemy law, and underlines the vital role of religion in politics in social development. At the same time, the work in general brings a deeper understanding of the interaction of the three crucial factors – politics, religion and law – in countries with a majority population of Muslims. By examining the role that TLP has played, we gain some advice on how religious groups can influence the framework of laws and values a society is founded on.

This appreciation is not only necessary to scholars and policymakers in Pakistan but also to the people for whom the value of dialogue in informing global politics, international

law and religion is significant. In essence, the significance of this research relies on the attempt to add to the discussions based on the underlying principles of harmonizing religious values, public sentiments and legislative decisions aspiring to attain the objectives of peace, tolerance and social cohesion in the Pakistani community.

Conceptualization

Operational Definition

Blasphemy

Blasphemy refers to all the movements or utterances that are sinful to religious images or symbols, scriptures, or prophets, specifically in Islam. In Pakistan, it is legally regulated through sections 295 and 298 of the Pakistan Penal Code PPC, which is the blasphemy law that concerns the desecration of the Quran and offending the Prophet Muhammad. (Khan, A., & Khan, M. (2020).

Islamism

Islamism is a path that opens up more opportunities for expressing oneself and realizing the masculine requirements found in cultural and religious tales, stories, and texts (such as the notion of martyrdom). There will be a heroic and holy death consequently. When there is evidence of jihadism in the past, this becomes more plausible and contributes to the collective and individual reason of Muslims (Aslam, M. (2014).

Research Questions

RQ 1: How has Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan influenced the discourse and policies surrounding blasphemy laws in Pakistan?

RQ 2: Why has Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan gained significant support among the Pakistani populace despite its confrontational politics?

Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

This study offers a new and critical perspective in the debate about the blasphemy laws in Pakistan, focusing on the enigmatic Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan. Unlike previous analyses that walk the path of religion, the following study charters a novel course toward understanding Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, using social movement theory and rational

choice theory. It offers readers a panoramic view of Pakistan's blasphemy laws and has them realize the sociopolitical, legal and historical contexts of the country to be taken into the multifarious dimensions of this very complex subject.

The study situates TLP's actions in the broader field of social movements and shows vividly the significant policy shifts and public opinion transformations the group has catalyzed. The contextual framework not only underlines the richness of understanding TLP's role but also reiterates the sociopolitical dynamism within the debate on blasphemy laws. The study, based on meticulous case studies and empirical evidence, draws out fine detail about the interactions between the blasphemy laws and TLP in Pakistani society and politics, thus providing an encompassing study on the profound impact of these laws. This study is kind of a lighthouse that guides the reader through the thicket of blasphemy laws and the influence of TLP, enriching scholarly discussions that have long awaited such enlightened input.

Weakness

While the study has made serious steps in looking at the complexity of blasphemy laws and the role of TLP, it is not entirely flawless. The principal drawback is the lack of fieldwork done due to time and logistical constraints. Obviously, this would limit the richness of firsthand insights and observations that could further enrich the analysis. This is also a potential introduction of biases given the politically and religiously sensitive nature of the subject. To analyze and interpret the motives and behavior of religious and political actors in such an atmosphere is a very challenging task, and this study appreciates that the danger exists of bias perceived to color its findings.

However, intensive focusing on TLP yields a deep exploration of that particular group, which can be lowered in generalization to other Islamist movements or different geopolitical contexts. With this kind of specificity, therefore, depth trades off with generality. In addition, qualitative data can be valuable through its depth and contextual richness; still, it does have a set of limitations. Given the subjective nature of qualitative analysis, this can impinge on the procedures and results of the study to show that there really is an inherent difficulty in trying to achieve the right balance of depth and objectivity.

These limitations underline the complexity and constraining character of scholarly research in this area, reminding us that a balance should be struck between attaining detailed insight and broad applicability. Despite these limitations, this study's contribution is

valuable. It illuminates a very sensitive subject and provides a very detailed and nuanced viewpoint on it.

CHAPTER II

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on Islamism, the state's administration of religion, and the laws of blasphemy in Pakistan, and it outlines the social movement theory framework utilized in this thesis. Also, I review previous literature on TLP to locate the organization in the academic discourse and situate my study in the lacuna. Reviewing literature on those subjects, particularly concerning Islamism in Pakistan, provides a context in which we can understand TLP and its Blasphemy Law's campaign and promotion, from a broader perspective. This chapter aims to discuss available literature on Islamism under General Zia-ul-Haq's leadership and its complexity related to the state's arrangement of religion, including the blasphemy law.

This thesis employs social movement theory as a theoretical framework in examining the campaign for and promotion of blasphemy laws by TLP, which is a central concern of this thesis. Social movement theory is a helpful way of conceptualizing the contemporary phenomenon of TLP in Pakistan. This thesis provides an overview of social movement theories to elucidate the significance of TLP in Pakistan in the following chapters. The hypothesis of this thesis is located at the end of this chapter.

Islam, Islamism and Populism

Islamism has been a particular focus of researchers since the late twentieth century. Researchers such as Humaira Iqtidar (2012) and Asef Bayat (2013) have debated the consequences of modern Islamist groups and the shifting patterns of their activities inside Muslim communities. According to Bayat, many Islamist parties who win elections are not Islamists. Instead, he describes them as "post-Islamists". He contends that post-Islamist groups often incorporate contemporary democratic ideas into their Islamist goals. Rather than imposing their version of Islam on society, post-Islamists want to allow individuals to use their democratic rights. Bayat (2013) cites the Justice and Development Party in Morocco, Hizb-al Nahda in Tunisia, and Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party as examples of Islamist parties that have gained electoral popularity in their respective countries by incorporating post-Islamist models into their political programs, even though their core Islamist objectives have lost appeal to their supporters.

Humaira Iqtidar (2012) refers to post-Islamists as electoral Islamists. She cites the Jamat-i-Islami (JI), an Islamist organization in Pakistan that adheres to the theory of political Islam, like the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and was established by Islamic scholar Sayed Abul Ala Mawdudi, as an example of this kind of Islamist movement. Jamat-i-Islami employs social assistance projects as a tool to provide alternate missions to the party beyond only Islamist aims and purposes. (See Table 1 on Islamic Political parties and their ideologies.)

Table 1

Islamic Political Parties and Their Ideologies

PARTY	IDEOLOGY
JAMAT-E-ISLAMI (JI)	Jamaat-e-Islami, based on the ideology of its founder, Syed Abul Ala Maududi, was built on a vision of Islam as a nizam-e-Zindagi. It is an ideology that strives to make Islam a comprehensive code of life, regarding it as a religion, system of law, and sociopolitical ideology. Throughout its history, the party's central ideal has been to Islamize the laws and constitution of Pakistan in this quest, with the aim of creating a model contemporary Islamic state to be run by a cadre of highly educated and pious men. (Awan, M., Kokab, R., & Iqbal, R. (2013)
JAMIAT-E-ULAMA ISLAM (JUI-F)	JUI-F strongly believes in the implementation of Sharia and holds religiously conservative views. It also operates its welfare wing, Al-Khair Trust, as its humanitarian department. While it is generally understood as a government-friendly party, JUI-F is ideologically opposed to all other Islamic parties, specifically on the issues of US intervention in Pakistan and on sectarian grounds (Shah, A., & Qazi, A. (2022).
MARKAZ-E-JAMIAT AHLI HADITH	Markaz-e-Jamiat Ahle Hadith closely follows a literal interpretation of Islam based purely on the text of the Quran and Sunnah and does not employ any interpretation of specific jurisprudential schools. As it seeks to bring reform within the Islamic societies, the party now emphasizes that religious education is central in bringing Islamic order to the state. Despite its ostensible opposition to extremism, the party has a very rigid and exclusionist ideology that opposes Ahmadis and even connects to groups like Jamaat-ud-Dawa (Ali, B. (2010).
JAMIAT-E-ULAMAE PAKISTAN (JUP)	JUP, especially the faction of Pir Ijaz Hashmi (JUP-F), is Bareilvi in its orientation. It is anti-Deobandi and anti-Wahhabi, viewing itself as a shield against the Ahle Sunnat mosques and shrines. It is part of the umbrella organization of the Sunni Ittehad Council and has taken part in protests on the issue of anti-blasphemy laws. (JUP member Report, 2011).

**SUNNI
TEHREEK**

Sunni Tehreek aims to safeguard and regain control of the Ahle Sunnat mosques and shrines from the government. The party has physically fought with Deobandi groups and opposes religious extremism and Talibanization. Some political forces see it as an ally against militancy, though it also finds common ground with extremist groups over blasphemy laws (Nasr, S. (2000).

Ali & Ali (2002), in their research, state that Pakistan has a long history of collaboration with various Islamist organizations and that the Pakistani official establishment uses religious organizations to gain political dominance. Shameem Burney Abbas (2002) claims that authoritarian Islamic regimes such as Saudi Arabia, Afghanistan (under the Taliban), Iran, and Pakistan use religion to reinforce their power. Manipulating Shariah rules allows the state to suppress dissident citizens who pose a challenge to authoritarian control. Matt Hoffman argues that Pakistan's Shariah rule does not allow for criticism of Islamic regulations such as those governing blasphemy.

Many researchers (Hadiz, 2018; Barr, 2018; Mudhoffir, 2020) have emphasized the significance of populism in understanding successful Islamist movements and other political battles. Laclau (2005) believes that the modern world is experiencing a period of populism. He contends that populist movements seek adversaries and friends in a certain setting. Marzouki (2016) discusses the role of speech in advancing populist ideology. For example, TLP represents a larger philosophy that identifies Pakistani nationalism as Islamic.

Mashal Saif (2020) contends that the ulama in Pakistan, especially those of the Barelvi style of Islam consider the death penalty for blasphemers of the Prophet to be God's demand, and they violate the state's sovereignty to carry out God's will by violence. TLP, like other Islamist parties, draws inspiration from Islamic nationalism (as sanctioned by the state) and uses language about establishing God's state in Pakistan.

Canovan (1999) thinks that populist agendas are driven by two factors: appeal to the people and anti-other anger. In traditional populist movements, the "other" is portrayed as industrial elites and privileged classes versus non-privileged individuals. In religious movements, rival religious communities or voices that oppose a specific set of beliefs or religious ideas are portrayed as "others". Religion is an essential component of populist movements across the world.

