



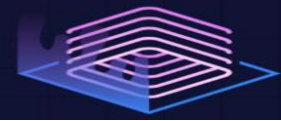
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## Political Aspects and the Entrepreneurial Success of Women

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**Abstract:**

This research investigates the impact of the prevailing political climate in Pakistan on the entrepreneurial achievements of women. The critical importance of a stable political environment in facilitating successful business ventures has also been noted. To accomplish this, the research method utilized self-administered questionnaires to collect data from two cohorts of Pakistani women entrepreneurs: those who were registered and those who were not. The registered members of the organization were selected through a stratified random sampling method from the seven women's chambers of commerce and industry in Pakistan. In contrast, the non-registered members were drawn from Facebook groups. Utilizing a quantitative research methodology, 506 samples were collected. Multiple regression models indicate that political variables influence the entrepreneurial performance of women across the board. Additionally, the results illustrate that female entrepreneurs perceive a lack of support from the government in regards to the responsibilities essential for the operation of their businesses.



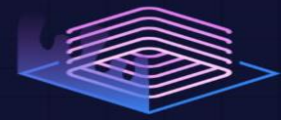
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## Introduction

Adeyeye et al. (2018) assert that the entrepreneurial process has gained momentum and is making a substantial contribution to the progress of developing economies. Additionally, success stories have emerged from Saudi Arabia and Beirut (Ullah, 2011). Ullah (2011) asserts that the entrepreneurship process contributes to market innovation, the creation of employment opportunities, and the implementation of novel technologies. In contemporary times, the significance of entrepreneurship support is universally recognized (Tur-Porcar et al., 2018). It is considered a significant determinant in the economic development of both developed and developing countries (Vivarelli, 2012; Hamdan, 2019). Naqi (2003) posits that in industrialized nations, the advancement of enterprises and industries is propelled by entrepreneurship. Research has established a strong positive correlation between the level of entrepreneurship and annual economic growth in the seven industrialized G-7 countries (Mary, 2005): France, Japan, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, the United States, and Italy. The traditional notion that women are relegated to the role of "house makers" and men are the "bread winners" in the modern era is being challenged by an emerging entrepreneurial movement that encourages women to start their own enterprises (Narayan et al., 2000). Numerous elements motivate females to engage in entrepreneurial endeavors. The decision to launch a business may be influenced by push or drag factors (Erogul & Quagraine, 2017). Pull motivation is influenced by the social, familial, and economic environment in which an individual resides, while push motivation arises from the pressures associated with potential job loss or career limitations. As a consequence, they motivate them to partake in entrepreneurial pursuits, thereby fostering the active involvement of female entrepreneurs in this phenomenon (Pages, 2005). They are undertaking entrepreneurial pursuits in order to regain control over their lives and achieve independence (Cartel et al., 2006). Scholarly investigations have established that a considerable proportion of women are initiating their own entrepreneurial ventures (Mas-Verdu et al., 2009; Chapele, 2010; Kaautonen & Palmroos, 2010;



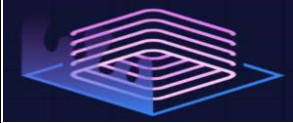
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Tsuchiya, 2010; Yousof & Jain, 2010). Despite this, women continue to be perceived as the inferior gender in terms of physiology and emotions (Wennekers, 1999). While certain scholarly investigations, such as those conducted by Nina (1997) and Brush (1992), center on the position of women in entrepreneurship, Henry et al. (2005) contend that males are the primary catalysts and decision-makers in this field. Holmquist and Sundin (1989) investigated concepts of entrepreneurship that were conceived and implemented by men. However, a scarcity of theoretical literature exists that provides support for women entrepreneurs, an issue that necessitates thoughtful examination (Baker, 1997). The principal obstacles impeding the entrepreneurial aspirations of women in Pakistan are the veils (Pardah) and the repositories of her family's dignity (Izzat) (Roomi & Parrott, 2008). Goheer and Penksa (2007) posit that the primary responsibility of women is to care for their families, and any self-employment they engage in is perceived as a safeguarding of the family's reputation and dignity. Regarding social feminism as a concept, Nancy J. According to (1991), women are expected to engage in both "paid labor" and "unpaid domestic labor." The male partner is entitled to certain privileges due to his substantial contributions to the household. In terms of entrepreneurial endeavors, women are predominantly engaged in small-scale enterprises and are content to advance their careers at a sluggish pace. Urban Pakistani women have increasingly invested in the business sector in recent years with the intention of attaining financial independence and supporting their families. Significant effort is being made by them to achieve parity in status with men (Ferdoos, 2005). Furthermore, numerous Pakistani women entrepreneurs opt to concentrate their efforts on service provision, handicrafts, and textiles due to the relatively low initial investment requirements in these sectors (McElwee & Al-Riyami, 2003; Roomi & Parrott, 2008; & Roomi, 2013). Work-life balance becomes a formidable task in Pakistan's patriarchal society, where women are expected to provide for their families. While a new social structure has facilitated the incremental integration of women from private to public spheres on a global scale, women in Pakistan are hindered from pursuing their entrepreneurial aspirations by a number of obstacles. The achievement of female entrepreneurs in business



