Development-induced Displacement and Dispossession: A Critical Discourse Analysis of the Construction of Dadhocha Dam in Rawalpindi

By

Arfa Saleem

(Registration No: 00000364863)

Department of Development Studies

School of Social Sciences and Humanities (S³H)

National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

Islamabad, Pakistan

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National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST)

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Date: _____

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Examination Committee Members

1. Dr. Muhammad Ammad Khan   Signature: _____

2. Ms. Sheeba Tariq   Signature: _____

3. Dr. Rabia Zaid   Signature: _____

4. Dr. Tauqeer Hussain Shah   Signature: _____

Supervisor: Dr. Arslan Waheed   Signature: _____

                                    Date: _____

Dr. Arslan Waheed
Assistant Professor
Department of Development Studies
School of Social Sciences and Humanities (S³H)
NUST Sector H-12, Islamabad.

Dr. Umer Khayyam

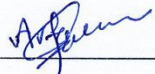Head of Department   Signature   Date

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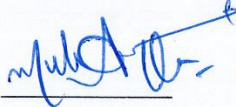
Student Name: Arfa Saleem   Signature: _____

Examination Committee:

External Examiner/Official Discussant:

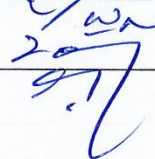Dr. Muhammad Ammad Khan   Signature: _____

Assistant Professor

Department of Development Studies, S3H, NUST

Supervisor: Dr. Arslan Waheed   Signature: _____

Name of HOD: Dr. Umer Khayyam   Signature: _____

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LIST OF SYMBOLS, ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
MDG	Million Gallons per Day
SDO	Small Dams Organization

ABSTRACT

Construction of hydraulic infrastructure is often regarded as an epitome of development whereby its *raison d'etre* is based on various rationalities. Though propagated as apolitical interventions infused with scientific rationality and technocratic supremacy, mega infrastructures cannot be regarded as value free as post-development scholars argue. This case study of Dadhocha Dam in Rawalpindi, Pakistan aims at inquiring these dominant rationalities that propagate dam construction while legitimizing the displacement and dispossession of affectees of Malikpur. Employing Critical Discourse Analysis as theoretical and analytical framework, this research views the development-displacement nexus as a contested terrain and problematizes it by examining both the dominant/state and the marginalized/affectees discourses embedded in it. The discourses, taken as data, are collected through qualitative interviews of state, represented by the Small Dams Organization and the affectees of Malikpur, official documents including PC-1 and regulations, and focused ethnography. Through critical analysis, the research argues that the Dadhocha Dam and the ensuing dispossession and displacement of the Malikpur residents is legitimized by state through discursive strategies of rationalization, authorization, practical argumentation and blame avoidance. These strategies, while marginalizing the affectees' discourse, also determine implications on their livelihoods in the form of exploitation and impoverishment risks. This juxtaposition of the discourses and their socio-material manifestation reveals power asymmetry in development projects, and mainstream policy processes at a broader level. By providing a critique of the normative public policy discourse in Pakistan, this case-study contributes in democratizing the development discourse and highlighting institutional obstacles in achieving inclusive development, which can be reformed for social justice.

Keywords: development-induced displacement, hydraulic infrastructure, land acquisition, compensation, critical discourse

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Some people have left out of fear, some of us remain. We will build barriers if we have to until we get justice (Ariz, a resident of Malikpur)

Remaining in a perpetual state of waiting for an inevitable destruction of livelihood is a form of powerlessness. At its backdrop is the construction of the Dadhocha Dam in Rawalpindi, for which the land of Malikpur, among other villages, is being acquired. The land acquisition was initiated by the Small Dams Organization (SDO) in 2011, after which the process fell quiescent until 2020. After almost 10 years of silence, an urgency was issued to resume the dam construction. While the years preceding urgency created conditions of uncertainty and exploitation, the recommencement of acquisition procedures has thrown the affectees in a legal struggle to claim fair compensation for their land.

Displacement for them is inevitable, since the *raison d'etre* for the dam is built on the hegemonic developmentalist discourse deeply rooted in colonial practices. The concept of development which perpetuated after post World War II with US victory came with its own lexical baggage and manifested in the form of development programs comprising mega-structures, fiscal restructuring and socio-economic reforms (Esteva, 2010). These were undertaken in Asia, Latin America and Africa by international financial institutions, most prominently the World Bank, along with regional institutes like the Asian Development Bank and African Development Bank during the years of 1950s to 1980s (Zaman et al., 2022). Embedded in the hyperbolized illustration of modernization, these projects guaranteed a promising trajectory towards economic growth. While regimes in the Global South embraced and implemented these programs, it came at the cost of marginalizing those who had already existed on the sideline (Terminski, 2015). Development became an oxymoron, where on one hand, the prominent towering infrastructures, expansive highways and urbanized housing stood in stark contrast with destruction of traditional homes, ways of living and cultural and social ties (Oliver-Smith, 2006; Uvin, 2010). For this reason, Sachs (2010) depicts a cannibalistic nature of economic growth, where the cost of development is shifted to communities and nature, causing

dispossession and displacement, and a growing polarization in the society. Development proponents condone it as a necessary price to pay for the greater good, but many critics ask the essential question: development for whom?

'Public Purpose' is the term invoked to validate development projects, and it is the most prominent feature in the colonial land acquisition laws enacted in South Asia (Saxena, 2008). The Land Acquisition Act 1894, although amended with its own variations over time by India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, retains its colonial features. Being non-specific in terminology, it gives immense powers to the state to seize land and discredit land ownership over an issuance of one notification (Ahmed, 2022; Sarkar, 2007). In order to claim rights on the land to acquire compensation in exchange for their homes, people have to go through extensive, yet often exploitative bureaucratic procedures in their already vulnerable state of depleting time and resources. They are often reliant on documentation which could be easily invalidated by administrative systems (Tassadiq, 2022). While fighting for their rights, they are often discursively othered, criminalized and trivialized in the process, which largely delegitimizes their struggle and consequently pushes them into peripheries. These processes have been prevalent since the initiation of top-down development programs in Pakistan ever since its inception in 1947.

1.1 Problem Statement

The era of development enveloped Pakistan all the same in the 1960s, when Ayub Khan launched extensive development programs to harness economic growth (Houston, 2017; Weiss, 1999). Megaprojects like construction of dams and building modern cities like Islamabad were central to the policies and were delineated as harbingers of socio-economic progress (Akhter, 2015; Gardezi & Mumtaz, 2005). Even though an economic growth rate, purported to be the main indicator of development, was projected to be at 6%, moving to 10% in the 1970s, however, as a consequence of neo-liberal capitalism, the inequalities increased considerably (Abbasi, 2021; Gardezi & Mumtaz, 2005; LaPorte, 1969). In the name of so-called nation building, colonial legacies were reconstituted at the expense of displacement, creation of internal peripheries, material deprivation and aggravation of social stratification (Abbasi, 2021; Akhter, 2022; Jamali, 2014). For instance, more than 0.3 million people were displaced by major dams of Mangla, Tarbela and Ghazi Brotha

alone without sufficient compensation or effective resettlement plans (Haq & Haq, 2022). Construction of Islamabad and modernization of Karachi displaced approximately 654,000 people, while grand highways like Lyari Expressway have led to demolition of 25000 residential households (Anwar et al., 2021).

Abbasi (2021) in her critique of Pakistan's Vision 2025 contends that current development in Pakistan follows the same historical trajectory since Ayub's era, which is based on dominant development ideology, while it normalizes the destitution of people who pay the cost of such modernization endeavours. Several recent infrastructural projects depict the similar dichotomy of development and impoverishment, for instance, the ghettoization of Gwadar under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), with the violence of displacement and loss of rights to the sea (Ebrahim, 2017; Jamali, 2014). Similarly, Tassadiq (2022) explores the citizen-subject, where people's right to land and housing is undermined in the light of construction of Orange Line Metro Train (OLMT), where their social and material relationship to the city is mediated through colonial legal and bureaucratic practices, causing dispossession and displacement. Any act of resistance and voices to seek social justice are suppressed or muted through normalization of racialized peripheries, justified on the basis of necessity, or validated in terms of future visions of national prosperity (Abbasi, 2021; Akhter, 2022; Jamali, 2014).

Dadhocha Dam, the case study of this research, in its rational, planning, and execution is no exception to the centuries old practices of land acquisition and developmentalist authoritarianism. The Small Dams Organization, the main institute under this research, has similar mechanisms to acquire land. Borrowing heavily from the western discourse, the Dadhocha Dam is founded upon technocratic and scientific knowledge, which when put to paper in the name of planning and policy bestow it with institutional, bureaucratic and procedural legitimization. Dadhocha Dam is envisioned to resolve the grave water shortage that Rawalpindi and Islamabad will inevitably face. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report delineates the proposed location of the dam as ideal and validates it through expert feasibility studies. This need-based human rights and technocratic discourse lays grounds for 'justified' land acquisition for the dam construction, which will displace 218 households and 1064 people.

Contextualizing the preceding debate within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, an imperative question can be formulated: why, despite the stark binaries of growth and impoverishment, the development-displacement nexus remains largely uncontested? To arrive at a comprehensive answer, problematization of this nexus is required.

According to Foucault (1984, 1972), discourse strives to stabilize meanings, and thus shape and control broader orders and structures. Its constitutive character naturalizes what is actually socially constitutive (Diaz-Bone et al., 2008). Problematization then, dismantles what appears to be a fact, but is in actuality a historically constructed fixed meaning (Foucault, 1984). Accordingly, Fairclough's (2013, 1992) conceptualization of problematization presents discourse as a part of the social process, sharing a dialectical relationship with material reality, or social actions, which is held together by power relations in a society. Through normative and explanatory critique, this dialectical relationship is problematized by exploring and uncovering how and why these power relations exist in discursive and non-discursive aspects, and how/why they materialize the social reality comprising structures, practices and events (Fairclough, 2015, 2013, 1992). In this way, the hegemonic development discourse can be said to be an attempt to freeze a particular modernist outlook which permeates all spheres as commonsensical and naturalistic, creating a discursive closure which precludes alternative discourses through power relations. In this particular context, the development-displacement nexus is presented as normative, which purports a particular development idea as essential, and legitimizes the displacement and dispossession of people.

Akor (2015, p. 1) emphasizes the need to problematize the development discourses, in order to not only bring into question the readily accepted notions constructed by 'development experts' but extend the capacity of decision-making to people for whom the development is said to be. Moreover, by studying the developmental discourses and practices, it will bring forth the strategies used which makes development a contested terrain, provide a comprehensive understanding of policy-making and institutional frameworks and delineate construction of political imaginaries within mega projects (for

details see Coticchia & Di Giulio, 2023; Esposito and Terlizzi, 2023; Rek-Wozniak, 2023; Tinti, 2023).

Thus, the case-study of Dadhocha Dam problematizes the development-displacement nexus in Pakistan by juxtaposing the state and affectee discourses to explore legitimization of dam construction and displacement/dispossession and reveal the overarching power structures, practices and events which constitute the socio-material reality for the affectees. A detailed explanation of the study area is as follows:

1.2 Dadhocha Dam and the Peripheries: The Small Dams Organization vs. the Village of Malikpur

Designed by the Punjab Planning Commission and executed by the Small Dams Organization, Dadhocha Dam is projected to fulfill 35 million gallons per day out (MDG) of 60-65 MGD water requirements of Rawalpindi. Falling under the administration of Punjab Irrigation Department, the Small Dams Organization was formed in 1973 to undertake development of Barani Areas in Potohar plateau and so far, 57 small dams have been constructed since 1962. Its main activities include feasibility studies, construction, operation and maintenance of small dams (Punjab Irrigation Department, 2023). The Small Dams Organization is set to complete the Dadhocha Dam project with a budget of 6833.158 million within 3 years (PC-1, 2018).