Yilmaz (2021) contends that populist political players in India, Turkey, Indonesia, the US, and Europe use religious identities to gain public support and reinforce identity politics. Religion has fueled right-wing populism's rise in power. Haynes (2021) argues that right-wing nationalists in Western nations see Islamist radicalism as the primary threat to their culture. Religious populist movements across the world use religion to establish national identities. Right-wing religious and political groups in Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity are motivated by a sense of community and fear of "other" components. Populist leaders organize people against "others", such as religious organizations or economic elites.

The Interplay of Islam and National Identity in Pakistan: A Historical Perspective

The trajectory of Islamism in Pakistan has been a continuous thread influencing the weave of its national identity. From its birth, Pakistan's identity was to be distinctively Islamic, which was envisioned as a means of creating a unifying national identity for a state divided by ethnicity, language, and provincial loyalties (Jalal, 1995). The constitutions of 1956, 1962, and 1973 all designated Islam as the state religion, but it was the interpretation and application of Islamic principles that would oscillate with the prevailing political currents (Kennedy, 1987).

The genesis of Pakistan is inextricably linked to the ideal of an Islamic state, a vision articulated by its founding fathers as a sanctuary for the subcontinent's Muslim population. This intertwined relationship between religion and state has not only persisted but has dynamically evolved, profoundly influencing the nation's political, social, and legal landscapes (Nasr, 1994). Since its establishment, Pakistan has grappled with the complex role of Islam in shaping state policies and societal norms (Jalal, 1994).

Pakistan, with a Muslim population of almost 96 percent, has long seen religious conflict. According to Akram (2020), the Cold War and revolutions in neighboring Afghanistan and Iran in the 1970s had a significant impact on Pakistani society, which was previously secular. In the 1980s, military ruler General Zia-ul-Haq intensified Islamization to assist the Afghan Jihad. The Soviet Union's loss in Afghanistan led to the rise of the Taliban, who eventually conquered the Mujahedeen and established a government. Pakistan was among the first three nations to recognize the Taliban regime in Afghanistan in 1996.

Political parties and groups, as well as the Pakistani military, are accused of misleading the people by abusing religion for political or strategic interests and benefitting from the lack of religious knowledge among the masses (Karamat et al. (2019), Akram (2020)). Foreign funding

from Saudi Arabia and the use of the nexus of mosques and seminaries have aided in the spread of extremist narratives (Bennett-Jones and Hughes, 2018).

General Zia-Ul-Haq and the Islamization of Pakistan: Transformative Policies and Political Impact

A dramatic change in Pakistan's political environment occurred in the 1970s when General Zia-ul-Haq rose to prominence and led the country's Islamization effort (Nasr, 2001). The adoption of Islamic legislation, the creation of sharia courts, and the Hudood Ordinances, which imposed a strict interpretation of Islamic law on the legal system, were the hallmarks of his rule (Khan, 2001). Additionally, during this time the state aggressively supported religious groups to maintain its legitimacy and quell political unrest (Haqqani, 2005).

Debates on the degree to which Islam should direct state governance dominated the early years following independence. The discourse was predominantly influenced by political considerations rather than religious precepts (Jaffrelot, 2002). The 1949 Objectives Resolution, which declared that Allah alone was sovereign, established a pattern for blending politics and religion that would significantly influence Pakistani society (Kennedy, 1987).

The Legacy of General Zia-Ul-Haq's Islamization: Persistent Influences on Law, Society and Politics in Pakistan

The Islamization under Zia not only entrenched Ulama's power within the state apparatus but also encouraged the proliferation of religious schools (madrasas), many of which would become crucibles for radicalization and militancy in the ensuing decades (Rahman, 2004). The state's patronage of Islamist groups during the Afghan-Soviet war further complicated the picture, weaving geopolitics into the country's domestic religious tapestry (Fair, 2017).

Post-Zia, while subsequent governments have oscillated between liberal and conservative poles, the legal and social precedents set during the Zia era have proved resistant to reversal. For example, the "Shariat Bill" passed in 1991 attempted to ensure that all laws would be brought by the injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Quran and Sunnah, reflecting the enduring influence of Zia's policies (Jones, 2003).

The 1970s heralded a fundamental transformation with General Zia-ul-Haq's assumption of power. His regime (1977-1988) marked the most aggressive phase of Islamization in Pakistan's history, during which the state not only actively engaged in shaping the religious landscape but also sought to align Pakistan's legal system with his interpretation of Islamic law. Zia's policies

institutionalized and expanded the role of religious elites and Islamic texts in governance and daily life (Nasr, 1994).

The Role of Islam in Shaping the Pakistan National Identity: Historical Evolution and Contemporary Implications

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Pakistan's Top Court's Bail Decision for Suspected Blasphemer Sparks Outrage Among Religious Parties

Religious parties and anti-blasphemy groups are furious at Pakistan's top court's bail judgment for a suspected blasphemer. The court rejected the request to retrospectively ban Ahmadiyya Qur'an interpretations. Accused of book distribution in 2019, Mubarik Ahmad Sani was arrested on Jan. 7, 2023. Its distribution was prohibited in 2021. The court released Sani after 13 months in jail. The court upheld Sani's imprisonment since his acts were legitimate. Conservative religious organizations criticized the court's ruling. The government of Punjab, Pakistan's largest province, filed a review appeal against the verdict, while a man was arrested

in Rawalpindi for inciting internet violence against the supreme court judge (Azmat Abbas, June (2022)).

State-Sponsored Islamist Politics Influences Pakistanis' Religious Sentiments

Saadia Toor (2016) connects extremism in Pakistan to global political issues. She links Cold War politics to the official backing of Islamist beliefs in Pakistan. Toor explains how under Zia-ul-Haq's tenure in the 1980s, Pakistan became a close ally of the United States. The Zia dictatorship used US money to support Islamist parties in Pakistan, creating fighters to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan. Toor demonstrates how official funding of Islamists culminated in the dominance of Islamist pressure organizations inside society. Toor highlights how the state promotes various religious views in society.

Malik (2021), in his research on laws and constitutions in Pakistan, reveals those goals of Islamic legislative discourse in Pakistan and their relationship to state-approved Islamist agitation by certain organizations. Pakistan aims to preserve support from Islamist organizations by upholding Islamic blasphemy laws. The state aims to de-radicalize society and reduce the effect of jihadist beliefs on society.

Blasphemy Law in Pakistan: A General Account

Blasphemy laws in Pakistan date back to the colonial era, when regulations were enacted to control religious peace and prohibit religious transgressions. These laws were first enacted under British administration in the Indian subcontinent and were later kept and changed into Pakistan's legal system after independence. Implementing these regulations attempted to defend religious sensibilities and avoid religious unrest within a diversified social fabric (Kanwel, Sidra., Khan, M. I., Usman, Muhammad., & Khan, Asif. 2020).

The drafting of blasphemy laws in Pakistan was riddled with numerous phases of tinkering and adjustment. Such legislation, particularly in the late part of the 20th century and in the 21st century, has resulted in very subtle changes in the language and scopes of the laws to plug gaps, ensure the protection of religious sensibilities, and allow for fair implementation of the law. However, the amendments have also stirred up controversies regarding their impact on free speech and human rights (Khan, A. S., Bibi, A., Khan, A., and Ahmad, I., 2023).

Hussain et al. (2023) holds that few precedents or judicial interpretations have materially led to determining the application and perception of blasphemy laws in Pakistan. Some high-profile cases have impacted judicial determinations, cultural perceptions, and understanding of

some laws. In most instances, judicial pronouncements look through the prism of bias or contradiction to maintain the delicate balance between considerations toward religious purity on the one hand and individual liberty on the other. Therefore, this section tries to trace the historical trajectory regarding their genesis, legislative changes, the critical role of significant cases, and court interpretations in operationalization, as well as their impact. Understanding this history is crucial in appreciating the subtleties and effects of the blasphemy laws on the legal environment in Pakistan.

As opined by Khan et al., blasphemy laws in Pakistan mainly follow Sections 295 and 298 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). One relates to allegations such as the destruction of the Quran, while the other includes disgraceful words that are to be said in respect of certain religious symbols. These laws prescribe the offenses, punishments, and processes applicable to acts that are regarded as blasphemous and thus lay a statutory basis for the prosecution of such crimes. Khan et al. (2022) found that the importance of the influence of Shariah-based law could not be ignored as far as the administration of blasphemy laws in Pakistan is concerned. While the PPC lays the statutory foundations, decisions, and rulings of courts, have often looked toward the Shariah principles for the scope and intensity of actions constituting a breach of blasphemy. The overlap of secular legal codes with religious tenets has made the application and interpretation of blasphemy laws so complex that it continues to create heated debates on their conformity with contemporary legal standards and human rights principles.

Julius, in his 2016 study, stated that human rights groups had always accused Pakistan's blasphemy laws of being discriminatory and violating human rights enshrined in the Pakistani Constitution and international treaties. In contrast, those in favor of the blasphemy laws have a completely different perspective on this matter. They believe that blasphemy laws are not biased against any religious class but are applicable to each and every single individual residing in Pakistan. They present facts to validate their point, stating that most of the people charged with blasphemy are Muslim.

A study conducted by Hussain et al. (2023) aims to investigate the legal protections against mob justice, especially regarding the blasphemy laws of Pakistan and international human rights norms. This study employs a qualitative research approach in checking out the constitutional provisions of Pakistan against mob justice and international human rights standards on such activities. Legal bases that specifically ban mob justice and guarantee the individual's right to a fair trial are examined in explicit detail in the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights (1948) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966). The study hence identifies the protection of vulnerable groups, such as religious minorities, and research on how international human rights legislation can use fighting with mob justice. The research shows that though Pakistan has the legislative framework to prevent mob justice, there are still gaps and challenges in its implementation. An elevation in terms of understanding the rights that are upheld by law and the protection against mob violence besides the rule of law should be instilled to dissuade the violation of human rights. The study concludes that to uphold peoples' rights and eliminate mob violence in Pakistan, the legislative protection against “justice by the crowd” should be implemented and followed.

According to Khan & Riaz (2024), blasphemy laws have caused significant debate, scrutiny, and controversy within and outside of Pakistan. This article looks into the blasphemy laws in Pakistan from a critical perspective: their history, legal grounds, sociological implications, and human rights context. Starting from the historical overview, this paper inquiries into the beginnings and development of such legislation in light of provisions of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) and Shariah-based legal concepts. The article proceeds through a reflection on critical cases and events in demonstrating the challenges to conducting fair trials and the overarching consequences facing convicts of blasphemy. It further engages critically in the inconsistencies of the laws and the fundamental fabric of free speech and expression regarding implications for human rights and international views.