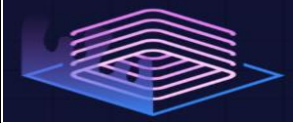
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management is susceptible to a multitude of external factors, with politics being one such element. A strong positive correlation has been observed between entrepreneurial support from the government and economic growth (Acs et al., 2004; Kumar & Liu, 2005; Hernandez, 2011; Gohar & Abarra, 2016). In spite of the considerable scholarly effort devoted to women's entrepreneurship in Pakistan, the political determinants that impact their performance have been largely overlooked. The aforementioned factors predominantly pertain to cultural dimensions (Roomi & Parrott, 2008), the empowerment of women (Anwar & Rashid, 2011), and workplace concerns associated with gender (Mahmood et al., 2012). In order to address this research lacuna, the present study investigates the influence of political factors on the entrepreneurial performance of women in Pakistan. As a result of the applied research, the implications of the study's results for management will be enhanced, enabling a more comprehensive understanding and resolution of challenges or issues that manifest in practical work settings. Saunders (2011) posits that research objectives offer more explicit clarification than research studies and function as a means for the researcher to exhibit a clear sense of purpose and trajectory. The purpose of this study is to identify the entrepreneurial development programs accessible to women in Pakistan. To analyze the political environment in Pakistan with respect to the entrepreneurial endeavors of women. · To investigate the impact of political issues on the entrepreneurial performance of women in Pakistan. This research will provide a substantial contribution towards addressing the existing need for domestic studies that examine the political factors that impact entrepreneurial performance. It will facilitate the development and growth of Pakistan's entrepreneurial culture, thereby fostering the generation of fresh employment prospects and bolstering the nation's economic expansion.

## 2. An Analysis of Literature

The term "entrepreneur" originates from the French word "Entreprendre," which Richard Cantillon (1775) first used in the early 1700s. The term "undertake" was associated with commanders of military expeditions (Hisrich & Peters, 1992). Mary (2001) defines entrepreneurship as the pursuit



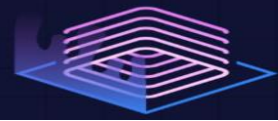
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of self-employment accompanied by an element of risk and reward. It is also linked to the recognition and acquisition of advantageous opportunities (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Drucker (1987) posits that entrepreneurship is a behavioral discipline. Kiyani (2017) posits that this facilitates women's active participation in business and the generation of employment opportunities, thereby promoting economic expansion (Gundry & Welsch, 2001; Allen & Truman, 1991). As stated by Anwar and Rashid (2011), a woman entrepreneur is an individual who employs her expertise and available resources to generate and advance novel business prospects. This can manifest in two ways: formally, through the operation of a registered business where she is also responsible for day-to-day operations and which has been in operation for over a year; or informally, within the confines of her home, where the business is not formally registered; as cited in the Global Entrepreneurship Directory.