Dadhocha Dam is proposed to be located about 25 km from the Rawalpindi City, 8 km from Rawat on the Ling River, with 123 feet height, 737 feet length and a storage capacity of 60,000 acre-ft, under the administrative control of District Rawalpindi (Figure 1). Falling in its pond area/reservoir are two large villages in the Rawalpindi Tehsil i.e. Khanpur and Bherwala, also known as Malikpur Azizal and one village in Kallar Syedan namely Kund. Smaller villages include Saidhot, Thalla and Bhaun. Most of the people in the villages earn their livelihoods through agricultural farming of wheat and maize on their lands. They also have small-scale businesses like grocery shops. Other facilities accessible to them are dispensaries and medical stores, along with 3 primary schools (PC-1, 2018). These villages will be submerged completely due to the dam, displacing approximately 1064 people and their livelihood.

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For this research, state-society binary is understood in the roles of the Small Dams Organization which is assigned with the responsibility of planning and executing the development, i.e., Dadhocha Dam. On the other hand lies people to whom development is directed as a public good and inevitable path to glory and progress, i.e., the residents of Malikpur Azizal who experience socio-materiality of development and refer to themselves as 'affectees of development' (for a detailed discussion on corpus of the study and data gathering for this research, see Chapter 3).
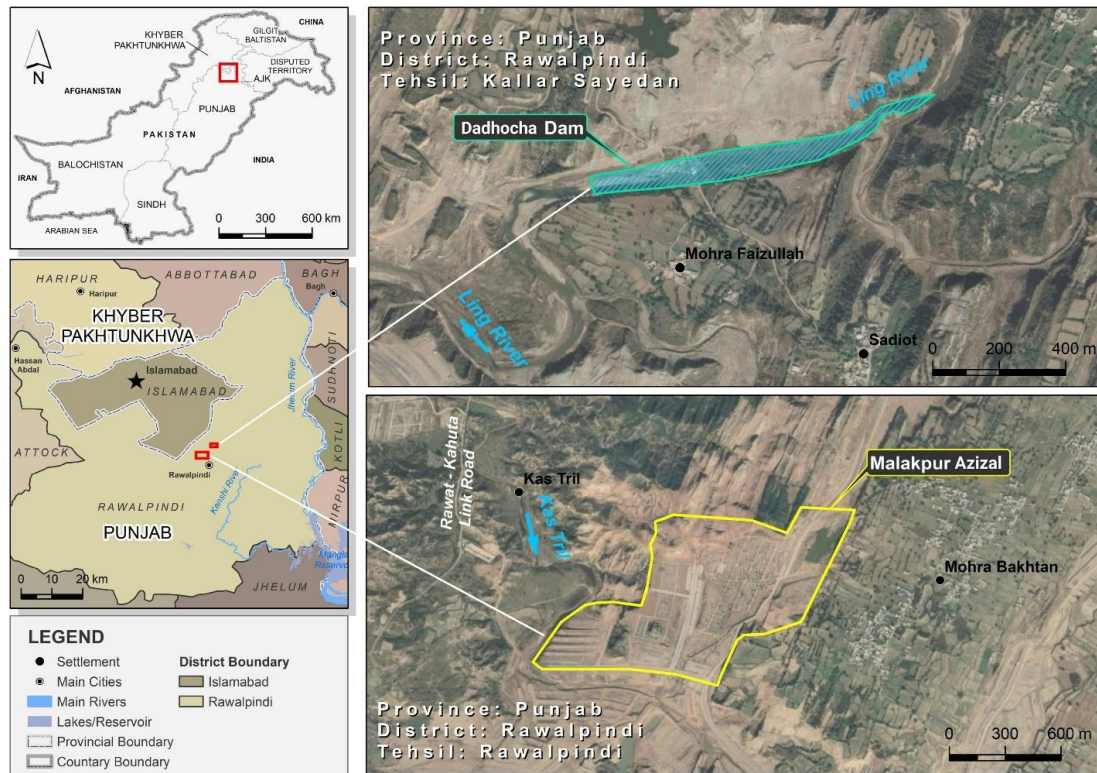
Figure 1 Location of the Dadhocha Dam (GIS Map)

1.3 Construction of Research Questions and Objectives of the Study

Development as a discourse, and as a material process are intertwined in a way that the ideas perpetuated regarding development come from dominant institutions, and these very institutions hold the power to mobilize resources to materialize their vision into reality. The semantics of development and what it actualizes is depersonalized and dehumanized, where the prevalence of hegemonic discourses project a reality in which the underrepresented discourses appear to not exist. These are manifested in the social process as institutional practices which marginalize other discourses to ensure the continuation of power hierarchies in order to maintain and sustain the authoritative structures. The way such discourses are operationalized into practice also shape the reality of those whose voices are muted.

Dam construction, a mega-structure illustrating the epitome of development with its grandeur image and promises to become a panacea for socio-economic obstacles is readily endorsed and implemented in state policies. Yet it constructs a very different truth for those on whose land the dam is built. Following are the research objectives and research questions that guide this research:

1.3.1   Research Objectives

1. To investigate the power-hierarchies in the realizing the dream of development while constructing the Dadhocha Dam

2. To understand socio-material struggles, appropriations, and contestations in the process of development of Dadhocha Dam

1.3.2   Research Questions

To achieve the above-mentioned research objectives, following are the guiding research questions:

1. How power-hierarchies play out in the event of the planning and construction of Dadhocha Dam in both discursive and non-discursive aspects?

2. How the socio-material reality of the displaced population counteracts with the dominant discourses of planning and construction of Dadhocha Dam as an inevitable step towards development?

1.4 Significance

The particular significance of this study lies in, firstly, attempting to problematize the normative nexus of development and displacement/dispossession in Pakistan through the framework of critical discourse analysis. This will contribute in democratizing the development debate in Pakistan by bringing the marginalized discourses of the affectees to the forefront of the otherwise majorly monopolized discursive space driven by power-hierarchies. The in-depth understanding of smaller, context-specific case-study of the Dadhocha Dam will help identify not only socio-cultural aspects of displacement in Rawalpindi, but also will serve as a model to highlight obstacles in wider policies and institutional practices causing hindrance in achievement of a vision of inclusive development.

1.5 Link to Sustainable Development Goals

While this case-study primarily aims to critique the nexus of development and displacement/dispossession, it can provide valuable reflection on how the findings of problematization of the aforementioned nexus can be harnessed to improve or restructure the orientation towards Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) for a better development outcome in Pakistan. The case-study of the Dadhocha Dam connects at least three SDGs across the development-induced displacement debate. A commonly understood and accepted way to overcome water shortage or conserve water is through hydraulic structures. Hydraulic structures and their underlying ideologies (see chapter 2 for details) have been embraced by the authorities in Pakistan as a means towards materialization of development policies. Thus SDG-6 i.e. ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all, is aligned with the case-study of Dadhocha Dam, whose purpose is described as a solution to water-shortage in Rawalpindi and Islamabad (chapter 4). This case-study is built on the existing literature which contends that in pursuit of constructing hydraulic structures, some communities wind up as peripheries through

displacement and dispossession. Accordingly, displacement and dispossession exposes people to impoverishment risks (chapter 2), thus they are antithetical, specifically to the SDG-1, which aims for zero poverty. Moreover, displacement and dispossession also undercut the efforts towards SDG-11 i.e. make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable, since displacement/dispossession without proper integration or resettlement provisions will push people towards insecurity.

Thus, this case-study will not only reflect on how SDGs must not be looked at in isolation, but also that compartmentalizing or prioritizing one SDG over the another will undermine the overall effort towards a comprehensive sustainable development in Pakistan. Most importantly, the case study, through critical discourse analysis, will highlight the gap between the discursive construction of sustainability into policies, and their materialization (or lack of) at a concrete level.

1.6 Chapters Summary

Chapter 1 (this chapter) commences with a quote from an affectee, which highlights the essence of this study. It is contextualized through a background explanation of the case of the Dadhocha Dam. The chapter then provides a brief overview of the main themes of the research i.e. discourse and practice of development, hydraulic structures, land acquisition, dispossession and displacement within which the case study takes place. This is followed by an introduction of affectees of Malikpur and the Small Dams Organization, the main representatives of the research. Finally, the research objectives and questions are established in order to guide and conduct the research.

Chapter 2 discusses and connects the theory and literature review in order to construct a comprehensive framework within which the case study of Dadhocha Dam is placed. It firstly outlines the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis, particularly, Norman Fairlough's (2015; 2013; 2012; 2003; 1992) concept of dialectical relational critical discourse analysis, elaborating upon the discourse, semiosis, and its relationship with the material aspects of the social reality. The power of institutions and formulation of public policy is contextualized through critical discourse analysis. Through this lens, the discourse on history of development, hydraulic structures, displacement and dispossession is explored. It examines how public policy on dams is established by institutions to legitimize

dispossession and displacement of people, and is enacted through legal instruments such as the Land Acquisition Act 1894. Finally, it highlights the exploitative provisions of land acquisition laws and their implementation specifically in South Asia, and Pakistan. Thus, the theory of critical discourse analysis and empirical literature review is structured accordingly, to argue that the discursive practices of policies and regulations materialize non-discursive practices of mega-structures, land acquisition and displacement, revealing a power hierarchy between the state and people.

Chapter 3, divided in two sections, establishes the methodological and analytical framework to guide the research process. The first section expands on the Critical Discourse Analysis as a methodological toolbox as formulated by Fairclough (2009). It discusses the process, which is organized in stages whereby the semiotic aspect of a social wrong i.e. displacement and dispossession is theorized, and its dialectical relation is analyzed through relevant texts such as documents and interviews, within the social, historical and ideological context in which the case study is placed. It then discusses the analytical framework, which outlines the discursive strategies employed to analyze the data collected for this research. Some of these strategies include practical argumentation (Fairclough, 2013), legitimization (Leeuwen, 2008), blame avoidance (Hansson 2015; Hood, 2011; Lakoff, 2008; Wodak 2011, 2006), discursive closure (Hajer, 1995), non-decision making (Bachrach & Baratz, 1963) and power of silence in discourse (Foucault, 1978). The second section delineates the method of data collection in qualitative research and explains the procedure followed by the researcher in acquiring documents, interviews and ethnographic data. Lastly, the chapter highlights the limitations of the study.

Chapter 4 structures the data in accordance with the timeline of the Dadhocha Dam case-study i.e. 2010-2023, and analyzes it through application of the discursive strategies. It divides the discussion into four sections and presents the discourse of the state and the affectees within an organized sequence of events. The first section uses practical argumentation to deconstruct the policy report on the Dadhocha Dam, which legitimizes the construction of the dam based upon problematization of the current water situation in Rawalpindi. The second section discusses the discourse of state and the affectees with respect to the displacement resulting from the construction of the dam. It argues how

legitimization tools such as technocratic and scientific rationality, authorization and moral evaluation are used to justify displacement. Third section provides a detailed account of the affectees' experience of uncertainty and exploitation as a result of land acquisition process. It explores the discursive strategies used by the state officials to deflect blame and responsibility for the conditions faced by the affectees due to exploitative administrative procedures. Finally, section four presents the struggle of affectees against dispossession and displacement, highlighting the role of regulations such as the Land Acquisition Act 1894 in maintaining the power asymmetry between the state and people. It analyzes how dispossession is enabled through law and strategies of discursive closure implemented to obstruct affectees' access to fair compensation.