Uddin (2011) further elucidates that through her study, judges in Pakistan use blasphemy laws to intimidate religious minorities and Muslims at the same time as legitimizing sweeping speech control. Ahmadiyya and other organizations in Indonesia, whose teachings are considered deviant by the state-sanctioned religions, are persecuted. In Egypt, governments employ blasphemy laws to suppress conversions, discourage proselytizing, and quiet opponents. Such rules pacify rather than regulate violent radicals, fostering an environment of impunity in which more heinous acts are perpetrated with little or no repercussions for the offenders. The United Nations Defamation of Religions Resolution permits nations to ban religious speech and undermines the rule of law.

Blasphemy Laws in Muslim Countries

The literature on blasphemy laws in Malaysia about Islamic political parties is relatively small, most of them focusing on the shift in the form that Islamic politics is taking. Weiss (2004) discusses the role of political dynamics and social contexts of Malaysian Islamic

movements. Abbott et al. (2010) bolster such claims with their argument that political competition between the United Malay National Organization (UMNO) and the Islamic rival Parti Islam Se-Malaysia (PAS) has deepened the influence of Islam in politics in Malaysia. Lee (2010) considers cases such as the freedom of religion case of Lina Joy and the Islamic state debate as important occurrences, evincing the increasing comingling of religion with the interests of the state and individual rights.

More recently, a focused examination of cultural changes within PAS comes from Müller's work (2015), which considers its engagement with modern popular culture to have stayed relevant. Examples include Rahman et al., 2018, who are concerned with how Islamic Awakening creates a sense of solidarity through PAS and other Islamic institutions in establishing a singular Muslim identity. Rahim, 2018, discusses, instead, the struggles that come along with Salafi Islamization, such as when PAS introduced *ḥudūd* law. On average, the literature will reflect back on Islamic political parties, especially PAS, as the body responsible for the molding of Malaysia's political setting, and thus, influencing the policies in regard to Islamic law. This is why researchers focus on how these interact with the rest of society and how Islamization impacts governance and democracy.

Blasphemy laws and Islamic political parties in Indonesia have seen some serious scrutiny in the last decade. This is a historical recurrence by addressing the state of compromise and stability in Indonesian politics that also looks at the plight of Islamic political parties. Munabari (2017), on the other hand, comes to analyze the ideologies and framing strategies of the Indonesian Forum of Islamic Society, also considered a revivalist movement that would work toward implementing Sharia law. This movement is part of a broader array of Islamic political parties and movements that sprang up after the fall of the autocratic Suharto regime in 1998. Chalik et al. (2019) examine the intersection of values with power among santri-based parties, shed light on the internal challenges supporting ideological conduct likely shaping blasphemy laws enforcement. Susanto (2020) points out that when considering early Islamic history, a historical view of party formation carries a significant place, which is needed for a proper understanding of the current constellation of Islamic political parties in Indonesia.

A few years ago, then-Jakarta governor Basuki Tjahaja Purnama was accused of blasphemy. Muslim organizations then protested in huge numbers, accusing Purnama of "insulting Islam" and promised future demonstrations. President Joko "Jokowi" Widodo requested a quick investigation. The Muslim organizations made the accusations after a viral

video showed Purnama criticizing his opponents for exploiting a Koran passage to discourage support (Rafiq et al. (2016).

A'yun (2020) further discusses the politicization of the issue of blasphemy in Indonesia and how Islamic alliances are subsequently formed around it, laying a greater emphasis on the fact that a blasphemy law has become a *sine qua non* for all theocratic parties in Indonesia. This focus on blasphemy laws will help to demonstrate the influence of these laws on the ideologies and strategies of such parties. The inherent historical background, power struggles, and alliances around blasphemy laws certainly increase the complexity of the political landscape in Indonesia. Further in-depth research such as that by Santoso et al. (2020), which attempts to identify the role and functions of Islamic political parties, is warranted in order to garner a complete understanding of the influence of blasphemy laws on political dynamics in the country.

Extensive theoretical literature exists on both Turkish blasphemy laws and Islamic political parties' beliefs. To modernize the state, Turkey adopted secularism for promoting pure capitalist order (Ahmad, 1991). Since there was no class differentiation that could release discontent, Turkish society, as a rule, used Islamic discourse to challenge state authority. In the context of the AKP period, Islamic political parties were articulated. AKP is said to have enhanced democratic and rule of law by some analysts, while others argue that it has transformed to populist authoritarianism as a result of its leadership and foreign factors (Çınar, 2018; Ozkan 2012).

Another question is about Islamic populism, and Erdogan's need to produce a pleasing citizenry should also be considered. Young people are educated in the spirit of Islamist ideology in Turkish schools (Yilmaz, 2018). Changing the educational tools so as to be able to influence the perception of the youth is part of this. Through the Islamic unity discourse, the AKP has also supported a reactionary Kurdish civil society (Kurt, 2018). Empirical evidence on the role of women in a religious environment/Islamic party has been used to make literature-based arguments about the weakening of gender inequalities that religious women's participation bring. Findings from the research on Turkish blasphemy laws and Islamic political identity help to shed light on the nature of the political system, thereby giving an insight to the subject matter of secularism, democracy and Islam in the country.

Previous Studies on TLP

There was previous research on Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) that discussed several issues. For example, Matoi (2021) stated that Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan's radicalization may be linked to the emergence of the Barelvi and Deobandi sects in the early 19th century. The Deobandi sect adhered strictly to Hanafi Sunni teachings, while the Barelvi sect developed independently. In 1947, British India was divided into two states: Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India. The former became the state entity that included both Hanafi revivalist movements, Deobandi and Barelvi. The differences between the two movements became critical in terms of politics, security and social issues.

Ijaz and Alvi (2023) delve into the complex link between Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) and the idea of elitism. Historically, Muslim cultures had a strong religious elite. The development of religious political parties in the subcontinent coincided with the religious leadership's initial political mobilization of Indian Muslims during World War I. The Ulema became active in politics when they began to agitate against the British, who ruled the Muslim world and the subcontinent. The religious elites have played a significant role in Pakistan's political history, notably in the Khatm-e-Nabuwat and blasphemy problems. The examination of TLP through the lens of elitism will aid in understanding the role of religious elites in Pakistani politics.

Another research of focus regarding TLP is Islamophobia. Saleem and Hassan (2023) study examines Islamophobic speech in Pakistan's print media. Two instances, the Khatam-e-Nabuwat Bill dispute and the Asiya Masih acquittal case, were investigated to study the narratives created by the print media in the selected newspapers. The research goals included investigating the major dimensions and manifestations of the coverage of the religious political group Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan, as well as how the media depicted the image of TLP and its actors during the sit-in in Islamabad's Faizabad district. Discourse analysis was used as a research strategy to statistically examine the editorial and op-ed content of newspapers. The coding sheet was created to collect data by splitting it into several groups. However, the data indicate that English dailies were more likely to cover Islamophobia issues than Urdu dailies. They were more concerned with independent opinion rather than editorial policy. The study shows that the media's texts were Islamophobic in character. We discovered metaphors utilized in newspapers throughout the sit-in, concluding that Islamophobic discourses exist in Pakistan's print media.

To date, there is no adequate research on TLP's involvement in promoting and defending blasphemy laws in Pakistan. This thesis is dedicated to elucidating TLP's defense of blasphemy laws in Pakistan by using social movement theory, in particular resource mobilization theory.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study will be grounded in two prominent theoretical frameworks: social movement theory and resource mobilization theory. They are some of the theoretical perspectives that can be used to explain the case. Analyzing the roles of grievances and opportunities in the mobilizing structures helps to elucidate the nature and the development of social movements within the framework of social movement theory. What is novel is how it explains process dynamics of mobilization of grievance and political opportunity concepts and their role in the context of the formation of a disadvantaged group's action. RMT, on the other hand, concentrates on the logistics of the social movements which comprises the acquisition of resources such as funding, backing, and political connections, among others. Critically, this emphasizes the importance of resource acquisition in the notion of sustainable social movements and how the movements obtain the specific resources to maintain and construct the objectives. Thus, the integration of these two theories helps the study to offer a comprehensive discussion of social movements: factors that may prompt people to engage in collective action, and practices that may allow social movements to continue their operations and bring their goals to fruition. Such a two-theoretical approach will provide a complex picture of the factors that contributed to the beginning of the democracy movement and sustained it and the resource strategies it deployed.

SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY (SMT)

Social Movement Theory (SMT) has been used as a theoretical framework to help explain the complicated phenomena of religious populism. SMT is founded on the idea that informal networks of similar values and solidarity mobilize people on contentious subjects through diverse and frequent protests. SMT sprang to prominence when it thoroughly described the continuous demonstrations on civil rights, nuclear-free, feminism, and the green movement in Europe and the United States in the 1950s and 1960s (Wiktorowicz, 2003).

During the last decades this knowledge has stably progressed, especially due to the supplying and developing of concepts of SMT (McAdam et al, 2001). This has indeed turned out to be a theory that every academic person who intends to analyze the mechanisms and processes of social movements must embrace (El-Mahdi, 2009). The social movement scholars McAdam, Tarrow and Tilly assert that social

movements generally emerge as a result of perceived injustices in society and mobilize oppressed groups to seek to achieve certain aims through available resources (Maher, 2019).

The theoretical framework best outlining the grievances and opportunities within the social movement's framework is SMT, in terms of which grievances constitute the spark that is requisite for the emergence of social movements while opportunities denote the enabling environment. For example, the occurrence of the pro-democracy movement in Egypt can be explained with the help of SMT as it was induced by demands for change and merged as it was supported by social networking sites and a transition of control of information in the country (El-Mahdi, 2009).

Another significant component of SMT is the political opportunity structure, in which it is underlined that the significant range of the political context can either help or challenge the social movements. Among them, it is necessary to include changes in the structure of social movements in terms of regime shifts, policy changes, or international support. The uprisings, including the Egyptian uprising for democracy, was due to changes in the political opportunity structure in the Arab region as identified by (Maher et al., 2019). Social Movement Theory also pays a lot of attention to what is known as the mobilizing structures. These are the organizational structures that support collective action. Mobilizing structures hence include labor unions, NGOs and groups of activists in that they offer the physical and human power, the leadership and organizational capital required in the sustenance of a social cause. The Egyptian pro-democracy movement had strong mobilizing structures involved in the coordination of the protest, the dissemination of information, and intensity (El-Mahdi, 2009).