Female ownership of firms exceeds 30% in Finland, Canada, New Zealand, and Denmark, according to additional research (Greene et al., 2005). Performance can be defined as the ability to execute a task or endeavor by utilizing one's knowledge. As stated by Brush and Vaanderwerf (1992), it is possible to quantify it through metrics such as annual revenue, return on investment, and employee count. According to the corpus of research on the efficacy of women-owned businesses, some attention has been paid to this aspect. The performance of businesses owned by women is comparatively inferior to that of businesses owned by men, owing to inadequate initial funding (Watson, 2002). Insufficient capital, social, financial, and human resources have an effect on the performance of the organization (Maarlow & Strange, 1994; Boden & Nuci, 2000). The reasons for the proliferation of businesses within a country can be attributed to the factors that comprise the operating environment of the company (Cuervo, 2005). The political climate is one such element.

## 2.1 Political Dimensions



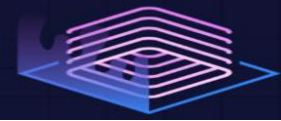
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Market mechanisms and favorable political environments facilitate the growth of an organization (Hamed, 1995; Zhou, 2014). The success of entrepreneurial pursuits within a nation is contingent upon the formulation and implementation of governmental policies that foster such initiatives. Environmental factors, such as governmental support and political and traditional demands, notably impact the performance of small businesses (Yusuf, 1995). "The support by institutions (state, local companies, authorities) for developing and building social and personal sides that permit free and unrestricted individual development of entrepreneurship in the environment in which it is operating" is the manner in which Skica et al. (2013) define The relationship between the government and entrepreneurship is advantageous because the former fosters economic growth and development and the latter promotes entrepreneurship (Acs et al., 2004; Kumar and Liu, 2005; Hernandez, 2011; Gohar & Abarrar, 2016). The relationship between firm investment and political affiliations is found to be moderated in a governmental environment that enforces anti-corruption measures (Yu et al., 2019). There exist two distinct schools of thought concerning the government's function in fostering entrepreneurship. One viewpoint posits that the government assumes a pivotal function in nurturing entrepreneurial endeavors. The implementation of adaptable policies pertaining to infrastructure, finance, and fiscal policy has been found to enhance business performance (Obaji & Ulugu, 2014). Consequently, this fosters prosperous entrepreneurial endeavors (Minniti, 2008; Lee et al., 2011; Greeine, 2012; Mason & Brown, 2013; Kamunge et al., 2014; Acs et al., 2016). Furthermore, governmental initiatives promote and provide assistance to business proprietors in their pursuits of investing in ventures and expanding their organizations (Tende, 2014). The counterargument posits that the government might, to some extent, foster an entrepreneurial ethos (Zhang & Lai, 2014). Moreover, it contends that an entrepreneur who possesses formidable political connections can thrive in an environment devoid of institutional support (Ge et al., 2017). Resource availability is among the many obstacles that a woman encounters when she launches her own business. According to Resource Based Theory (Hoopes et al., 2003), organizations that acquire and utilize unique resources from the market



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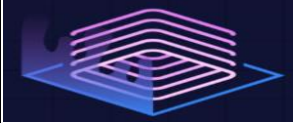


exhibit superior performance relative to their competitors. The provision of these resources on the market for female entrepreneurs is guaranteed by the government. In Pakistan, a multitude of domestic and international initiatives are at work to facilitate the access of female entrepreneurs to training courses and resources.

### **2.3 International Development Initiatives for Women Entrepreneurs in Pakistan**

Pakistan is presently hosting several foreign initiatives that offer financial and technical aid with the aim of fostering the growth and progress of women entrepreneurs (Anwar & Rashid, 2011). USAID and the World Bank are the two primary organizations involved (McLymont, 2008; Ibrahim, 2009). The World Bank is the principal donor of the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund, an organization that has been extending microloans to female entrepreneurs (54 percent of whom are women). The World Bank is collaborating with its partners to establish a variety of financial assistance programs for female entrepreneurs. The principal emphasis of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) is on women entrepreneurs who own and manage businesses situated in remote areas. Moreover, it enables them to penetrate profitable markets (Anwar & Rashid, 2011). It is establishing programs in collaboration with regional organizations to assist female business proprietors in learning the fundamentals of management. The US Department of State additionally provides assistance and instruction for the advancement of women in various countries, including Pakistan.