Since the case-study and its implications for the affectees are on-going, Chapter 5, acts as an extension of Chapter 4 by leaving the series of events untied, yet concluding the research by reiterating and summarizing the critique on the continuous power-hierarchies. Further, it bridges the discourse on the Dadhocha event and the wider debate on Pakistan's commitment to Sustainable Development Goals by highlighting the discursive and material dichotomy of legitimization and delegitimization in prevalent structural and institutional loopholes in policy planning. Lastly, in accordance with the methodology of the Critical Discourse Analysis, it suggests a way forward for overcoming the obstacles of the social wrong and move towards inclusive development structures.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter discusses the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis with an emphasis on the meaning of discourse and how it materializes in historical power structures. The lens of Critical Discourse Analysis is then used to view the power of public policy institutions in the context of hegemonic development discourse and practices emanating from the postcolonial western ideology. It describes how hydraulic structures, a prevalent part of developmental modernization, are rationalized by the states in the Global South to consolidate regimes and control over resources. By drawing on development critique, the chapter highlights the impact of such infrastructural undertaking on people, specifically development-induced displacement and dispossession through land acquisition. Finally, the chapter provides an overview of common exploitative practices in policy implementation in Pakistan. By integrating the theory of Critical Discourse Analysis and literature on development practices, this chapter creates a comprehensive conceptual framework within which the case study of Dadhocha Dam is placed.

2.1 Critical Social Theory and Dialectical- Relational Discourse Analysis

The epistemological foundations of this study are grounded in critical social science that not only describes societies and their systems, organizations and institutions but also evaluates them with respect to understanding the obstacles to, and possibilities for bringing changes for the betterment of the society (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012). The ideas, representations and concepts of social events, practices and behaviors are produced in social life while simultaneously influencing social life itself (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). These ideas are manifested in discourse, due to which a part of critical social science concerns itself with social explanation of types and forms of discourse, and explains social life as affected by discourse (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Fairclough, 1992).

With various theoretical and disciplinary standpoints, scholarship on discourse is diverse, making the concept difficult to specify or define in concrete terms. In taking a more socio-theoretical approach, Fairclough (2013; 2009; 1992) combines linguistic analysis with social theory, whereby discourse means the use of language in social context.

For him, discourse in social context could still be taken in different sense, i.e., a) discourse as an element of social processes; b) the language with which a particular social field or practice is associated (e.g. political discourse); c) the manner of how world's different aspects are construed with respect to specific social viewpoints (e.g. a 'neo-liberal discourse of globalization'). For this approach to CDA, Fairclough (2013; 2009; 1992), instead, uses the term semiosis in a general and abstract way to refer to a) discourse as an element of social processes, suggesting that language is one of the 'semiotic modalities' of discourse analysis, others including visual images and body language.

Fairclough (1992) proposes that discourse is a form of social practice rather than an individual activity. This makes discourse a mode of action, which thereby establishes a relationship between discourse and social structures. This dialectical relation implies that on one hand social structures shape and constrain discourse at all levels e.g. societal relations by class, institutions like education and law, or conventions or norms etc. On the other hand, drawing on Foucault's (1979; 1978; 1972) concept of discursive formation of objects, discourse is taken as socially constitutive. not only in representation but also signification of the world (Fairclough, 1992). It constructs and constitutes social identities, social relationships, knowledge and beliefs systems, and the wider social structures (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). Thus, discourse and society are not independent entities, rather, they have an internal and dialectical relation (Fairclough, 2015). The relationship is such that while each 'internalizes' the other, they are not reducible to each other (Harvey, 1996). This signifies that social institutions, power, relations, cultural values and beliefs are partially semiotic, enabling the key question that CDA poses: what is the nature of relationship which ties semiotic and other elements? (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012).

Fairclough (2013; 2009; 1992) establishes the dialectical relationship by considering semiosis as an element of social process, the social process comprising three levels of social reality: social structures, practices and events. Social practices are networks constituted by social institutions, fields and organizations, and they play an intermediary role between abstract social structures and concrete social events. The semiotic aspect of networks of social practices is known as orders of discourse and its elements i.e. genre,

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discourse and style, are not only semiotic but cut across both discursive and non-discursive i.e. other social elements. Genres relate to other social elements in terms of semiotic means of action e.g. interviews, editorials and advertisements etc. Discourses construe and represent aspects of the world that different social actors identify with. Styles constitute identities or ways of being semiotically. In this case, multiple structures are inextricably intertwined that include economic, development, political and legal structures through which the event i.e. displacement of Malikpur residents takes place due to Dadhocha Dam. The relationship between them is mediated by social practices of bureaucratic, developmental and legal institutions of Punjab, as well as informal institutions of land transfers at local level. The order of discourse then is made up by policy texts such as feasibility and environmental studies, regulations under the Land Acquisition Act 1894 and official and affectees narratives in the form of Genres. The social groups in this case i.e. government officials represent the development discourse embedded in colonial, hegemonic discourses while the affectees represent the peripheral discourses. Within these discourses, the social groups identify in particular ways of being i.e. sub-divisional officers, field officials, community leaders etc.

Social relations of power hold these networks of practice in place. Relationship of power, according to Foucault (1982, p. 790) is established in relations between individuals or groups: "a mode of action upon actions". Power relations, then, are not reconstituted 'above' the society, rather, deeply embedded into it (1982). These are diffused in the society in the form of domination structures across diverse practices e.g. capitalism, patriarchy, racism, colonization etc. (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999). However, instead of being apparent, modern power is concealed as truth and knowledge, having been normalized, progressively governmentalized through rationalization and centralization, in the form of state institutions (Foucault, 1982). This form of naturalization can be analyzed through Gramsci's concept of hegemony, where power relations are based on consent rather than coercion. In other terms, the exercise of power also determines, shapes or influences the wants of someone (Luke, 2005).

It is important to emphasize here that power, even within the CDA has different meanings. For Fairclough (2015, p. 26), power is dialectical in the sense that power enables

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action over people i.e. "power to do things"; and to do things or act upon others, power is required. While power is not inherently bad, but when it results in negative consequences on social life, it is open to justifiable critique. Power over discourse then, manifests in two ways: (1) power in discourse i.e. "Unequal encounters", control over who says what; (2) power behind discourse, often not apparent in texts and interactions, is the control over shaping and constituting 'orders of discourse', what kind of discourses or genres are available, or who has access to them (Fairclough, 2015, p. 77).

Power *of* [emphasis added] discourse relates to "the influence of historically grown macro-structures of meaning, of the conventions of the language game" (Wodak, 2011. p. 36) The struggle over semiotic hegemony is achieved through stabilization of meaning through social practices (Foucault, 1972). These social practices are tied to specific historical contexts within which knowledge is constructed (Fairclough, 2003; Keller 2005). Discourse then, is performative and knowledge-driven: knowledge produced by power carries serious truth claims about objects, and these truth claims materialize the very reality they describe (Foucault, 1977; Fairclough, 2003).

Accordingly, CDA focuses on emergence and hegemony of discourses i.e. how some dimensions of social processes are construed through certain discourses, which may become dominating and hegemonic when some aspects of those discourses recur and sustain while marginalizing others (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, 2010; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Fairclough, 2013, 1992). Particular discourses then tend to become more recontextualized and operationalized by shifting from one institution/organization to another one and practiced in a certain way i.e. "dialectically transformed into new ways of acting and interacting, new identities, new material realities" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 2010, p. 1216). For instance, in this case, the research traces the dam construction and displacement back to dominant western development discourses that have been recontextualized and operationalized by institutions through public policies in the Global South. This will be discussed in the following section.

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2.2 Institutional Power and Public Policy: Legitimacy of Hydraulic Structures in Development Practices

Discourses are institutionalized by creating fixed meanings or wider symbolic orders in a particular context in time (Keller, 2012). The institutionalization processes epitomize, realize and reify various knowledge structures which are legitimized in certain ways (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Keller, 2012). Legitimization, in a way, can be understood in terms of governmentality, which according to Foucault (1979), is the systematic means of employing techniques or tactics, to achieve certain ends. This governmental rationality is based on scientific processes, which is problematized by Foucault. The problematization is an analysis of how governmental power, and its mode of inquiry is operationalized such that they objectify the subjects through science i.e. subjectification to (Foucault, 1979). It comes about through practices that make human life a domain of power/knowledge. Accordingly, Fox and Miller (2015) draw on Giddens (1984) to view public administration institutions as recursive practices that are sustained by rules and appropriation of resources. Essentially then, bureaucratic administration is "domination through knowledge" (Weber, 1978 cited in Hull, 2012, p. 257). Thus, the discourse of public policy is deemed to be legitimized on the basis of scientific and technocratic rationality or 'truths'. Founded on knowledge claims, these truths are represented as part of an independently existing world- as an external referent to language (Miller et al., 1997). Majone (1989) contends that language constructs public policy (cited in Hajer, 2002). Discourses thus shape policy, which is more contingent upon deeper power dynamics than on rationality's external attributes (Richardson, 1996).

The public policy discourse in this research must be placed within a historical context or in Hajer's (2002, p. 62) terms "play of positioning at particular sites of discursive production". The grounds for modernist policy outlooks, ensuing mega projects, and resultant mass displacements can be traced back to the post- World War II US-led development. Escobar (1984) refers to development discourse as a historical formation, stabilized by subjecting common meanings, practices and cultures to various forms of power-knowledge. When the United States (US) stood triumphant at the end of the Second World War, so did their idea of how the world should be transformed. President Harry S Truman established the US' supremacy by declaring the age of development based on

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Western, industrialized outlook. The Third World was categorized as an 'underdeveloped area'. Sachs (2010) called development a perception that shapes reality, rather than just a socio-economic venture. Subsequently, the following occurred: it created a dominant interpretive grid through which the Third World was seen as problematic for lacking 'development' (Ferguson, 1994). Development, no matter what it entailed, was indisputably represented as 'better' for the underdeveloped, thus development became a performative word and naturalized in policies, to justify interventions in pursuit of the greater good (Rist, 2010; Esteva, 2010).

The interventions for development come with the ideas of what it should look like, and are mostly synonymous with modernity, industrialization and urbanization (Adebjörk, 2020). Reflecting what Scott (1998) has described as the high-modernist state ideology, they often consist of large-scale projects commonly financed by lending agencies, that include dam construction and urban redevelopment, as well as multinational extraction projects like oil and coal mining (Satiroglu & Choi, 2015). As Foucault (1977) maintains, in every society the production of discourse is controlled, organized and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures. Similarly, the development discourses are constructed around problematization, 'technification' and institutionalization, allowing development strategies to be deployed within the constructed discursive space (Escobar, 1984). They work in conjunction with rhetorics such as blanket nationalism (Abbink, 2012), survivalist or human rights notions to gain legitimacy (see for example Antonio et al., 2018; Hommes et al., 2016; Menga, 2015). The manner in which they are placed and illustrated in the policies reflect the state's disposition towards particular ways in which the world should work (Simpson, 2022).

Among modernization and infrastructural development, dams or hydraulic infrastructures have been one of the most prominent megastructures constructed by the West, as McCully (2001) observes: "Massive dams are much more than simply machines to generate electricity and store water. They are concrete, rock and earth expressions of the dominant ideology of the technological age: icons of economic development and scientific progress to match nuclear bombs and motor cars" (p. 3-4). According to him, Hoover Dam, one of the largest dams in the world, was redesigned to accentuate its visual power since it

was meant to represent power and domination. In a way then, Dams are seen as man's triumph over nature (McCully, 2001). The control over nature is not just expressions of visual power but also economic and political ones. Scott (1998) observes that organization of nature lexically reveals an overriding human interest in that the utilitarian discourses focus on those characteristics of nature which humans can appropriate for their use i.e. replacing the term "nature" with "natural resources". This discursive simplification, combined with technification results in the denaturing of landscapes, allowing administrative reordering and control of natural terrains (D'souza, 2008; Baghel & Nusser, 2010). Accordingly, the justification for development projects is most often unidimensional quantitative and economic (Oliver-Smith, 2006). They are synthesized with discourses that represent, for instance, 'lawful' practices in the shape of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to approve predetermined projects (Bingham, 2010; Fearnside, 2006), using the guarantee of scientific research and knowledge to build sound infrastructures (Antonio et al., 2018) and projected as having green credentials even with negative environmental and social impacts (Bratman, 2015).