The assessment of SMT as a resource for researchers and analysts in conceptualizing social movements highlights this as strong due to the wealth of factors considered in the theory, which makes it rich capacity in explaining the movement's events. Thus, by exploring grievances and opportunities, analyzing weaknesses and strengths in comparison with opponents, and understanding organizational strategies, scholars will be more capable of determining why some movements are successful while others are failures. This research thesis will incorporate SMT to assess factors that contribute to the birth, progression, and results of social movements (Maher et al., 2019). It is important to pinpoint that the research is to center on the relation between grievances, opportunities, and mobilizing structures and so should encompass the study of social movements in different contexts.

Therefore, SMT has been of considerable assistance to the research field for social movements as the various mechanisms and processes involved in collective action have been elucidated. Thus, disgruntlement, resources, and mobilization structures provide links to the extensive theoretical scheme that helps in studying social movements and their effects on society. The incorporation of SMT into this study will help advance knowledge about how MNEs emerge and extend their animating social movements in the social and political sciences (McAdam et al., 2001; El-Mahdi, 2009; Maher et al., 2019).

SMT also describes the escapist coping strategy that occurs when the state entirely ignores one group's views and concerns, either intentionally or unintentionally, and fails to address that group's alienation (Fox, 1999). This is precisely what happened when the Barelvis experienced estrangement; despite being the majority, they were disregarded, while Deobandis gained political power through official patronage. Mink Enberg's hybrid political style enables the spectator to see how the TLP's path as a group culminated in a movement. Applying his method to TLP creates a coalition of activism that emerges from the social movement and attempts to apply the social movement's structure and strategic practice to the political arena (Minkenberg, 2019).

With their large support base, these organizations turned movements may either solidify or resist the current quo. When their social, political, or religious identity is endangered, they rally those who share their beliefs. When Mumtaz Qadri was condemned to death by a Pakistani court, the TLP responded by rising to the occasion via agitation. It articulated its narrative with the persuasive appeal of defending the finality and honor of the Prophet of Islam, rallied its followers around the faith imperative, and embarked on a religious discourse that claimed a monopoly over religious concepts (Benford & Snow, 2000), demonized state institutions, and delegitimized political opponents in a self-righteous manner. This rhetoric is performative, radicalizes the populace, and weakens the justice system, as seen by the numerous killings.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION THEORY

Resource mobilization theory (RMT) was established in the 1970s to contradict theories of social disintegration and relative deprivation that focused on individual complaints as the major motivation for collective action (Heitzman, 1990). According to RMT theorists, complaints are not enough to spark a movement because social strife is a natural part of any community. According to Kelly (2011), movement mobilization relies on the establishment of social movement groups and their ability to mobilize resources from prospective supporters, including labor and money.

RMT focuses on the actor's operations, tactics, plans, and tools of power to attain their goals (El-Mahdi, 2009). This theory helps in comprehending how groups can go about attaining and deploying the resources needed to achieve their goals. This raises the theme of resource mobilization to indicate requirements of funding, organizational support, and political influence in the creation of social movements (Kalleberg & Leicht). RMT stands on the proposition that the level of achievement of a movement mostly relies on the efficiency of the resources acquired and utilized. These resources allow movements to continue the operation, rally individuals together, and sway the thinking of others and the government. For example, money is needed for the preparation of the events, the creation of fliers and posters, and the financing of the activists. Endorsement by other organizations and cooperation with other groups and institutions means additional personnel, experience, and, most importantly,

recognition. Academic affiliations can help get in touch with more decision-makers and the media to boost the voice of the movement and the plans it has.

When analyzing the case of the pro-democracy movement in Egypt, RMT can be quite useful (El-Mahdi, 2009). As with other movements, a significant amount of funds was needed to coordinate the demonstrators, spread awareness, and sustain the cause. This paper examines how records of the resources at their disposal helped to illuminate factors that led to the successes and setbacks of the movement. For example, the Egyptian pro-democracy movement used the features of social media networks to support the acquisition of resources and organizing actions, which highlights the kind of effective use of available resources in modern movements.

The research thesis will be based on RMT, regarding the process of resource mobilization in social movements and its outcomes concerning the pro-democracy movement in Egypt. They will help to break down the means through which the resources are mobilized, coordinated, and used to accomplish the movement's mission. Therefore, this case study seeks to investigate the various aspects of resource mobilization to give a clear picture of dynamics of the resource mobilization together with the achievement of the destiny of social movements (El-Mahdi, 2009).

It is because of this theory of resource mobilization that my theoretical framework for this research thesis will be drawn, such that it ensures grounding and fullness in the investigation of resources as central to social movements. This framework will be used in identifying the various types of resources, their sources, and the processes involved in the mobilization of the resources. It will also determine the problems that movements face in assembling resources and what is done to overcome the difficulties. Therefore, each of the aforementioned aspects will enhance the understanding of the critical elements indicative of the success and survivability of social movements.

Thus, RMT facilitates the knowledge of how and why the movers and shakers of social movements organize resources. This is an instrumental theory because, through its identification of funding, organization, and political aspects, a set of criteria in the definition can be explained that may be key to understanding why some social movements may be effective and can flourish in the long term. With the help of RMT in this kind of research, it will be viable to provide detailed scrutiny on pro-democracy movements in the Egypt region such that the resource mobilization mechanism plays a significant role in the overall process of mobilizing collective actions with the aim of social change (Kalleberg & Leicht; El-Mahdi, 2009).

RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY

Rational choice theory is based on classical economics and assumes that individuals are rational agents who consistently work to maximize their utility. Building on these points, the theory posits that individuals act self-interested; hence, a rational kind of self-interest is involved in this process. The second premise of RCT is that a number of disciplines and structures ensure that an individual's

maximum gain will also take care of the welfare of society (Vanberg, 2016). Thirdly, the theory postulates that before any decision is made, a clear analysis of the costs of such decisions must be established against benefits or potential incomes. The last is that it hinges on the preferences and range of options an individual has. In the field of political and social processes, RCT can be useful in the analysis of rational behavior on the part of all entities—groups, organizations, and institutions—in the pursuit of specific goals.

Rational choice theory subsequently provides an influential framework for understanding the acts and motivations of different parties, among which the states stand prominent within political and social analysis. It further presents a coherent framework by viewing such actors as rational entities that make strategic decisions in maximizing their utility. This further makes RCT very suitable in the analysis of complex interactions within scenarios like the workplace or broader sociopolitical arenas (Vanberg, 2016). This view further allows for a subtle interpretation of the means by which individuals or groups operate within set environments, align their priorities, and make informed decisions they feel will be of more significant benefit to them. It also highlights that personal and public interests are interrelated and illustrates the way in which individual behavior could lead to broad societal consequences (Vanberg, 2016).

Based on its application in research, rational choice theory sheds light on more specific case studies, policy implications, and generally broader sociopolitical dynamics of a country. Such a strategy helps scholars grasp the underlying motivations and consequences of any actions and policies through an analysis of the strategic choices available to rational actors (Vanberg, 2016). This does not only enrich the analyses of individual and collective behavior but also highlights the general implications of the respective actions for societal welfare and political stability in the broader sense (Vanberg, 2016). RCT, therefore, is an all-inclusive framework that can guide further studies and policymaking, thus contributing to a better understanding of human behavior and its implications for society.

Besides, rational choice theory can be a good lens through which to analyze the motivations of other parties and the state. By framing the issues as scenarios where rational actors make strategic decisions about achieving higher utility, RCT systematically offers ways to understand complex workplace interactions and social dynamics. This may lead to further studies on individual case studies, policy ramifications, and a country's more considerable sociopolitical consequences. In doing so, RCT helps explain current behaviors and decisions but also aids in predicting future actions based on the assumption of rationality and utility maximization (Vanberg, 2016). This predictive power is crucial for developing policies and strategies that align with the anticipated actions of rational actors in various contexts.

Hypothesis

First, the group significantly influences debates and policies about blasphemy laws in Pakistan. Its attitude, based on religious teachings, is very rigid, and so is Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan's public protestation in defense of spiritual values. Guided by such attitudes, policymakers may amend their respective blasphemy laws to be more considerate of spiritual values, representing public opinion and concern.

Second, as the country has a dominant Muslim majority and is, to a great extent, religious, TLP has been able to attract a significant percentage of support from the population. While TLP politics have been highly confrontational, it has, through this, made effective use of religious sentiments and the perceived failures on the part of the mainstream political parties in dealing with issues related to blasphemy laws and the protection of spiritual values and teachings.

This section investigates the ideologies of various political parties in Islam. It brings forth a general view of the beliefs that founded some of these political groups and how they operate. The political parties are Jamat-E-Islami, Jamiat-E-Ulama Islam, Markaz-e-Jamiat Ahli Hadith, Jamiat-e-Ulamae Pakistan, and Sunni Tehreek. The ideologies of these parties, therefore, have to be explored with an understanding of the impact such parties have on national politics, social dynamism, and legal frameworks in countries where Islam is heavily interwoven into state governance. This is something which has not only been realized in Pakistan, for several other states around the world are testaments to this reality, including Indonesia, Malaysia, and Turkey, to name but a few. While the competition between the UMNO and PAS increased the role of Islam in politics in Malaysia, it has also had an impact on how Islam influenced governance and societal norms. Something entirely different is taking place in Indonesia, where an upsurge of Islamic political movements occurred post-Suharto with parties like the Indonesian Forum of Islamic Society advocating for sharia law and influencing blasphemy law enforcement. This is a crucial challenge as regards the conception of secularism based on Islamic populism, specifically from the leadership of the AKP, which has established in governance a fusion of Islamic principles with democratic and authoritarian tendencies. Such comparative analysis for the countries presents the complicated nexus of Islam and politics, how Islamic political parties help in forming national identity, the legal system, and social cohesion across a wide variety of both cultural and political contexts.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the method that was applied to undertake this study. As with all such paradigms, it comprises several key elements. First, the Research Design section highlights the overall tactical plan to be followed by the study for a systematic research work. After that, it specifies the Data and Data Source, with an explanation of the types of data implemented and from where they were retrieved. The Data Collection section provides information on how the data is collected with a significant focus on the approach that is applied to acquire data that is credible and exhaustive. Data Verification is presented next, which explains how credibility and dependability of the collected data were established.