2.4 Deficits in the Current Body of Literature On the growth and success of an organization are contingent on a variety of factors. A multitude of entrepreneurial frameworks have been formulated in response to extensive research conducted at the national and regional levels, which explored the impact of business operations, human relations, environment, and behavior on the performance of organizations (Sandberg & Hofer, 1987; Lerner et al., 1997; Lerner & Haber, 2001; Sidik, 2012; Tur-Porcar et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the adequacy of these models is attributed to the unique entrepreneurial culture and environment (Rajput, 2011). As a result, further investigation is warranted to ascertain the critical



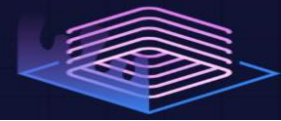
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factors that impact the performance of women in entrepreneurship. In recent years, scholarly attention in Pakistan has been directed towards entrepreneurship. However, there exists a scarcity of research concerning the political factors that impact the performance of women in the entrepreneurial realm. Gender-related issues (Roomi & Harrison, 2010; Mahmood et al., 2012), the empowerment of women in the contemporary cultural milieu of Pakistan, and the determinants that inspire female entrepreneurs are all subjects of research. Environmental issues were the subject of Ullah's (2011) exhaustive investigation, but his scope was restricted to the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Thus, through an analysis of the impact of political issues on the entrepreneurial achievements of women in Pakistan, this research fills a void in the scholarly discourse.

### 3. Approaches to Research

#### 3.1 Type of Study

To determine the attributes of the participants who have been conducting business operations in Pakistan, this research employs a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical methods. The mean and standard deviation of the respondents' perceptions of the political climate in Pakistan are calculated using multiple regression analysis. Additionally, the impact of political factors on the performance of women entrepreneurs is examined.

#### 3.2 Population Under Investigation

In order to investigate the impact of political issues on the entrepreneurial performance of women, data collection was limited to registered and unregistered groups. The 693 registered and active women entrepreneurs were selected from among all provincial women chambers of commerce and industry, whereas unregistered women entrepreneurs operated their businesses remotely from their residences and distributed their products via diverse Facebook groups. An equivalent number of participants were selected from each cohort.





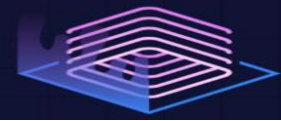
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### 3.3 Determining the Size of Sample

Given the limited number of 693 active and registered women entrepreneurs in chambers, the sample size was determined using Yamane's method (1967).

### 3.4 Equipment and Measuring

The respondents' information was collected via self-administered questionnaires. On a Likert scale, the degree of agreement or disagreement expressed by the respondents was recorded.

The researcher obtained an exhaustive roster of engaged female entrepreneurs from the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP); consequently, the respondents who had registered were selected from this roster. A random selection was made of unregistered respondents from the following Facebook selling groups: Peshawar buy and sell, wOmania, Ladies buy and sell, and Shebizz. Electronic mail and Google Docs were the digital platforms utilized to gather the data. Furthermore, surveys were delivered to respondents via courier.

### 3.5 Methods of Assessing Outcomes

Version 20 of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) was utilized to analyze the data. Convergent validity was ascertained subsequent to assessing the dependability of the instrument. In order to evaluate the hypotheses, multiple regressions were implemented. Bajpai (2011) defines dependability of an instrument as its consistent application of the same score to entities or individuals possessing identical values. Cronbach Alpha is an extensively employed and highly recommended metric for assessing dependability. Its range is from zero to one. Validity refers to the capacity of an instrument to precisely measure what it is designed to measure. Convergent validity and discriminant validity are its two classifications. Convergent validity establishes the true relationship between concepts that ought to be interconnected (Zikund, Babin, Car, & Grifin,

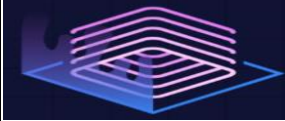
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2013). The identification of the intended results is accomplished in this investigation by means of component analysis.