The southward flow of large dams is traced by McCully (2001) as mostly undertaken by British colonialists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which was most evident on the Nile, Indus, as well as Ganges. The work continued in the decades following the Second World War, and the leaders of the post-colonial nations looked at dams as symbols of progress and prosperity. Given the South's trajectory of dams aligning with Western practices, in a way then, hydraulic imaginaries i.e. ideas about waterscapes, can be seen as semiotic ensembles or meaning systems that are historically situated and formed in social practice (David, 2011; Sum & Jessop, 2013). Accordingly, studies show that hydraulic infrastructures are tied to the hegemonic ontology of water, where the way of relating to or knowing water is embedded in western origins (Flaminio, 2021). The hydraulic structures were aligned with the development vision of the west, and international organizations were set-up to fund and implement massive top-down projects. Most particularly, the World Bank invested over $90 million in dam projects. (Clark, 1997; International Rivers, 2015).

2.3 Dam Regimes: A Case of Dispossession and Development-induced Displacement

As observed above, while dams were built on the notions of a brighter future and promises of socio-economic uplift, paradoxically, they came at the cost of inflicting impoverishment risks upon people (Cernea, 2000). Boelens et al (2019, p. 6) contend that dam regimes based on modernist epistemology are built upon such water governance discourses through which other knowledge systems are subjugated i.e. they exclude the "water users, meanings, values, identities and rights systems". Accordingly, Akhter (2022), by building on Gramscian approach to hegemonic strategies, argues that the statist hydraulic imaginary relies on image-function to establish the internal peripheries i.e. socio-spatial marginalized populations as a temporal problem that justifies infrastructural interventions. These practices are often legitimized under the 'right to development' which Uvin (2010) contends, is a self-serving rhetoric for institutions and states that postulated that development projects in themselves are a representation of implementation of human rights. He highlighted how institutions like the World Bank claimed to promote and provide human rights for over 50 years. Ironically, according to Clark (1997), an evaluation of 192 World Bank funded projects between 1986-1993 revealed massive internal displacement.

Terminski (2015) highlights some of the most glaring examples of hydraulic-structures and displacement nexus as the Three Gorges Dam in China, the Sardar Sarovar Project in India and Aswan, Kariba and Akosombo Dams in Africa. In China over 10 million people have been displaced solely due to dam construction, in India between 21-41 million, and over 400,000 in Africa (Terminski, 2015). Currently, there are no accurate global figures on the scale of Development-Induced Displacement. An estimate of 100 million people during the 1990s has been suggested by the World Bank (1994) to have been displaced by modernization and development projects in the 1990s. It has increased to 15 million annually between 2001- 2010 (Cernea, 2008). In the decade of 2011-2020, Cernea and Maldonado (2018) report approximately 20 million/per year displacements.

It is important to differentiate the term Development-induced Displacement (DID) from the most used term Development-induced Displacement and Resettlement (DIDR). Satiroglu and Choi (2015) delineate various scholarly stances, some of which argue that

DIDR carries an implicit assumption of provision of resettlement (de Wet, 2006), which is distinct from DID, in that displacement occurs despite the provision or non-provision of resettlement. The process of displacement resulting from development projects is deliberate (Price, 2009), and pre-planned, according to Oliver-Smith (2010), who contends that 'induced' in itself is problematic, implying that people have been persuaded to move. This opens up the debate of dichotomies of whether displacement and resettlement is voluntary or involuntary, but 'involuntary' is taken to be more reflective of the displacee's lack of choice (Price, 2009). There is yet further criticism of adopting neutral terms such as 'involuntary resettlement', preferring 'forced eviction' or 'development-forced displacement as more appropriate to underscore violation of human rights in forced migration (Oliver-Smith, 2010; Satiroglu & Choi, 2015; UN-HABITAT, 2011).

Several policies and frameworks to address development-induced displacement have nowbeen provided by the UN and the World Bank. For instance, the United Nations' Guiding Principle on Internal Displacement Principle 6.2(c) states: "The prohibition of arbitrary displacement includes displacement: [...] (c) In cases of large-scale development projects, which are not justified by compelling and overriding public interests [...] when the requirements of necessity and proportionality are met" (2004, p. 9).

However, Pettersson (2002) calls to attention a contradiction in such policies that, again, allow for infringement of the very human rights that they claim to protect. He deconstructs these principles by arguing that displacement is legitimized by using simplified terminology like 'overriding public interest' which leaves it open to interpretation for the state. It is at the state's discretion to determine what is 'public interest'; who, in fact the public is; what is necessary, and on what basis is proportionality quantified. It is thus, up to the state to decide whether displacement is a human rights violation or an unavoidable cost of development. More than being a consequence of right-based endeavor, DID is a dynamic of conflicting interests involving public institutions and local communities (Terminski, 2012), including politics and power differentials (Koenig, 2015).

Most often, the DID occurs through land acquisition which is enabled through regulations. Dijk (1989) maintains that discourses such as laws, regulations and instructions perform a directive pragmatic function that enables actions to be controlled directly. Law follows a Gramscian hegemony, according to Litowitz (2000), where compliance towards dominating institutions and practices is achieved without threatening the use of physical sanctions. He calls law an instrument that socially constitutes ontologies, making a world that criminalizes certain behaviors while legitimizing others. The legal instrument used to justify land expropriation for development projects is through the land acquisition acts, most of which are colonial laws that are still practiced in most South Asian countries (Chakravorty 2013; Jahnavi and Satpathy, 2021). Land has been deemed as the main source of livelihood and social networks for people (Patel et al., 2015). When people are dispossessed of their land, not only are there economic costs, but social costs as well (Terminski, 2015). In the words of Butler and Athanasiou:

> Being dispossessed refers to processes and ideologies by which persons are disowned and abjected by normative and normalizing powers that define cultural intelligibility and that regulate the distribution of vulnerability: loss of land and community; ownership of one's living body by another person, as in histories of slavery; subjection to military, imperial, and economic violence; poverty, securitarian regimes, bio-political subjectivation, liberal possessive individualism, neoliberal governmentality, and precaritization (2013, p. 2)

They further emphasize that being vulnerable to deprivation of rights means people are dependent on power of those who can deprive or sustain them and being and they are dependent on 'modes of governance and legal regimes' through which rights are sustained or conferred. However, dispossession by land grabbing is legitimized through law, and as Chakravorty (2013) states, it is deemed as the necessary cost for development. As mentioned earlier, since development is premised on the pursuit of greater good (Sachs, 2010; Esteva, 2010), it echoes in the Land Acquisition Act 1894.

The prehistory of the Land Acquisition Act 1894 can be traced back to the Bengal Regulation I of 1824, under the domain of the East India Company (EIC) (Afzal, 2023; Donogh, 1916; Downing, 2013). Where once EIC was limited to the rights to tax, trade and draw revenue, the regulation increased its powers whereby they could now acquire private property (Downing, 2013; Gogoi, 2018). According to Bhattacharyya (2015), the arrival at the notion of eminent domain is considered to be the Company's deliberate misrecognition of proprietary rights in precolonial India. He notes that the work of Lieutenant Colonel John Briggs (1830) called the true nature of Land Tax in India, mentioned, without justification, that the uncultivated or waste land in Indian villages was assumed by some to be owned by the state. Thus, any alluvial land in Bengal's lower delta, which had no permanent settlements, could be declared as a wasteland by the Company and included under the state's property. These "legal fictions" were furthered effectively by misappropriating the use of the term "estate" as land, which legally enabled the British occupants to become landowners (Bhattacharyya, 2015, p. 46). The idea of legal land ownership was redefined by introducing a paper regime whereby the right to ownership could only be claimed through documentation proof, despite which, the state could still refuse to recognize the claim (Bhattacharyya, 2015). Simultaneously, the colonial economic basis for legally producing spaces was established by codifying the public land as one which could be measured, disciplined and regulated (Bhattacharyya, 2015). Various modifications were done to the regulation over the decades to cater to economic expansion of the Company, for instance, 1850s regulation enabled the state to acquire private property for private companies by invoking public purpose, especially with the introduction of Indian Railways (Downing, 2013; Krishnan, 2014). Eventually, with its imperialism undertones, the Land Acquisition Act 1894 was passed, which converted a corporate entity into a sovereign state (Bhattacharyya, 2015; Krishnan, 2014).

The act continues to be used predominantly in post-colonial South Asia. In the act, justification for land acquisition is said to be for 'public purpose', characterizing it as moralistic (Saxena, 2008) thus, giving it a moral legitimacy (Leeuwen, 2008). However, since the law does not offer any exhaustive definition of 'public purpose', it gives the state extensive, exclusive powers to acquire a vast amount of land under 'eminent domain' which renders it *terra nullius*- nobody's land (Sarkar, 2007; Saxena, 2008). Moreover, while the

legislation enumerates procedures for acquisition (Sheikh, 2005), it empowers the state to 'short-circuit' mandatory processes of public hearings, social and environmental impact reports etc. (Levien, 2011). This is done through the undefined provision of 'urgency' which allows the state, whenever it deems necessary, to acquire land within 15 days of the notice (Ahmed, 2022; Goswami. 2016; Levien, 2011).   In most cases, dispossession and displacement is inevitable. It then becomes a question of how long and when, where people come to deal with ambiguity and uncertainty, which further threatens their livelihood (Harms, 2013).

All these processes, however, are reduced to 'just' compensation claims, which are typically insufficient in restoring lost livelihoods (Price, 2009; Thomson, 2014). The act creates no obligation for the state to bear responsibility for any additional costs, or to rehabilitate affected people (Das 2006; Ramanathan, 2008 cited in Mariotti, 2016). Based on market rates of the current year in which the notification is issued (Nielsen & Nilsen, 2015; Sarkar, 2007), most often it is lower than asset-replacement rates so affectees might not be able to buy replacement land. Moreover, the cash is spent easily or used to pay debts so it cannot replace productive assets (Jayewardene, 2008). While cash compensation is not enough as is, Price (2009) notes that national frameworks are often implemented in an inefficient manner, resulting in late payments or worse, non-payments in case of corruption, thus negatively impacting people's effort to re-establish their livelihoods. As a result, negotiations take place on the sidelines but when they are unsuccessful, cases escalate to the legal domain (Jahnavi and Satpathy, 2021). Court cases only tend to delay the process or increase the award for compensation (Guha, 2007 cited in Nielsen & Nilsen, 2015).

2.4 Pakistan's Dam Regime and Displacement

The development trajectory of Pakistan was similar to the numerous other countries in the Global South, where industrial growth harnessed through mega projects was based on international expertise and loans (Anwar, 2014). Called the Golden Age of development, it reflected Ayub Khan's military regime which aimed to legitimize and consolidate the leadership by harnessing the ideology of technocratic knowledge- a

Gramscian 'developmentalist passive revolution' (Akhter, 2015; Houston, 2017; Weiss, 1999).