Furthermore, the Data Analysis section discusses the research strategies employed in analyzing the data and raises concerns about the approach's objective of identifying suitable patterns. Last, the Interpretation section gives a detailed analysis of the results obtained with a focus on the context of the findings and possible conclusions. Altogether, these components constitute a consistent methodological approach that serves to guarantee the research's credibility.

LIBRARY RESEARCH

This thesis investigates the many causes that contributed to the emergence of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) from a marginal religious group to a major political force in Pakistani politics, as well as why TLP involves itself in defending blasphemy laws and how the organization mobilizes Pakistani people to join its ranks. The research was mostly based on library resources, with an emphasis on and critical examination of data. Considering the limited time and logistics, I was not able to do fieldwork in Pakistan.

The research design part, often known as design, elucidates the comprehensive structural design employed by the research (Perry, 2008: 49). The design was used to address a variety of questions. According to Zeid (2004), library research refers to the utilization of library sources to get data. Conversely, library research involves using library sources to gather and interpret data. In this study, the researcher utilizes many sources and

books as references. Additionally, the study was constrained in terms of library resources since the data was not obtained from direct field observations but rather gathered from numerous references.

George (2008) asserts that library research is a deliberate and controlled process, rather than a random or fortunate occurrence. Despite the inability to predict the specific sources that will be found, the researcher has full control over the study from beginning to end. Library research is a systematic investigation that follows a set of guidelines, utilizes certain resources, and employs particular methods.

Time and space are no longer constraints for library research data. Another advantage, as stated by Glasser and Strauss (1967), is the extensive comparison material that is accessible, which includes time, space, and other qualities. According to the statement, the data may be accessed quickly and conveniently, regardless of location or time constraints.

Research Time

Research Stage	Period
Research Preparations	October 2023 - December 2023
Data Collection	October 2023- December 2023
Research Proposal	November 2032- February 2024
Data analysis	February 2024- April 2024
Thesis Writing	February 2024- June 2024

Data Source

The information or facts used to debate or determine the answer to the research question are called data. The participants from whom the data may be gathered for research purposes are the study's source of data (Arikunto, 2010: 129). The library is a good place for the researcher to look for papers, Journals, books, and reports and other written documents relevant to the study.

Therefore, for this study, a variety of data sources have been used. Existing research, journal articles, information obtained from TLP's official website, speeches by prominent figures such as Khadim Hussain Rizvi sourced from reputable YouTube channels, mainstream media and social media content from official accounts on a variety of social media platforms, including Facebook and Twitter, were all thoroughly examined. This

study discovered a number of repeating themes in TLP rhetoric, as well as the party's primary goals regarding Pakistan's blasphemy laws and mobilization techniques.

Government records received through official means, including reports from the Ministry of Interior, provide light on TLP actions and the state's response. News from print and electronic media. The news archives of Pakistani newspapers such as *Dawn* and *The Express Tribune* provided in-depth coverage of TLP's growth and operations, as well as editorials by famous journalists providing many viewpoints on the movement.

Data Collection

The data collection method is the way of collecting data. This study uses qualitative methods in the form of articles, reports, books, and journals. The researcher analyzed documentation in collecting data. The researcher used all the documentation of Tehreek-E-Labaik Pakistan about the rise of the organization, its tactics, resources, ideologies, and the impact of the politics of Pakistan and Pakistani society.

Finding Data

The researcher explored the relevant materials or data related to Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan using library research techniques.

Understanding the Theory

The researcher understands the theory (as elucidated in Chapter Two) to determine the approach to be used in this study.

Reading and Understanding the Data

The researcher then carefully read the data to understand it. The purpose of this was to develop an in-depth understanding of Tehreek-E-Labaik Pakistan.

Data Analysis

According to the nature of this research, qualitative analytical methodologies were used to investigate data from sources such as papers, speeches, and the media more generally. Thematic analysis was performed. Themes such as religious discourse, blasphemy laws, and the use of social media for mobilization were discovered and researched to better understand TLP's promotion and defense of blasphemy laws in Pakistan.

CHAPTER IV

TEHREEK-E-LABBAIK PAKISTAN: EMERGENCE, IDEOLOGY, AND ITS PROFILE

Introduction

To better understand of the nature and goals of TLP, this chapter describes its emergence, ideology, affiliates, funding, and activities. The emergence of TLP cannot be separated by its prominent figure, Khadim Hussain Rizvi. The ideology, membership, funding, and activities of the party have raised great national and international controversy, defining the country's domestic integration and its global image.

History: Emergence and Founder

TLP was founded in August 2015 by Khadim Hussain Rizvi, a veteran cleric who gained popularity following his extremism on the matter of blasphemy laws in the country. Rizvi was earlier associated with the Punjab government and later took to preaching and held rallies demanding that the state must follow these laws to preserve the honor of the Prophet Muhammad (Zeeshan, 2023).

The Mumtaz Qadri case was the turning point that thrust TLP to center stage. In 2011, Mumtaz Qadri, a bodyguard to the Punjab governor, Salman Taseer, assassinated his boss. Taseer was a vocal critic of Pakistan's blasphemy laws and had pleaded for their reformation, especially in the case of Asia Bibi, a Christian woman sentenced to death on charges of blasphemy. To many, he defended the dignity of the Prophet according to what they thought, especially within the Barelvi sect of Islam. His hanging in 2016 led to widespread protests and demonstrations. Rizvi and TLP took this up, making a martyr of Qadri and portraying themselves as the real defenders of the faith (Yilmaz, 2021).

Both the case of Mumtaz Qadri and the incident of Salmaan Taseer have hugely affected religious and political life in Pakistan. They demonstrated the embedded power of Barelvi Islam, a potent Sunni group focusing on prophetism. Until the recent incident regarding Qadri, the Barelvi movement was perceived to be soft and non-political compared to other Islamic movements in Pakistan. The ruckus over Qadri was the turning point, and

the event that made the prospect of Barelvi activism a significant political force through which power could be consolidated.

Rizvi was born in Attock, Punjab, and raised in Islamic seminaries, which gave him a deep understanding of Islamic jurisprudence and theology. His oratory and crowd-connecting abilities were honed through years of preaching in mosques and religious gatherings. His disablement due to an accident did not blunt him. Instead, Rizvi became the symbol of the strength and commitment to the mission he had taken upon himself. This attribute further made him popular among his supporters, who started perceiving him as a leader who was firm and unwavering in his stance and actions (Sabat, 2020).

Rizvi's speeches are more often based on the themes of love and respect for the Prophet, and in doing so, he strikes chords with his audiences. He also argued that any disrespect to the Prophet merited the severest punishment and then accused the government of not undertaking sufficiently stringent measures against blasphemy. In this, he found a strong resonance with the populace, which thought their religious ethos was being eroded in the face of a fast-changing world. The feeling that there was a mutual responsibility to protect the prestige of the Prophet on a collective basis became the clarion call for TLP supporters (Sabat, 2020).

The establishment of TLP also emerged at a time when politics in Pakistan, known for its coups and changes, was once again starting to tilt more toward the religious right. The public, fed up with the traditional political parties and their branding as corrupt and inefficient, lent TLP an ear. TLP emerged as a champion of Islamic values and the voice of the commoner, loud in its defiance against the establishment in committing to the assurance of Islam being preserved in the laws and policies of the country (Nisa, 2023).

One of the early reflections of TLP's mobilization power was during protests against Asia Bibi's acquittal by the Supreme Court of Pakistan in 2018. The court had overturned her death sentence based on insufficient evidence, and this caused nationwide protests organized by TLP. Rizvi provoked the killings of judges who were responsible for the verdict and another mutiny within the armed forces (Basit, 2020). The scale and intensity of these protests underscored TLP's ability to disrupt public life and challenge state authority, cementing its role as a significant political player. The party's activities are not only limited to protests but also social services, where it feeds and houses thousands of its supporters during its sit-ins. It is believed that Rizvi's leadership style, which was messianic

and based on fiery religious rhetoric mixed with a heavy dose of populism, heightened TLP's appeal amongst a wide range of the population. These included the profoundly spiritual as well as the disaffected masses who were searching for a means of venting their frustrations at the political class.

TLP's rise also helped shape the environment for mainstream political actors in Pakistan. Indeed, mainstream political parties across the country have often shifted to more conservative platforms vis-a-vis religious politics for fear of losing their vote bases to parties like TLP (Naqvi, 2023). This has caused an overall rightward drift in the politics of the nation, and the blasphemy laws have been raised to the level of a litmus test for political legitimacy. It has become virtually impossible after the rise of TLP for any political agent in Pakistan to propose reforms in the laws without any severe reprisals.

The death of Sheikh Khadim Hussain Rizvi in November 2020 was also a defining moment in the history of TLP. His influence on the members was proven by the hundreds of thousands attending his funeral. His party's leadership shifted to Rizvi's son, Saad Hussain Rizvi, who declared he would carry forward his father's legacy. TLP, from that point on, under the stewardship of Saad, has shown no signs of any softening and remains at the vanguard of Pakistan's religious and political activities. Saad declared that his father's mission would continue under his leadership. Upon his release from prison, he was more charismatic, persuasive, and more popular than ever among his followers (Yilmaz, 2021).

The establishment and rise of TLP under the leadership of Sheikh Khadim Hussain Rizvi reflected a complex interplay of religious fervor, political disillusionment, and charismatic leadership. The case of Mumtaz Qadri was such a decisive event that not only served as a catalyst for the birth of TLP but also pointed to the formidable role of Bareilvi Islam in Pakistan's politics. As TLP continues to evolve, it remains profoundly transformative in the sociopolitical fabric in Pakistan (Yilmaz, 2021).

Ideology

Ideologically, TLP is founded on a literal and rigid application of Islamic tenets. Its core dogma is the enforcement of sharia law in its literal form, which TLP's leaders and its supporters posit must be fully implemented in every inch of Pakistani life. The interpretation is characterized by adherence to traditional Islamic jurisprudence and an unwillingness to imbibe modernizing influences that may dilute religious purity (Abbas, 2022). A critical dimension of the TLP ideology is its staunch resistance to any changes in

Pakistan's blasphemy laws, which are seen to suggest harsh punishments for people who are accused of insulting the Prophet or Islam in some other way. The party considers these as sacrosanct. The party believes even minor reforms or leniencies might dilute the sanctity of Islam and wither away societal morals. This inflexibility flows from the underlying belief that honor to the Prophet cannot be compromised and that any compromise to this end is unacceptable (Yilmaz, 2021).