**4. Results and Discussion**

Table 1: Coefficients of Political Factors

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	1.921	.092		20.983	.000		
	PF_F1	.072	.030	.169	2.437	.015	.702	1.425
	PF_F2	.132	.034	.272	3.907	.000	.702	1.425

a. Dependent Variable: EP

The relationship between entrepreneurship and its factors, which include individual, enterprise-related, and external variables, has been the subject of extensive scholarly investigation (Zahra, 1999). Political issues constitute a component of this set. In this study, the impact of political issues on entrepreneurial performance was investigated. The two categories into which political variables were categorized were government encouragement and government initiatives. According to the results, political variables have a substantial effect on the entrepreneurial performance of women. As a result, the results align with the investigations of other distinguished scholars who have found that governmental policies that provide assistance to entrepreneurs are pivotal for their prosperity in any given economy (Acs et al., 2004; Kumar & Ulug, 2005; Hernandez, 2011; Obaaji & Ulug, 2014). The analysis supports the hypothesis that there is a correlation between government support and entrepreneurial success. In contrast, with respect to the accessibility of governmental assistance, the results suggest that female entrepreneurs hold the perception that the government fails to provide the necessary support to execute the operational aspects of their enterprises. The implications of this study's results for female small business proprietors are evident. The market is



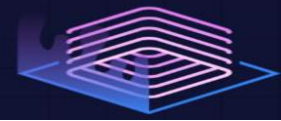
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replete with numerous business opportunities, and women who gain access to them may be exploited. Women entrepreneurs may engage in resource competition and strategically integrate them to enhance prospects through the efficient utilization of market opportunities. Assistance from the government is unquestionably vital in this situation. Thus, the findings of the study provide support for the Resource Based Theory.

**5. Conclusion**

The objective of this research endeavor is to examine the impact of political factors on the entrepreneurial success of women in Pakistan. The results indicated that these factors significantly influenced the entrepreneurial achievements of women with regard to governmental support and initiatives. In contrast, respondents believed that the government does not provide sufficient assistance to female entrepreneurs in managing their businesses. Additionally, it is worth noting that the governmental assistance programs for women entrepreneurs in Pakistan lack adequate financial and spiritual support. A significant proportion of the participants lack awareness regarding the services provided by SMEDA, WBDC, Pakistani NGOs, Chambers of Commerce and Industries. The government fails to provide assistance to the remarkable female entrepreneurs. The political climate in Pakistan fails to fulfill the governmental responsibilities that include establishing policies and legal frameworks, granting social recognition, and facilitating access to resources such as technology, financial assistance, education, and training. Thus, the aggregate findings of the analysis provide support for the resource-based theory. As suggested by the aforementioned findings, the government should promote the use of online training programs and establish online databases and portals to collect and disseminate the knowledge of successful enterprises. Furthermore, it is imperative that the organization organize lectures and seminars to equip the business proprietors with the necessary skills. Despite the existence of several reputable organizations in Pakistan, including Women Chambers of Commerce and Industry, SMEDA, and First Women Bank Ltd., which provide comprehensive support to women entrepreneurs



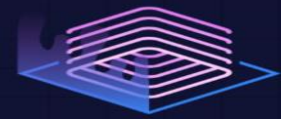
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throughout their careers, further progress is required in this area. It is recommended that policymakers devise amicable and accommodating legislation that alleviates the plight of women through the elimination of bureaucratic obstacles and the provision of tax exemptions. Economic advancement may be attainable through the provision of adequate resources and conducive environments for female entrepreneurs in Pakistan. Fostering trust can be achieved by organizing a recurring series of seminars that elucidate the functions carried out by prominent networking organizations in the nation, including SMEDA and various Chambers. It will increase female business owners' understanding of networking and how to implement it to enhance their organizations' operations. The dissemination of success tales pertaining to female entrepreneurs has the potential to make a substantial contribution to the progression of entrepreneurial culture through Pakistani media. In order to positively impact aspiring entrepreneurs, it is imperative that the media promote successful female entrepreneurs as paragons. This will enable novices to operate and manage their businesses more efficiently by enabling them to make well-informed decisions. Media outlets ought to endorse and draw attention to websites that prioritize innovation and creativity as a means to cultivate an entrepreneurial ethos within the community.



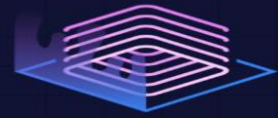
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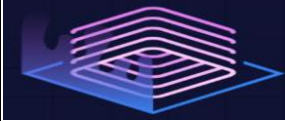
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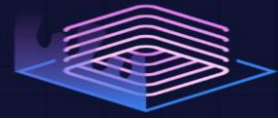
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