Houston (2017) argues that technocratic knowledge played a central role in Pakistan's developmental discourse and thus, the decision-making. He analyzes the report of the World Bank in 1968 which used technocratic suggestions to mobilize dams as development in Pakistan. He draws similarities between the approach to dams in Pakistan and development projects in Lesotho, a case studied by Ferguson (1994) to reveal the premise of governmentality in development discourse that views state as a machine to achieve growth through apolitical development programs. Moreover, hydraulic bureaucracies have often been built on water scarcity discourse to legitimize megastructures, and Pakistan national water policy is reflective of that (Arfan et al., 2020). Accordingly, the water development program for Ayub was central to Pakistan's infrastructure modernization (Akhter, 2022).

Around 150 dams have been made in Pakistan, due to which an estimated number of 300,000 people have been displaced (Yuefang & Ali, 2021). The major dams Mangla (1965) and Tarbela (1976) displaced approximately 177000 people (Haq & Haq, 2022). Despite having comparatively better developed plans, the future projects of Mangla Rising and Ghazi Barotha still had insufficient provisions to ensure satisfactory restoration of livelihoods (Haq & Haq, 2022). Along with inadequate and delayed compensation, Mangla affectees were relocated without an integration plan which led them to move back near their inundated lands (Waqar, 2014; Kayani, 2012). Similar situations of landlessness and social disarticulation were also faced by affectees of Tarbela dam (Kamran, 2019; Azher, 2013). Naheed et al (2017) observe in their study of hydropower projects that effective EIA is essential in mitigation of adverse impacts, however, in Pakistan EIA varies in paper and practice. They highlight that practical implementation is flawed and grievances occur with mismanagement and limited incorporation of public concern and participation in the process. The processes of land acquisition are also laden with favoritism and corruption, where land is mismeasured and records are unofficially changed, as Sabir and Torre (2017) highlight in their study of Diamer Bhasha Dam.

Similar to some other South Asian countries, as discussed previously, the main tool used for land acquisition in Pakistan is the Land Acquisition Act 1894. According to Sheikh (2005), although the act has been amended and modified over a period by federal and provincial governments, its essence remains the same. He further points out that the act gives coercive powers to the state that are often used arbitrarily to acquire land and determine compensation rates. For instance, section 17 of the act enables land to be acquired within a 48-hour notice in 'cases of urgency' which is left to the discretion of the authority to be defined (Afzal, 2023; Ahmed, 2022). Moreover, the act only outlines compensation rate procedures while precluding any provision on resettlement and social and psychological impacts on the affectees. Even the given provisions are forgone by the authorities (Ahmed, 2022). While there is lack of inclusive participation, where the affectees are kept out of the loop, they are also deprived of fair compensation (Afzal, 2023). The act requires the compensation to be given at market rates. However, affectees are usually compensated on DC rates, which is lower than the actual price of the acquired land (Sheikh, 2005).

Documents play a major role in land acquisition and compensation claims with respect to measurement of land and ownership. Claims on land are invalidated based on documents, Tassadiq (2022) notes, when land acquisition is administered by relying on revenue documents only. This depersonalization reduces the matter of dispossession to a techno-bureaucratic process (Tassaqid, 2022). Considering the loopholes in procedures, underhand dealings also take place by revenue officials, while malpractices resulting in discriminatory benefits distributed among some parties also emerge (Sheikh, 2005). Hull (2012, p. 261) notes that the bureaucrats invested in a "political economy of paper" have been against database adoption in Pakistani bureaucracies. The colonial, oppressive act in itself, non-implementation of the procedures, and ambiguity and uncertainty around such processes, have opened up numerous court cases which are not only time-consuming, but worsen the impact of dispossession and displacement on the affectees.

The megaprojects and displacement nexus continues in South Asia as the development trajectory embraces the dominant structures and practices embedded in high-modernist ideology. These are drawn from post-World War II western ideas of

development, as well as colonial regulations which permeate the post-colonial South. This research attempts to build upon the existing critical discourse literature on development policies and extend the framework towards Pakistan, where the critique on dialectical relation in discourse remains understudied. It problematizes the development-displacement nexus in Pakistan through the case study of Dadhocha Dam. By applying the theorization and methodology (chapter 3) of critical discourse to hydraulic infrastructure development and the ensuing displacement/dispossession, this research draws attention towards power hierarchies which hold the ideological structures, policy regimes and institutional practices in Pakistan. Thus, this case study contributes in developing a comprehensive understanding of how and why technocratic water regimes in Pakistan have sustained since the 1960s, and how that shapes the socio-material reality of marginalized populations. The next chapter explores critical discourse analysis as a methodological and analytical tool to guide the investigation of power-hierarchies in the planning and development of the Dadhocha Dam.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLODY

This chapter outlines the methodological considerations for this study which are divided into two segments: the first one (section 3.1 & 3.2) explains the process undertaken for data collection in the form of documents, interviews and ethnography, as well as the procedure of data transcription and coding. The second one (3.3, 3.4 & 3.5) structures the case study of Dadhocha Dam in accordance with the methodology of CDA and elaborates on the discursive strategies derived from CDA as analytical tools for the textual analysis.

3.1 Data Collection: Text as Data in Discourse Analysis

It is important to emphasize that at the time of data collection i.e. February 2023- October 2023, the Dadhocha Dam construction itself had not started, yet the land acquisition process had been initiated, due to which the project has been in litigation since 2010, involving multiple actors and stakeholders. Considering the complexity of the case study and on-going proceedings, the data was collected in a non-linear manner from various sources. This was necessary to align and analyze the discourse of affectees and officials within the timeline of events. The data comprises two main categories of documents i.e. policy documents and court proceedings; and interviews from affectees of Dadhocha Dam and the officials of Small Dams Organization.

In line with the method of CDA, text is considered as empirical data in qualitative research, which further serves as the basis of interpretations and a medium for presentation of results (Flick, 2014). The manner in which the empirical data is ordered is crucial to the way or technique of data collection (Cruickshank, 2012).

3.1.1. Documents

According to Flick (2014), documents must be selected purposely in accordance with the research question and design. He highlights that documents may be connected to other documents intertextually and are essential in constructing the social realities, thus it is important to take them into account. For instance, in this research, the document which justifies the creation of the Dadhocha Dam i.e., PC-1, enables the notifications under Land

Acquisition Act 1894 which in turn displaces the residents of Malikpur, leading them to file petition in the court.

The first set of documents, i.e. policy documents, consisted of reports, environmental study, surveys, technical designs as well as background and conception of the Dadhocha Dam, all compiled within the PC-1. The PC-1 was acquired from the Punjab Irrigation Department upon referral since the document, although not confidential, was still not openly made accessible to the public. These not only provided significant knowledge and understanding regarding the rationale of the event, but also helped in establishing the link between theory of policy discourse and the social practice of institutions in mega-project development.

Court proceedings and petitions were the second set of documents, some of which were acquired from Punjab Irrigation Department, and rest were provided by the affectees' court representative. They included petitions by the affectees, departmental replies by the state officials and High Court and Supreme Court judgements. These were essential in establishing a concrete timeline and highlighting the affectees and state discourse within a legal framework. Supplementary documents i.e. The Land Acquisition Act 1894, and public notices under this act were also studied to understand how regulations were used to justify displacement.

3.1.2 Interviews

Documents, when combined with interviews and ethnography, contextualize information, creates depth and equips the researcher with awareness of the relevant information and terminologies (Flick, 2014; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Seidman (2006, p. 8) considers in-depth interviewing as the "basic mode of inquiry" for understanding meaning and context behind observed behaviors and institutional practices.

For the purpose of this study, semi-structured, responsive interviews were conducted, since the research question required a conversational flexibility to follow up on new information while remaining focused on the topic (Blandford, 2013; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). In this way, the interviewer is more visible in the process of knowledge-production

(Brinkmann, 2018). Scholastic views vary while establishing a criterion for 'enough' interviews. Charmaz (2006) emphasizes that since the aim of qualitative research is not generalizability, large samples might result in unnecessary and conceptually thin data. For Seidman (2006, p. 55) "enough is an interactive reflection of every step of the interview process" which differs according to the study and researcher. He suggests information as one of the criteria for determining a saturation point, when the researcher no longer comes across new data and finds the information being repeated across the interviews. Thus, for the purpose of this research, information was established as a criterion for saturation while keeping a certain number of interviews as a benchmark for diversified but thick data.

During field research, the affected village of Malikpur was visited and 20 affectees were interviewed. The criteria for the affectees' participants included both those who were being displaced/dispossessed by the dam construction, and those who were leading the main resistance i.e. village leader, court representatives etc. In accordance with that, the affectees were firstly approached at random. The interviews then progressed through snowball sampling by being directed towards village members who were prominent members of their community and were active participants in negotiating with government officials and court proceedings i.e. village leader (*Lambardar*), court representative of the village, teachers. During the site visit, some of the affectees also accompanied the researcher to construction sites while explaining the topography and nature of their land, their residential areas and the surrounding private society development. The interviews were conducted in the languages of Urdu and Punjabi, according to the affectees' preference. The researcher was well-versed in both of these languages. In some cases, the affectees preferred their local language of Potohari, for which the researcher was assisted with by an acquaintance for translation and context.

State official interviews were taken through purposive sampling, whereby officials of the Small Dams Organization who were assigned to the Dadhocha project were approached for interviews. These also included both high and low-ranking officials i.e. Sub-divisional officers, accountants, book-keepers, overseers etc. Given that the organization comprises small number officials i.e. all projects are headed by two officials namely the sub-divisional officer and the overseer, the participants for the data collection

were relatively limited in number. Nevertheless, since the project had been conceived in 2002 and initiated in 2010, there were several officials who had overseen and managed the Dadhocha project for the past decade. This helped the researcher in expanding the participants by interviewing officials who had been formerly assigned to the project, including field officials, accountants and current and former sub divisional officers (SDOs) as well as land acquisition collectors (LAC). Based on the saturation of information, 8 interviews were conducted from the government officials. Additional interviews were taken, from lawyers, property dealers and the LAC to facilitate the contextualization of the case-study, especially for verification of information regarding court cases and assistance with understanding legalities of land acquisition processes.

While conducting the interviews, ethical guidelines and considerations were strictly followed. In both cases of affectees, and government officials, pseudonyms have been used to protect their identity. Moreover, the researcher relied on both audio recording and note-taking for effective collection of data. Consent for audio recording was pre-acquired from the government officials before the setting up of the interviews. In some cases, the permission for recording was not given, in which case, the researcher was accompanied by one or two of her colleagues to take rigorous notes and compare them afterwards to ensure correct recording of discourse and to minimize room for human error while writing. Consent for audio recording was given in almost all the affectees interviews. Note-taking was still incorporated despite permission for audio to avoid technical difficulties i.e. corruption of files or inaudible recording due to ambient sounds, both of which the researcher came across. In such cases, the data was safely backed up due to note-taking.

3.1.3   Ethnography

Ethnography, rooted in anthropology, is one of the oldest methodologies for qualitative research (Mannik & McGerry, 2017). It has evolved from its classical origins over the period of time and has been integrated in various postmodern approaches (Mannik & McGerry, 2017; Wall, 2015). For the purpose of this research, focused ethnography has been selected, which involves field visits for a shorter period of time in which the researcher is equipped with some background knowledge to investigate a context-specific research question (Wall, 2015; Knoblauch, 2005). Ethnography when combined with

critical discourse reveals the manifestation of Fairclough's view of discourse as a social practice (Krzyzanowski, 2017). It forms a triangulation method whereby ethnography becomes a non-linear, complex exploratory process which is guided by a theoretical framework to inform collection, analysis and interpretation of the data (Krzyzanowski, 2017; Wodak et al., 2012). For this study, the ethnographic method of observation and participation (Flick, 2014) was used. The researcher used the theory of critical discourse analysis, the information in PC-1 and the perspective of government officials to acquire an initial understanding of the field. This assisted in forming a baseline to observe alignments and contradictions in preconceived knowledge regarding the event and helped in formulating relevant questions.