TLP's ideological framework, aside from being a legal and religious prescription, is about creating a culture of vigilantes. The party empowers its followers to take matters into their hands whenever there is an infringement on religious matters. Violent vigilantism is, therefore, pushed here as an inevitable defense mechanism against blasphemy. TLP has defended such actions in the name of devotion to and duty toward Islam. This has meant public calls for the assassination of the accused parties in blasphemy charges and violent retribution against alleged offenders, as in the rhetoric surrounding the Mumtaz Qadri and Asia Bibi cases (Yilmaz, 2021).

Violence is used to demonstrate the party's self-identity. TLP has rallied massive crowds in the past to protest judgments in the court, where blasphemy cases are given light penalties. Usually, these protests descend into violence. In the past, the TLP has fought pitched battles with the police, creating chaos in public order (Qureshi, 2023). For TLP, such displays of strength are not so much for immediate political gain as to inculcate fear and respect for the cause among the public and political elite. By ensuring that the costs of opposing their views are high, they ensure nobody intends to reform the blasphemy laws anytime soon.

TLP has deep ideological appeal in certain sections of Pakistani society. Many of its adherents support the doctrine that exercises extraordinary love and esteem toward the Prophet. It demonstrates devotion through its various religious practices of poetry, music, and public celebrations of the life of the Prophet. TLP has tapped into this cultural and religious sentiment, presenting itself as the authentic guardian of the Prophet's esteem. This has allowed the party to mobilize substantive support from those who take any perceived insult to the Prophet personally (Yilmaz, 2021). Among these is where TLP's narrative has struck a chord in rural areas and urban working-class communities. These sets often feel marginalized and disinherited by mainstream political discourse, which they view as governed by elite interests (Nisa, 2023). The populist rhetoric of TLP, combined with

religious zeal and a complete lack of tolerance of the political order in power, has thus made it possible for them to amass a vast support base.

What is more, the ideological position of TLP is significant for the larger political context of Pakistan. The party's hold translates into many other political players adopting stricter conservative positions regarding religion. This is probably best exemplified by the sheer reluctance of mainstream parties to voice open support for any reform of the blasphemy laws, much less openly face down against TLP rhetoric (Rana, D, 2021). Primarily, the fear of being labeled as blasphemous or even remotely anti-Islam has dampened speech and conversation in the public eye, providing little space for moderates or progressives. All this only aids the TLP in expanding its influence even further and gathering people en masse. Take, for instance, the blasphemy reform campaign by rights groups and activists over the decades, which has virtually failed to receive any support from any mainstream political party.

This can be seen in how the intersection of the party's ideology runs with the law and judicial system in Pakistan. TLP has not shifted from pressurizing the judiciary with street power to bring it in line with its thinking. This was most evident in the Asia Bibi case, when massive TLP protests created widespread disturbances, throwing a veiled threat of mass violence in the event of an adverse judgment, thus coercing the judiciary and state administration in their overall approach to the case (Sabat, 2023). The ideology of TLP is a mixture of religious literalism, advocacy for sharia law, and the unwavering defense of blasphemy laws. It popularizes violent vigilantism in support of the protection of religious sensibilities and has gained massive support among those whose religious values are considered threatened. TLP's ideological stance has defined not only its activity but has also had severe impacts on the political and social dynamics of the country, enhancing conservative shifts and raising significant challenges for those working on legal and social reforms (Yilmaz, 2021).

Membership

The Barelvi movement, on the other hand, is based traditionally on Sufi practices and the reverence of the Prophet 's life and teachings. The followers usually resort to poetry, recitals, and other artistic depictions, including festivals, to honor the Prophet. TLP has thus craftily tapped into these cultural and religious sentiments by portraying its political activism as an extension of the devotional acts of the Barelvis. This has made TLP very

popular with the followers of Barelvi, as this group looks at TLP as a protector of its religious values.

TLP is a well-organized party with significant mass support primarily drawn from the followers of the Barelvi sect, a Sunni organization that emphasizes love and respect for the Prophet. The Barelvi sect focuses on devotional aspects and religious practices on loving and respecting the Holy Prophet of Islam – a theme which is well-indicated in the name and mission of TLP (Naqvi, 2023). This alignment has enabled TLP to build an extraordinarily passionate and zealous support group that believes in the group's mission.

One of the most jarring examples is how effectively TLP can mobilize its members, as in the funeral of Mumtaz Qadri in 2016. The man was executed for the 2011 assassination of Punjab governor Salman Taseer for the latter's condemnation of Pakistan's blasphemy laws. The party and its followers praised Mumtaz Qadri as a martyr, and his funeral was attended by over 100,000 people. So, indeed, the number of people gathered there reflected how deep the support for TLP's stand on anti-blasphemy is and how potentially big it can be in leading people to its cause.

Given the huge crowds that TLP can draw, this goes to show that the party has organizational capabilities and an underlying dense network within the masses. It has a strong grassroots network in urban as well as rural areas. Mosques, madrasas, and community centers are local recruitment, education, and training centers for the workers of TLP that provide venues to develop networks in different localities (Nisa, 2023). It is through these networks that TLP spreads its messages, holds its significant events, rallies, public meetings, and protests, and ensures that its members are kept involved and active.

Finally, a significant proportion of the membership of TLP comes from the youth, especially those who have become disenfranchised from conventional electoral options. It is in this respect that the party's populist rhetoric, coupling religious zeal with sentiment against the political establishment, has found resonance with many who often feel sidelined and not heard. TLP positions itself as a champion of the common man's religious values, setting itself apart from a corrupt and secular political elite (Qureshi, 2023). This story has proved successful in attracting young, fervent supporters who come out into the streets in full force.

Moreover, the members of TLP are characterized by a high level of loyalty and activism. They are not passive supporters but active participants in the campaigns and

protests undertaken by the party. They evinced in the Faizabad sit-in conducted in 2017, when members of TLP sat in for an extended period in the capital demanding the resignation of a government minister accused of blasphemy. The sit-in disturbed life in Islamabad for several weeks and only ended when the government succumbed to demands from TLP (Sareen, 2021). That the members of the party could suffer with such resiliency in their resistance to the state attests to their commitment to the goals of the organization.

Thus, its leadership has become vital to sustaining and growing its numbers. Clerics like Sheikh Khadim Hussain Rizvi and later his son, Saad Hussain Rizvi, have given TLP its ideology and a figure, finally, in front of which it can rally. Their charismatic speeches and unapologetic zeal have riled up members in ways that encourage even more loyalty and active participation within TLP.

Secondly, the membership strategy of TLP is to use up-to-date communication means to reach out and mobilize its followers. The party uses all social media to voice speeches, disseminate propaganda, and coordinate action. This way, there is continuity and convenience in interaction with members, making dissemination of information fast and effective with quick mobilization of members. Moreover, TLP's ability to draw and keep a substantial following has been the other ingredient for its political power. The effective organization of massive protests and demonstrations provides TLP with enough muscle to coerce the government into submission. This has occurred on a number of occasions when the government has given in to TLP's demands to prevent large-scale violence or disturbance of peace. The sheer volume of active members allows TLP to create a great deal of pressure on both political and judicial processes until the outcome is aligned with its ideological aims.

The membership base forms a very crucial cornerstone of TLP's political influence. With their base in the Barelvi tradition, the party has been able to organize massive and enthusiastic support devoted to shielding the honor of the Prophet along with maintaining the blasphemy laws. TLP, through well-thought community mobilization, charismatic figures, and effective exploitation of contemporary means of communication, has set up a significant social movement that can impact Pakistan's social and political scenes to a very considerable extent.

Funding

The sources that sustain Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan's funding are diverse, showing the broad support base and good organizational skills of the party. The financial resources needed to maintain TLP's extensive activities – spelled out up to colossal protests, political campaigns, and organizational maintenance – come from diversified sources, reflecting the party's ability to mobilize both grassroots and potentially external financial backing. Such supporters' donations account for one of the largest funding sources for TLP. The donors are known supporters of the party who share the party's ideology and are made to part with the donations by a strong belief in the mission. In turn, the Barelvi community – being the leading societal support network for TLP – is active in the provision of financial resources. Most regular donations are collected locally at mosques, meetings with community members, and religious festivities. The charity embedded within the Barelvi tradition, and that too for religious purposes, ensures a constant flow of donations that TLP depends on for its operations (Basu & Kermani, 2023).

Apart from individual contributions, the party also holds fundraising campaigns to boost its financial strength further. Such programs are usually organized around religious festivals and gatherings, where the party can receive contributions from many people. Some of the popular means of TLP funding include fundraising dinners, charity auctions, and religious sermons where the party solicits funds from its followers. The events serve the second purpose in equal measure: raising funds and bringing about cohesiveness and a sense of communal and shared purpose within TLP's supporters.

One other element that has been key to TLP's funding strategy is the use of digital platforms. The party has made the best use of social media and other online platforms to reach more people to get their message across and also to raise money. In the TLP fundraising campaign, online campaigns, fund-raising projects, and requests for donations through posts on social media are already gaining a foothold (Malik, 2021). This digital outreach enables TLP to reach out to the diaspora community and other supporters who might not be physically present within Pakistan's confines but would be willing to pitch in financially for the cause.

Although most of the funding for TLP appears to be domestic, there are murmurings about international sources of funding that have a vested interest in the organization's agenda. These could include individuals or organizations from other countries who share

TLP's ideological stance and are interested in supporting its activities financially. However, concrete evidence regarding the extent and nature of this external funding is limited and remains a topic of investigation and debate. In this, the money from abroad points to a more extensive geopolitical and ideological network with which TLP is associated, although direct linkages are often complex to confirm.

It is thus the grassroots nature of its financial base that serves as a critical factor in the sustainability and resilience of TLP. Unlike other political structures that largely depend on high-profile donors or state financing, a base of many small donations guarantees the highest level of financial independence and stability for TLP (Qureshi, 2023). This funding structure is decentralized, thus ensuring that the party is not overly vulnerable to pressure from a few donors and is able to sustain its activities in the case of political or legal challenges.

The financial resources that TLP has at its disposal can finance and carry out large-scale protests and campaigns, which are essential to its political influence plans. TLP also has to consider the logistics and costs involved in transportation, food, security, and advertising materials. The ability to mobilize tens of thousands of individuals to stage protests, like that in the Faizabad sit-in and any other subsequent major demonstrations, legitimizes TLP's funding as an organizational mechanism (Basit, 2022).