Between April to June 2023, 6-7 visits were made to the village of Malikpur to not only conduct interviews but also to understand the on-ground realities of the impact of the dam construction. This involved a necessary insight into the way affectees live and earn their livelihoods. It also proved to be a practical visualization of struggles of the affectees and the accounts of their experiences. Having prior knowledge about the affectees and the villages only from the PC-1 and initial interviews from state officials- read depersonalized, the field visit presented a very different picture. Since the study involves themes of topography, ideas of underdevelopment and people associated with it and how these are used to delegitimize struggles of the affectees, it is important to start by setting a visual of the village at the beginning of the first field visit.

In the initial stages of investigating the study area, the proposed dam location and the affected villages were difficult to find and access. After coming across several dead ends, guidance was sought from people in the nearby areas. There were two entryways to the villages. One way was through the gated private society which connected to the village. The other one was through the road that led to industrial areas which then connected to a rough patch of an unsurfaced road surrounded by schools and small convenience stores. Around 10 minutes into the journey, vast wheat fields began to be visible at both sides of the road. Throughout the way, situated along the fields at a distance was a very long, tall outer wall of a gated colony. The road eventually got thinner until there was nothing but mountains around it. A river- locally called 'Nala Ling' ran underneath the road. At its left,

there was a half-finished bridge starting from the colony's wall. Ahead of the road laid a huge pile of construction material with a crane. As I stood next to the construction site, the villages became visible. The proposed dam location stood at a significant height and beneath it were a miniature bird-eye view of the villages. It was easy to see from the topography and the chosen location of the dam how the villages will directly be impacted by the dam as they are located right below the dam.

In my experience during the interviews, although most of the affectees were open towards interviews without hesitation, a few of them were reluctant. The reluctant affectees repeatedly asked me whether I was a government employee despite having introduced myself as a student before asking permission to take interviews. Some of them declined. Those who did agree on being interviewed and recorded, they would initially express their frustration with the situation but end by saying generic statements for instance "yes, we will do anything for the sarkar [government], we will sacrifice ourselves. Sarkar knows best", all the while stealing uncomfortable glances towards my notebook/recorder. This highlighted the atmosphere of distrust and anticipation towards the state over the dam project.

3.2 Transcription, Translation and Coding

The interviews were transcribed and translated into English keeping the social context in view so that the meaning of the original Urdu, Punjabi and Potohari statements retain and deliver the same expression. Then, to carry out a systematic analysis, multiple coding procedures were employed. Coding can be taken as a process of breaking down text and conceptualizing it according to the theoretical framework. This generates various categories and identifies patterns or thematic domains across the text (Flick, 2014). Rather than implementing it linearly, the researcher can oscillate between the text to compare, uncover and distinguish differences, similarities and recurring patterns (Flick, 2014).

The text was firstly organized according to the established timeline i.e. 2010-2023. The timeline itself was outlined with the help of the documents i.e. notifications, PC-1 and court proceedings, as well as references of the events taken from the interviews. Broader categories of events were then identified i.e. dam construction, displacement,

dispossession, compensation and land acquisition. Within these categories, the predominant discursive themes were underlined, some of which include legitimization, discursive closure, group polarization, topos of law and blame avoidance (for a detailed discussion see section 3.5). This structured process of coding established a relation between categories and themes, underpinning the discursive and non-discursive dialectical relationship that constructed the case study events, as discussed in the following section.

3.3 Dadhocha Dam: A Single Case-study

Case studies cannot be reduced to a single understanding, rather, their inquiry is based on the questions employed by the researcher (Schwandt & Gates, 2018). Single case-studies allow investigation of multiple 'intervening variables'. These variables are such which are difficult to measure in a statistical manner i.e. power and state strength etc., thus case studies are employed to identify, measure, as well as validate theoretical concepts (George and Bennett, 2005). This research studies the case of the Dadhocha Dam to investigate the power-hierarchies in the discursive and non-discursive events, practices and structures involving the multiple interdependent variables: conception of development embodied in the planning and construction of the Dadhocha Dam, the processes of land acquisition and the resulting displacement of the people of Malikpur and their fight for fair compensation. These variables are placed and analyzed within the theoretical and methodological framework of Critical Discourse Analysis.

3.4 Methodology of Critical Discourse Analysis

Fairclough (2009) delineates a general methodology for critical discourse analysis while asserting that specificity of the method is contingent upon theorizing of the object of research. The object in question would be constructed by identifying and theorizing the semiotic aspect of a social wrong. Although what constitutes a social wrong is arguable, however it is generally taken as aspects of social order that are inimical to humans. This study presents development-induced displacement and its various processes as social wrong. In particular, the construction of Dadhocha Dam will displace 1064 people from their land without any provision from the state to restore their livelihoods. These processes

are built on oppressive colonial regulations and thus also constitutes human rights violation.

The social wrong is placed within the social order and the dialectical relationship is then analyzed through relevant texts i.e. written texts, conversations, interviews or multimodal texts. The textual analysis includes linguistic and interdiscursive analysis that establishes relations between the semiotic and other elements. Interdiscursive analysis connects linguistic analysis with social structures, practices and events by articulating how configurations of genres, discourses and styles in a text constitute a specific event, and how that event stabilizes networks of social practices (orders of discourse), which is then connected to the wider social structures (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Fairclough 2015; 2013; 2009; 1992). The semiotic aspect and other elements of this case study is taken as documents (PC-1, Official notifications, LAA, Court petitions), along with interviews from affectees and the officials of Small Dams Organization (For details, see section 3.1). These are dialectically connected to the events of acquisition of land to construct the Dadhocha Dam, displacement of the residents of Malikpur and court processes to pursue fair compensation. The Dadhocha Dam event emanates from wider social structures of international development and international organizations with curated programs, political regimes and colonial structures. These structures are connected to the Dadhocha event through scientific and technocratic institutions, bureaucratic administration and legislative systems.

This framework is also used to analyze the third stage which explores whether the social wrong is embedded in ideological discourses that sustain power relations which maintain the social order (Fairclough, 2009). As discussed in Chapter 2, the power relations in this case draw upon the dominant western discourses of scientific knowledge, ideologies of modernization and development and nationalistic outlook.

Finally, the analysis would identify possible ways of overcoming the obstacles that keep the social wrong from being addressed within the dialectical relations (Fairclough, 2009). While the conclusion of this study will touch upon the way forward, the main focus of the study will be on textual analysis of the power relations in the events of Dadhocha

Dam. The methodology in terms of the stages and social process is visualized in Figure 3.1.

STRUCTURE

Theorization /ideology and Power Hierarchies Founded on

- Western Idea of Hydraulic Development
- High Modernist Ideology
- Economic Capitalist Regime
- Western Scientific 'Knowledge'
- Colonial & Post-colonial Systems

PRACTICES

Sustained by State Institutions

- Government of Punjab
- Planning Commission
- Small Dams Organization
- Judicial Courts (Lahore High Court & Supreme Court)

EVENT

Enabling/ Materializing

Dadhocha Dam and its Dialectical Relation

Semiotic/Discursive

Water Policy

PC-1/EIA

LAA 1894

Court Petitions

Interviews

Material/non-Discursive

Land Acquisition of the Residents/Affectees of Malikpur

Dispossession and Displacement of the Affectees

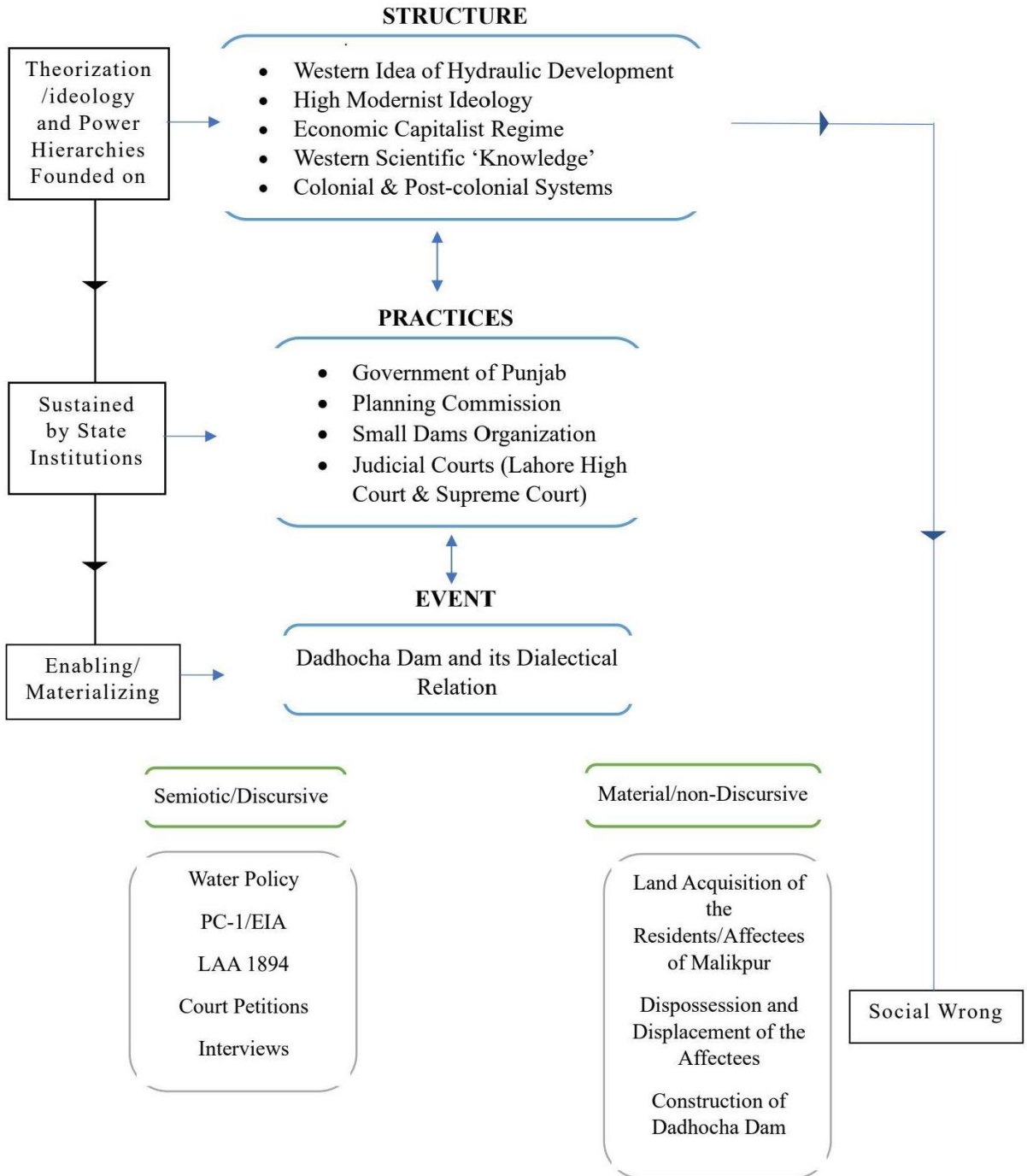Construction of Dadhocha Dam

Social Wrong

Figure 3.1: Methodology of CDA in terms of the Social Process

3.5 Discursive Strategies as Analytical Tools

The main themes explored in the textual analysis comprise the discursive strategies employed by the state in public policies to enable the construction of megastructures and manage the ensuing processes of displacement. These are identified as legitimization and blame avoidance techniques which will be explored below:

3.5.1   Fairclough and Practical Argumentation in Policy Discourse Analysis

Fairclough and Fairclough (2012, p. 183) integrate the CDA with 'practical argumentation' analysis, considering it a nexus or "interdependency of semiosis and structuration". Policies are characterized as having a 'problem-solution' relation. Policies when viewed with the lens of practical argumentation are constructed such that present circumstances or current situation is represented and problematized in a specific manner. The goals or intended future alternative is construed in accordance with the central concerns and values. The means-goals condition follows along with the claim, which advocates a particular course of action to deal with the existing problem and reach the desired solution aligned with the values. In this case study, the strategy of practical argumentation is revealed through the analysis of the state policy report which structures and legitimizes the construction of the Dadhocha Dam as a solution to the current state of water shortage in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. This argumentation is reflected in the discourse of state officials by various categories of legitimation as elaborated in the following section.

3.5.2   Legitimization of Policy Actions through Rationality and Blame Avoidance

> "Every system of authority attempts to establish and to cultivate the belief in its legitimacy" (Weber 1977, as quoted in Leeuwen, 2008)

Leeuwen (2008) discusses major categories of legitimation as authorization, moral evaluation and rationalization. Authorization is the legitimation acquired by referring to an institution which has authority vested in it i.e. authority of law, custom, tradition or person. Moral evaluation pertains to legitimation by values embedded in the system.

Rationalization rests upon truth or validity claims, or 'differentiated bodies of knowledge', which are used for legitimation of institutional practices.

As aforementioned, the megaprojects are legitimized through rationality, executed through authorization and appealed to the public by referring to moral evaluation. These strategies are also used to legitimize the actions and consequences of those actions by institutions and officeholders. Additionally, defensive strategies are also used to deflect or avoid blame when these actions are called into question. Hood (2011) sees blame avoidance as a 'political and bureaucratic imperative', which also permeates administrative structures. Hansson (2015) regards blame avoidance as a dominant theme in government communication He argues that blame avoidance has greater implication in the society, for instance, legitimization or empowerment of certain actors while disempowering others. It can be achieved discursively through group polarization, involving positive-self presentation and negative-other presentation, as well as by exploiting vulnerabilities of the other group e.g. emotions, knowledge asymmetry or lower status (Dijk, 2006; Wodak, 2006).

Blame avoidance also hinders which policy issues are talked about and how (Hansson, 2015). The prevention of alternatives by way of defining a problem is called discursive closure (Hajer, 1995). It is a strategic omission or inclusion in discourse which leads to mobilization of bias (Hajer, 1995), a structuration of argumentation in policy-making process to cater to certain demands while organizing other issues out of it (Howarth, 2010). The power to hinder certain issues from arising is not just confined to decision-making, but Bachrach and Baratz (1963) argue that nondecision-making, which deliberately limits the scope of decisions on issues that require decisions, also prevents latent issues from coming to light. This non-discourse is also what Foucault (1978) has defined as the power of silence.

3.5.3   Counter-Strategies by Affectees as Resistance

Since the discourse is a juxtaposition of state's narrative versus affectees narrative, it is important to highlight the discursive strategies used by the affectees in this case study to challenge the state's discourse. Oliver-Smith (2006) categorizes this as a discourse of

rights in the form of resistance. According to him, discourse of resistance towards DIDR brings forth defective state policies and legislative courses of action as well as shortcomings in assessment, evaluation and implementation of development processes. Terminski (2012) argues that displacement is absolutely unnecessary and any displacement directly infringes upon human rights. The discourse on human rights violations is employed by the affectees to highlight the abuse of law in procedural matters of land acquisition, their struggle to validate claims over land and right to fair compensation and resettlement. The counter strategies also emphasize the non-discursive practices which marginalize the affectees' discourse, for instance, their experiences of exclusion from formal participation processes (for a detailed discussion see chapter 2).

Besides economic costs of displacement, the affectees' discourse is vocalized through narratives of social disarticulation, a risk emphasized by Cernea (2000), by disintegration of communities and their ancestral ties to the land. Most of the displaced people are ethnic minorities and indigenous communities (Søftestad, 1991). Thus, while the state strategies dominantly rely on the modernist technocratic and scientific rationality, this is countered by the affectees by invoking indigenous and traditional knowledge, culture and ways of living which has sustained those communities for several generations. In this case, for instance, the affectees counter the feasibility of the dam site by providing knowledge regarding the topography of the land they have been living on for decades. Formal channels to have their grievances addressed is also pursued by affectees in the form of court petitions, and as Koenig (2015) more support is garnered by involving media and organizing protests.

The discursive strategies practiced by the state and the counter strategies employed by the affectees will be examined and elucidated through analysis of discourse in Chapter 4. The dialectical relation of the discursive and non-discursive events, and how they materialize through discursive and counter discursive strategies by the state and the affectees are illustrated in Figure 3.2.
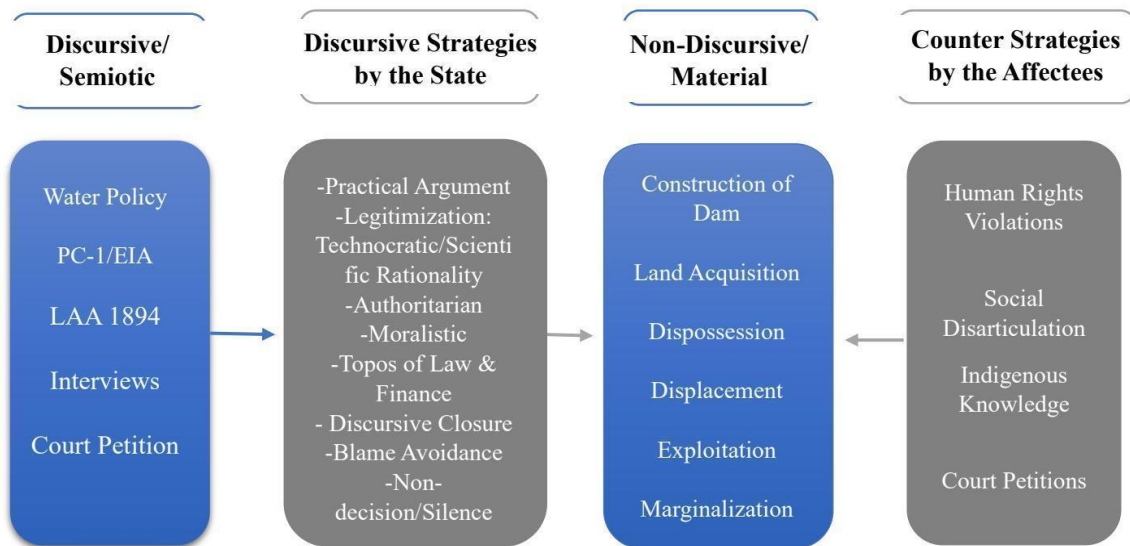
Figure 3.2: Discursive and Non-discursive events of Dadhocha with Discursive and Counter Discursive Strategies

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section will analyze the discursive and non-discursive practices which construct the event of Dadhocha Dam within the time-frame of 2010-2023. The events will be divided into 4 sub-sections as follows: The first section will deconstruct the rationale of Dadhocha given in the policy document PC-1. It will use Fairclough's practical argumentation to highlight the problem-solution premise that primarily builds on technocratic and scientific rationalization for legitimization of the dam construction. The second section will identify the discursive strategies used by the state to justify displacement of the affectees in execution of the dam. The major arguments legitimize the displacement of people on need-based and technocratic rationale, presenting the purpose of dam 'for the greater good'. It goes on to validate the 'sacrifice' of 'a few' people for national survival, and finally, to dispossess people of their homes by discursive othering and legal authorization. The third and fourth section is built on the timeline of 2010-2023, within which, the events ensuing the issuance of the Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act 1894 (LAA) are placed. It juxtaposes the discourse of the affectees and the state to reveal the power hierarchies in actualization of discursive practices which manifest as a material reality for the affectees. This includes the implementation of repressive colonial regulations to achieve discursive closure by muting the voices of affectees and justification of exploitative, standardized bureaucratic practices by drawing on various blame deflecting topoi.

4.1 Legitimization of Dadhocha Dam: The Only Solution to a Grave Problem

The idea of the Dadhocha Dam was conceived in 2002, according to the PC-1, in order to meet the drinking water requirements of Rawalpindi city. The *raison d'etre* for the dam is formulated as:

> Drinking water supply in Pakistan faces many challenges such as shortage during drought period. According to the National Drinking Water Supply Policy (NDWP) of 2009, the goal is to provide universal access to drinking water in an equitable, efficient and sustainable manner by the year 2025. Sustainable Development

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Policy Institute (SDPI) has extensively debated on Rawalpindi
Water Vision 2030 (Construction of Dadhocha Dam, Report, PC-1,
2018, p. 4)

The concept of Dadhocha is constructed around practical argumentation. The report establishes water shortage as the current situation. 'Water shortage', when juxtaposed with provision of 'universal access' in the national policy, problematizes it by deeming it incompatible with the policy goal. To achieve legitimacy, a moralistic element must be embedded in the construction of purpose. 'Universal access', 'equitable' and 'efficient' are phrases commonly found in human rights discourse that provide a moral legitimacy to the purpose of the policy and its *modus operandi*. These words represent fair, non-exploitative distribution of resources through effective means. The rights-based discourse becomes rhetorical when development projects are postulated as being constitutive of human rights, enabling perpetuation of the status quo (Uvin, 2010). 'Sustainable' then, is a composite of rights-based and scientific discourse, which characterizes the policy as irrefutable. Moreover, given its abstract and adaptable quality, the mobilization of the term becomes ideal for the policy to be readily endorsed. This scientific and rights-based construction of irrefutability is further reinforced by calling out 'water experts' as the sole architect of the intervention:

Water Experts are generally of the view that severe water shortage
in Rawal Dam is anticipated, the existing major source of drinking
water supply to twin cities of Rawalpindi/Islamabad. As such, there
is an immediate need to construct small dams on Soan and Ling
Rivers. The construction of small dams is a step towards revolution
in water sector development and to match water needs in the barani
areas of the country (Construction of Dadhocha Dam, Report, PC-1,
2018, p. 4)

Besides being built on scientific and right-based claims, 'sustainable development' is reinforced through global institutionalization, signifying it as an expert legitimacy. The prediction of water shortage by Sustainable Development Policy Institute, anchors the

problem to expert authorization, while remaining simultaneously obscure. Since the anticipation of water shortage is given by 'water experts', it gives the predictory statement a factual overlay. This indistinctiveness between statements of fact and prediction not only has the performative power to materialize what is being described but reveals who holds the social power to make truth claims about the future (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2001; Fairclough, 2003).

Subsequently, resolution of water shortage is claimed to be contingent upon construction of small dams. 'Immediate need' connotes a time constraint with undertones that any hindrances to the proposed solution i.e. dam construction would be dire. Another futuristic truth claim is made: "construction of small dams *is* [emphasis added] a step towards revolution". The small dams, thus, are not only being presented as a solution to a problem, but their tendency to bring drastic change to the water sector is made definitive.