Moreover, TLP's funding strategy is integrally connected with its political objectives. By building an extensive financial base, TLP can pursue sustained long-term protests and political practices such that the state and other political stakeholders are forced to give in to their demands. This financial capability forms a vital part of TLP's overall strategy to shape public policy and discourse in Pakistan, particularly on issues related to blasphemy laws and religious governance.

The financial setup of TLP is complex: it includes grassroots donations, organized fundraising events, digital campaigns, and maybe even foreign contributions. This diversified financial base has enabled TLP to sustain a wide range of activities and continue its dominance as a serious political power in Pakistan. Basu and Kermani (2023) also argue that the mobilization of significant financial resources from a broad base of support speaks loudly about the organization's strength within the party and to the degree to which its ideological message seems to resonate on deep levels for its followers.

General Activities

TLP is perhaps most known for vigorous protests and rallies on the issue of blasphemy, which have become its hallmark and byword, attracting international and national focus toward it. TLP protests usually come in the form of nationwide rallies, sit-ins, and violent confrontations with law enforcement. These are not just random demonstrations but large and organized rallies that can mobilize many followers, reflecting the well-built party structure and strong popular base of support. (Nisa, 2023)

The party is so frequent in its activities that most of them reach points where the government has to offer a compromise to the people, implying that TLP can manipulate state policy. It is in this light, for instance, that their protests have often made some legislation pass differently or be postponed when they believe that such a law is not in harmony with their faith. This, therefore, indicates clearly just how influential they are. Protests by the party have also led to much chaos in significant towns. This may include disturbances in businesses and other economic activities besides disrupting everyday life, thus having a great deal of impact (Craig, 2024).

CHAPTER V

Findings and Discussion

Introduction

This chapter discusses the study's findings on Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), especially its promotion and defense of blasphemy laws, by looking at an array of influences that TLP has had while attempting to critically analyze the party's operations in the overall context of Pakistani society and politics. In practice, the chapter elaborates on TLP's defense of blasphemy laws and its methods of mobilizing support and will focus on the tremendous effects on the public and government, explicitly explaining the crucial role played by TLP in social and political life in Pakistan.

Why Does TLP Promote and Defend Blasphemy Laws?

Over time, TLP has developed into a proactive, conservative, and traditionalist organization of Barelvi Muslims that remains rooted in the ideology of Sufi Islam. Understanding the ideological foundations, leadership principles, and larger sociopolitical strategy will help explain why the party is such a big supporter and protector of blasphemy laws.

The religious and ideological views of TLP are inherently based on the propagation of blasphemy laws. It follows a Barelvi understanding of Islam, which has a great respect for the Prophet Mohammad and keeps traditional customs and beliefs. TLP believes that the blasphemy law is essential to protecting the sanctity of the Prophet so that other fundamentals of Islam cannot be challenged also.

Significant leadership in the party, which includes the late founder Khadim Hussain Rizvi, has played a very significant role in creating and propagating anti-blasphemy discourse in the party. Infamous for his fiery speeches and charismatic oratory, Rizvi portrayed himself as the energetic champion of the Prophet's honor. He held a hostile view that the party policy mandated challenging those who insulted Islam, whether in the form of states or persons. This necessarily included Western influences and even internal entities such as liberal groups and Ahmadiyya, who are viewed as heretical by TLP (Abbas, 2022).

TLP's hardline approach to the issue of blasphemy is a response to what it deems burgeoning threats against Islamic ideals, both from within and outside Pakistan. The party accuses various groups and ideologies of being opposed to Islam, including Western cultural influences, secular and liberal Pakistani voices, and religious minorities such as the Ahmadiyya community (Basit, 2022). TLP believes such groups are polluting and defiling the real spirit of Islam and that this is the reason there needs to be a vehement defense of the religion through blasphemy laws.

Blasphemy laws are supported by TLP to promote its position as the protector of "real Islam". It argues that only by considering these laws can pure Islam be saved. This protectionist stance has resonance with a great majority of Pakistan's population, which share concerns over Islamic values being eroded in the march toward modernization and globalization.

TLP's ideological stance also includes the active confrontation and challenging of perceived anti-Islamic movements. This confrontational approach could be seen in their protests, demonstrations, and, at times, violent actions against those voices they consider blasphemous or even disrespectful to Islam. In the process, TLP not only struggles to bring religious orthodoxy into practice but also tries to assert its authority and influence the social and political scene in Pakistan.

TLP's very aggressive propagation and defense of blasphemy laws, according to the evidence available thus far, perhaps reflects a complex interplay of matters relating to religious conviction, leadership influence, and strategic sociopolitical positioning. The party tries to protect what it deems to be faithful Islam while facing and erasing those who are threats to their religious and ideological setup. This method has helped TLP to attain much ground and influence by Pakistani Muslims for whom the protection and assertion of Islamic values and beliefs is a prime concern and part of their identity (Abbas, 2022).

TLP Activities in Defending Blasphemy Laws

Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) conducts various acts to protect and uphold blasphemy laws. These are characterized by massive calls for “people power”, demonstrations, and civil disturbances, including acts of mob justice. These acts are underpinned by anti-Western, anti-liberal sentiments. The group’s actions often focus on high-profile cases of blasphemy, which is seen to make them more defiant in the defense of the Prophet’s honor.

Resource mobilization theory (RMT) is central to the analysis of the strategies of TLP, with mass mobilization through protests and demonstrations being a critical method applied to protect blasphemy laws. The mobilizations always happen following the occurrence of blasphemous acts or statements that are made inside or outside the country. This mobilization of TLP leaders reflects the presence of something much more profound than mere organizational capacity. It speaks volumes to the party's influence on different strata of Pakistani society. This efficient mobilization by TLP again positions them as politically resourceful and knowing how to employ these tools to consolidate and increase their influence in social, cultural, and political spheres.

While reviewing blasphemy laws in Pakistan, particularly in relation to the TLP, the results often include an analysis of structures and an actor's goals and objectives. Furthermore, these dynamics may be examined using rational choice theory (RCT), which assumes that individuals and agents make decisions based on cost-benefit analyses within the context of the environment. This theoretical framework will explain how TLP, the state, and others view Pakistan's blasphemy legislation.

When it comes to demonstrations and protests, TLP is one of the most committed groups to stand in defense of blasphemy laws and uses mass mobilization as a crucial tactic. It usually comes out with strong condemnation or verbal attacks, whether in the country or overseas. TLP leaders say the masses they can gather speak volumes about their party's organizational skills and influence across all major Pakistan population segments.

TLP, a political and religious party, is one of the groups that has supported blasphemy legislation in the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Furthermore, if TLP's behaviors are examined from an RCT perspective, they may be interpreted as the use of rational self-interest in the following ways. Given the protection of blasphemy laws, the TLP effectively mobilizes significant political support for itself and its clerical collaborators from the cultural-conservative-religious community, resulting in increased political influence inside the game.

TLP has been particularly active in defending blasphemy laws and organizing high-profile protests, both of which are revolutionary acts aimed at mobilizing more followers and establishing supporters' identities. Furthermore, TLP uses street power and political pressure to make the government legally obligated to implement blasphemy laws that are most compatible with TLP's viewpoint.

TLP has taken up a few highly publicized cases of blasphemy for many campaigns to use the opportunities to unify its members and show its strength. Two prominent cases are that of Asia Bibi, a Christian woman charged with blasphemy in Pakistan, and the *Charlie Hebdo* cartoon conflict in France. In both cases, TLP leadership and its followers publicly demanded stern action against alleged blasphemers, usually in a highly choreographed show of street power and media campaigns.

An integral part of TLP's operation, however, has to be its stance on the West and liberal ideologies, taken as suspicion against the Islamic value system. For this reason, the rhetoric and actions of TLP are opposed to western countries, their media, and cultural forms that these groups see as demeaning toward Islam. A clear example of such a position is the group's refusal to accept the *Charlie Hebdo* cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad.

For Pakistan to be a state, it must strike a balance between different interests. In dealing with blasphemy laws, one has to look at the strategic problems. This is because, on the one hand, it must consider how much social turmoil there might be if the laws are not implemented because of TLP's request, and yet some may see this as submission to TLP and a way of maintaining law and order in the country while stopping big protests. It also looks at its international standing since strict enforcement may attract condemnation from abroad, thereby affecting diplomatic relations and trade-offs leading to a clash between domestic pressure versus global expectations that needs to be resolved. Again in many cases political leaders would support such laws so as to build partnerships with religious factions like TLP, hence strengthening their political hold. This is how Pakistan plays out blasphemy laws tactically while juggling various national concerns.

An RCT-based study is required to comprehend better the game between blasphemy laws, TLP, and the state. We should consider the following: why TLP and state actors choose certain ways to support or execute these laws; what the costs and benefits are, as perceived by TLP, of it demanding support for blasphemy laws; and what are the costs and benefits to the state in its responses to such actions. It must also be considered that different players (including

TLP, the state, and individuals) play their roles to maximize utility within the prevailing political and social dynamics.

TLP's insistence on maintaining blasphemy laws can also be considered a notable departure from the traditional accommodationist and mystical thrust of Sufi Islam. Traditionally, Sufism in South Asia has been seen as an attempt to promote an indigenous, inclusive form of culture and spirituality. However, the leadership of TLP, with leaders such as Khadim Hussain Rizvi, took a more hardline and retaliatory stance. This was an indication of the party's determination to take hardline and active measures to respond to anything that could be viewed as being disrespectful to the Prophet rather than a passive response that would forgive and forget the incident in question (Basit, 2022).

The central aspect of TLP's operations is the dedication to defending the honor of the Prophet. It is more than a religious obligation for TLP but a rallying cause for its political and social campaigning. By establishing itself as the leading protector of the Prophet's dignity, TLP hopes to gather its influence and popularity among conservative Muslims who equally and passionately feel concerned for the protection of Islamic ideals.

The overall spectrum of actions taken by the TLP to protect blasphemy laws is broad and includes the setup of massive protests as well as vigilantism. The solid anti-Western, anti-liberal sentiment of the organization and its focus on only high-profile cases make it take a very aggressive stance. TLP thus came to reject the traditionally tolerant Sufi position. It became one of the leading political forces in contemporary Pakistan (Shaikh, 2018).

Mobilization of Pakistani People

Resource mobilization theory may help explain why diverse support was successfully mobilized by Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan. To broaden its mass base, TLP mobilizes cultural and religious resources by integrating elements of popular Sufi culture with a more orthodox interpretation of Islam. This resource-based strategy has enabled TLP to attract both urban middle-class professionals and rural followers by emphasizing the organization's capability to harness and deploy diverse resources to achieve its mobilization goals.

TLP combines a devotional-mystical narrative with hardline, orthodox religious beliefs, which are considered mainstream Sunni in Pakistan. TLP's synthesis resonates with many Pakistanis who draw their spiritual and cultural identity from Sufi traditions but, at the same

time, appreciate an aggressive approach to orthodox Islam. In the process, it sends an appealing message by marshalling Sufi heritage with the rigorous defense of Islamic principles.

Among the middle classes of professionals in urban areas, TLP is seen as the salvation of Islamic values from being swept away by secularism and Westernization. To them, TLP is an indispensable force that will guarantee the religious and cultural setup of Pakistani society. The group's preoccupation with the glory of the Prophet and its battle against blasphemy fits into its call for a moral and ethical order that stems from its religious tradition.

TLP has been able to reach followers in many areas of the rural region precisely by using traditional religious networks and rural religious leaders. TLP works through charismatic leadership and a strategy of grassroots campaigning to tap into the kind of deep religious sentiments and community ties characteristic of such places. For the rural followers, who think they are on the margins and neglected by mainstream political parties, TLP champions their religious convictions and cultural identity.

TLP is unique regarding its mass mobilization, but it is coupled with direct action and has charismatic leaders. Figures like Khadim Hussain Rizvi use fiery rhetoric and passionate speeches to galvanize support and inspire followers. They are usually at the forefront of these protests and sit-ins, leading from the front, a feature that appeals to their followers. The visibility and closeness of TLP leaders create a sense of belonging and loyalty for its membership.

TLP proved its mobilization strength during the Pakistani elections of 2018. For a relatively new party with meagre resources, it garnered an impressive following. Although this did not mean significant political influence, it further brought out the fact that the party could mobilize the public effectively. Through the elections, it became evident that TLP had support from a notable percentage of the population, hence its capacity to change the political game plan in Pakistan (Sabat, A., 2020).

Mass Mobilization Strategies

TLP uses modern technology and conventional means to form the basis for mass mobilization. The party implements social media to convene rallies or to communicate and mobilize supporters. Concurrently, it maintains strong connections with local religious institutions, using mosques and madrassas as hubs for community outreach and mobilization. This dual approach allows TLP to reach a broad audience and maintain a constant presence in both urban and rural areas (Qureshi, 2023).

TLP's success in mobilizing the Pakistani populace is attributable to the strategic blending of Sufi culture with orthodox Islam, its appeal to a demographically diverse group of people, the charismatic leadership of its figures, and its effective use of direct action. The 2018 elections revealed that the party had the potential, at least limited, to mobilize significant popular support, indicating that its efforts had nonetheless resulted in some measure of at least limited electoral success (Rashid, 2023).

TLP has provoked intense reactions from both the public and government because of its fervent anti-blasphemy campaigns, which have significantly shaped Pakistan's societal and political landscapes.

TLP has incited extreme reactions from society and the state through its fiery anti-blasphemy campaigns, which to a great extent have been at the forefront of shaping the terrain of contemporary Pakistan in social and political terms. The TLP has been historically adept at rallying support from Sunni-Barelvi constituencies, whose defense of the honor of the Prophet is seen as a matter of collective responsibility. Hence, its anti-blasphemy protests draw substantial popular and official backing. This sentiment has enabled mass participation in different kinds of rallies, protests, and public acts of expression. The strength of the masses in all walks of life, including sectors in the peripheries, that the massive presence creates in the public eye speaks to how TLP is successful with this form of mobilization (Rashid, 2023).

In the face of TLP activism, government reactions have walked a fine line between the principles of legal order on one hand and the reality of public sentiment on the other. The party's power to mobilize large crowds through street protests is essentially what has pushed authorities to make policy-related concessions concerning the blasphemy laws. These very concessions, however, call into question the government's commitment to national security and political stability, mainly when the demands of TLP are at odds with established national or international norms. (Ahmed and Falki, 2023).

TLP's confrontational stance on the issues of blasphemy has shed light on the reality of Pakistan: severe social divides along diverse ideals of religious identity and governance (Rashid, 2023). Its effects on public opinion and the susceptible religious issues affect domestic politics and international debates on human rights and freedom of expression in Pakistan. The government's responses to the demands of TLP have become severe indicators of the country's internal cohesion and its external diplomatic relations.

These dynamics between TLP, the public, and the government display the complex interaction of religion, politics, and governance that plays out in Pakistan. The power of religious rhetoric in influencing policy decisions and framing public discourse is underscored by the success with which TLP has mobilized Sunni-Barelvi sentiments. On the other hand, the government's approach typifies the ease with which it has to balance constitutional duties, societal expectations, and international obligations. Even as the TLP's influence deepens, the repercussions of their campaigns spill over national borders by tarnishing Pakistan's image and causing concerns and debate about matters of religious freedoms and civil liberties, not only in Pakistan but also in the rest of the world (Rana, D. 2022).

Impact of TLP Campaigns on Blasphemy Laws

By placing blasphemy at the forefront of both its religious and political agendas, TLP has dramatically changed Pakistan's political landscape.

Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan's unwavering advocacy on the issue of blasphemy led to the question of legislation being introduced at the federal level, which in turn, influenced public opinion in Pakistan's rural and urban domains, as well as policy formulations. The party's strong mobilization was organized by its brilliant organizational capacity and resonated with parts of society devoted to protecting religious sanctity (Yilmaz, 2021).

The party's firm stand on the blasphemy issue has attracted enormous sympathy, resulting in gigantic political pressure and efficient lobbying for stricter laws against it. It has gained recognition for the TLP as a political contender with a strong say in setting legislative agendas and public policy debates dealing with religion (Rashid, 2023).

Nevertheless, its support base is ordinary people, and owing to the radical activities of TLP, it is mutilating governmental activities and poses a severe threat to the state's sovereignty (Ahmed & Falki, 2023). The group's ability to derail civil protocols through protests and riots showcases the political insecurity and instability. This requires governments to intervene appropriately and fairly to address the violence while at the same time preserving democratic conduct.

Thus, TLP's impact extends beyond Pakistan, influencing regional views and sentiments on religious tolerance and governance (Shaikh, 2018). Concerns about human rights and religious freedoms in the West focus on how Pakistan handles blasphemy issues, while globally, TLP's activism affects the country's image. By strategically emphasizing blasphemy

legislation, TLP has altered Pakistan's political landscape, polarizing society and challenging state authority. As TLP's popularity grows through mass mobilization and lobbying, the implications for Pakistan's stability and its relations with the global community have become increasingly significant. This shapes ongoing debates on religious freedom, governance, and democracy – or their absence (Javid, H., 2021).

CHAPTER VI

Conclusion

This is evident by the formation of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP), which employs religion, politics, and social structure in the enforcement of blasphemy laws. The TLP, which is based on Barelvi Islam, has indeed employed religious belief to garner substantial support and, therefore, has attained authority over the country's policies. The power of TLP to apply pressure depends on its penchant for using populist tactics and its ability to harness social media platforms. This has led to the mobilization of significant portions of the population for the promotion of blasphemy laws, to the extent that anyone who goes against them is punished. The principal goal of TLP is to safeguard the honor of the Prophet, which is a strong and appealing message to a large chunk of Pakistan's population. This is compounded by how TLP has been excellent in inciting public protests and actively defending its stances on social media platforms. This example of the framing of discussion and the ability to push the government to become involved in subjects related to blasphemy legislation shows how the party has a significant impact on the political system in Pakistan. At the same time, this impact has deepened existing intersectoral inequalities and has led to acts of aggressiveness in the public spheres of the state.

Thus, there is a growing interest in the possibility of achieving a better symbiosis between these two activities. The recent escalation of TLP also shows that the organization is involved in enforcing strict blasphemy laws and represents a complex social and legal issue. The movement's emergence has also contributed to sectarian conflicts and stifled free speech and criticism, thus creating a discouraging tone in the society. This has further highlighted the delicate balance between preserving religious identity and seeking political power in Pakistan. In this case, it is possible to ascertain that when it comes to the question of whether religious views are compatible with the protection of human rights, one must be very cautious and objective. There is a rise in the possibility of misuse of blasphemy laws and hence there is a need for reformers to ensure that they amend the blasphemy laws while still protecting religious feeling. Another element to consider is the idea of transparency, where it is possible to understand the judicial processes and the systems which are in place. This is important to safeguard members of the public from those who wish to tarnish their reputations through false accusations and to guarantee that matters related to trials are dealt with professionally.

The following are major activities that are closely linked to the recognition of interfaith dialogue, understanding, and its promotion as fundamental in the settlement of social conflicts and the creation of a society of tolerance. Therefore, to ensure that no party feels disadvantaged or

threatened to act violently, religious leaders and followers must take an active role in the discussion of the application of blasphemy laws. There is a need to enhance the law and nurture organizations that aim at combating extrajudicial killings and defending minority groups. Police agencies should have the capacity and means to perform their functions in connection with blasphemy in a neutral and non-discriminatory manner. Since social media plays a massive role in mobilizing TLP workers, addressing the problem is best done by strengthening digital literacy and combating fake news.

Furthermore, providing education to the public on how to use social media effectively and the dangers of online radicalization could help to decrease the use of such appalling words and foster the spirit of positive change in society. This approach might offer some valuable information regarding the dynamics and strategies linked to blasphemy laws with references to the previous Islamist organizations within Pakistan and beyond. Perhaps conducting a longitudinal study to evaluate the impact of TLP's actions in terms of the legal system of Pakistan, social structure, and political stability of the country may be useful. Understanding how social media extends the message of TLP and influences society's perception is extremely important in the modern world, characterized by information and communication technology. Thus, the emergence of TLP and the organization's adamant support for blasphemy laws has provided Pakistan with numerous opportunities and threats. To foster social cohesiveness, we must tread carefully in addressing the complex issues before us. We must be careful not to trample on either religious beliefs or human rights while seeking to find solutions. Given the above considerations, the specificity of the impacts on TLP can be helpful for politicians, scholars, and the public. Solving such problems demands staying true to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion and the spirit of a pluralistic democracy.

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