After constructing the policy claims around the practical argumentation of problematizing water shortage and proposing dam construction as the only solution, the report effectively represents the specified location- Pothohar Plateau- as the most suitable one for the construction of the Dadhocha Dam:

> In general, the land of Pothohar Plateau is broken and uneven. The average runoff is about 45 inches. Here in Pothohar area two third of the total annual rainfall is received during the three monsoon months of summer i.e. July, August and September, while the remaining nine months are almost dry. Moreover, the delayed monsoon and erratic winter rainfall which is a common feature that makes the availability of water very uncertain. On the other hand, the topography of the hilly areas with steep ground slopes helps the rainwater to form into numerous streams running at high velocities, in result eroding the fertile agricultural barani land. This drought cycle is frequent. Consequently, the only solution is to build dams, to conserve the rain runoff for agriculture and sustainable water supply for domestic

water utilization (Construction of Dadhocha Dam, Report, PC-1, 2018, p. 4)

Pothohar Plateau is framed as an aggravation to the water shortage. The report problematizes the natural terrain by delineating it as "broken and uneven". This problematization is legitimized in two ways: (1) It uses evaluation by implying that this state of topography is undesirable, which needs to be fixed or restored to a desirable state; (2) the undesirable state is rationalized by referring to the meteorological patterns that are made definitive by using phrases like "is received", "is a common feature". The topography is then described in a manner that is seemingly incompatible with these patterns, thus contributing to water shortage. The conjunction of discursive simplification and technification denatures the plateau, allowing its administrative reordering and thus, control over its terrain. This problem definition enables a discursive closure, leaving no room for alternatives but the construction of small dams, as indicated explicitly through "only solution".

Conclusively, Dadhocha Dam is legitimized by presenting it as the only solution to the problem of water shortage in Rawalpindi: "To overcome this grave problem, Dadhocha dam has been identified since 2002" (Construction of Dadhocha Dam, Report, PC-1, 2018, p. 5). Thus, the validity of the problem rests upon truth claims made by institutional experts and its solution is anchored to the achievement of morally purposeful policy goals, as revealed in the report analysis.

4.2 Displacement: A Matter of Survival for Most at the Cost of a Few

The construction of the Dadhocha Dam will result in the displacement of a significant number of people. The EIA describes it as:

The implementation of the project will have impact on 218 residential structures of the reservoir area which need to be relocated/readjusted. These houses are located at Malikpur Azizal, Khanpur and Mohra Faizullah. (Land Acquisition, Environmental Study and Resettlement Action Plan, PC-1, 2018, p. 273)

The phrase 'residential structures' discursively dehumanizes the process of dam construction by depicting its impact on concrete objects rather than on people who will face a complete destruction of their livelihoods with economic, social and psychological cost. The word 'displacement' was absent from the EIA report. Upon asking whether displacement and its consequences were factored in the criteria for choosing the Dadhocha's location, almost all of the officials expressed that the only priority is the purpose of the dam and its feasibility. They repeatedly referred to the techno- scientific information provided in the PC-1 and the EIA report, assigning a depoliticized element to institutional decisions. An official who had worked on the Dadhocha project as a sub-divisional officer remarked:

> Once that is approved from above, we dont see who comes in
> between. It's only the design of the dam that is considered. Not the
> people. We have to see for ourselves what is required. People don't
> know anything (Tarshauf, official, interview, 5th June, 2023)

The official not only emphasizes the technical preference in decision-making, but renders it unquestionable by giving it authoritarian legitimacy i.e. "approved from above". The same criteria validate displacement, and leaves it incontestable. "Who comes in between" in this specific cultural context means getting caught in the crossfire, or bearing the brunt of a decision that does not involve or benefit that specific person. This indicates the affectees' powerlessness at two levels: (1) it effectively neutralizes their agency by removing them as stakeholders in the dam construction while simultaneously (2) confirming their status as being affected by the project but presenting them as dispensable. Moreover, the notion of "between" portrays affectees as 'in the way' of the dam, instead of the dam disrupting the lives of the affectees. "See for ourselves" and "people don't know anything" further validates the authoritarian decision by indicating a knowledge/expertise asymmetry between the affectees and the decision-makers, whereby the technical criteria are used to rationalize both i.e. what is needed and the displacement that comes with it.

While technification of megaprojects provides rationale for their implementation, it is also used to place individuals in comparative positions. Camargo (2009) describes

statistics as means of individualization, where the individuals view themselves 'vis-à-vis others' instead of in their 'individualities'. He sees this as a formulation of a truth claim, an exercise of power, which is harnessed by 'intelligences' to reach agreements on matters. Such individualization is evident in the following statement:

> It is a matter of survival for Rawalpindi, people cannot survive without water. We will have to make Dadhocha. There are no other sites. Besides, if 100 people are being displaced to benefit 10 lac people, so what? Where there is larger public interest, there will be displacement (Mirman, official, interview, 29th April, 2023)

The benefit of 10 lac people is made to be contingent upon the displacement of a 100 people. "So what" makes the displacement inconsequential in the name of "larger public interest", which, along with 'benefit' invokes moral purpose in terms of 'collective good'. What follows is a conditional premise: "where there is, there will be", that naturalizes displacement as a logical order of things where the public interest is concerned.

There were various times when the affectees were referred to as non-locals by the officials. The term non-local in this context discursively dispossesses and displaces people by implying that the affectees are occupiers or others, they are not indigenous to the land on which they are living. One of the affectees complained:

> They come to us and call us muhajirs (immigrants). I was born here and now I am 88, and my forefathers have been buried here for generations. Did people not migrate for the love of this country? Is that a sin, being a muhajir? (Abras, affectee, interview, 30th April, 2023)

The same notion of foreignness or an external malignant substance is implied by another official:

> If there is a problem, a doctor will perform surgery on you. He will cut you up for a major benefit so you will have to pay a small

sacrifice for that. That is how dams are (Hausat, official, interview,

5th May, 2023)

Here, people are characterized as something to be operated on, an infected part that needs to be 'cut' to save the rest of the body. Instead of being the ones getting affected by the dam construction, they are made to become a part of the problem that needs to be resolved i.e. displacement of affectees is a necessity, instead of a consequence of dam construction. Displacement thus becomes a means to an end for achieving a greater good, as indicated by "major benefit". It further trivializes the displacement by using the term 'small'. This process is then delineated as natural i.e. "That is how dams are", giving it a matter-of-fact character.

As mentioned in the statement above, 'sacrifice' was frequently used by officials to give a simplified explanation of displacement. Zachhuber (2014), in his study of modern sacrifice discusses positive interpretations of sacrifice by scholars which are influenced by Durkhiem's (1995) theory of religion: Religion as opposed to secularization *is* community cohesion [emphasis in original]. Emanating from it, is the concept that individualism is a threat to social cohesion. Hence, sacrifice, being opposite of self-interest, is seen as an act of integration into the society and a symbol of people's commitment to their nation (Zachhuber, 2014). This concept of sacrificial morality with a superior purpose was used by officials to appeal to people's value systems.

Ziar, an affectee recalled an interaction with a field officer: "There's a water shortage. If you sacrifice, people will get water because of you, you will get *sawab* [religious reward]". He added, "we think it is *naiki ka kaam* [moral good deed], but they should at least listen to our demands". (Ziar, affectee, interview, 30th April, 2013)

Sacrifice becomes glorified both materially and spiritually when combined with the religious reward system i.e. *sawab*, an islamic concept of spiritual reward attained through good deeds. This legitimizes interventions by offering people a sense of honor and righteousness. It is equating sacrifice with a moral good deed, in turn, establishing displacement as virtuous. However, Strenski (2003) argues that sacrifice, in a social or civic domain, is used as a euphemism to conceal violence and injustice. In this case then,

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the notion of religious sacrifice is used to mask the traumatic consequences of displacement.

Religion is also used to create resonance, and thus legitimacy while invoking authoritarian regulations, which is exemplified in an official's view on displacement: "There's a thing called God's will. Let's just say this is God's will" (Narlsan, official, interview, 20th May, 2023). While talking about land acquisition which resultantly displaces people, another official reasoned:

> Do you know Douie? He was a Britisher. He wrote about all the land in South Asia. It's very simple, because the first thing written in Douie's Settlement Manual is that all land belongs to God. The second owner is the State of Pakistan, then its Punjab and finally the Pindi district. People are temporary owners. Where did this concept of people's land ownership come from anyway? It is very recent (Tarshauf, official, interview, 5th June)

The first statement equates Dadhocha's construction and the ensuing displacement with divine intervention by calling it "God's will". The moral legitimacy acquires an authoritarian undertone in Narlsan's statement. It transitions into an overtly regulatory one when "Douie Settlement Manual" (or Punjab Settlement Manual, 1930) is cited by Tarshauf to iterate that the State of Pakistan and the divisional authorities have a right to take land. By calling people "temporary owners", he reflects the irony of dispossessing people of their land, when they had never 'possessed' it in the first place, thus revealing the blatant powerlessness of affectees. He further delegitimizes people's right to land by questioning the source of their claim. By calling the concept "recent" he indirectly accords validity of any ownership claim to colonial regulations.

Unsurprisingly, the main instrument to induce and legitimize displacement in South Asia is a colonial law called the Land Acquisition Act 1894. Its authorization rests on the legal basis of Eminent Domain (*terra nullius*- Nobody' land), while the acquisition of land for 'public purpose' gives it a moral legitimacy. As observed, these notions were reflected

and reinforced in the aforementioned statements of the officials to justify the construction of Dadhocha Dam and in turn, the subsequent displacement.

The following section will discuss the Land Acquisition Act 1894 that was invoked by the Punjab Government to acquire land of the affectees.

4.3 In Between Displacement: Absence of Government, Uncertainty and Exploitation of Affectees

This section places the accounts of affectees' experience of uncertainty, vulnerability and exploitation during the gap against officials' narrative of state's absence. The gap in this context refers to the time period between 2010-2020, during which, there was no official process initiated by the government after issuance of section 4[1] under LAA, 1894, in November, 2010. The section 4 enables the state to start the process of land acquisition. It is important to mention here that while the researcher used 'absence' in the interviews, the officials referred to it as 'a gap'. Hereinafter, they will be used interchangeably according to the context. The absence of the state is framed in this context as Foucault's conceptualization of silence in discourse:

> There is no binary division to be made between what one says and
> what one does not say; we must try to determine the different ways
> of not saying such things, how those who can and those who cannot
> speak of them are distributed, which type of discourse is authorized,
> or which form of discretion is required in either case. There is not
> one but many silences, and they are an integral part of the strategies
> that underlie and permeate discourses (1978, p. 27)

This silence has manifested as a deterioration of affectees' livelihood psychologically, socially and economically. During the field visits, the researcher observed

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[1] Section 4: Publication of preliminary notification and powers of officers thereupon.– (1) Whenever it appears to the Collector of the District that land in any locality is needed or is likely to be needed for any public purpose or for a Company, a notification to that effect shall be published in the official Gazette, and the Collector shall cause public notice of the substance of such notification to be given at convenient places in the said locality.

that the village of Khanpur (another affected village) was mostly deserted. One of the elders of Malikpur, Mutafa, remarked that most of the people of Khanpur had sold their land to the private housing society back in 2010 out of the fear that they would not get money from the government. He explained how people of Malikpur are also slowly leaving out of the same fear. He added:

> In the earlier years, in 2010, there was all this hue and cry of the dam
> being made. A number of people went to other villages to bury their
> dead. When someone dies we get worried because we are still in
> between, we don't know where to bury them, we don't know what
> they will do to us (Azaar, affectee, interview, 13th May, 2023)

To indicate fear and panic, the affectees referred to the uncertainty of their burial location, as expressed in the statement above. It was established by the affectees that the community graveyard was essential to them. Having their forefathers buried there, the graveyard symbolizes an anchor to the land by providing a sense of belonging. The possibility of displacement created a precarious situation for their livelihood as well, especially when they did not know when and how they would be displaced, and whether they would be compensated or resettled.

The absence and its consequences on the affectees were discussed while interviewing the state official. Two main questions were asked by each official (1) reason behind the absence; (2) their awareness of the consequences faced by affectees owing to the absence. While reasoning behind the absence differed according to each official, most of the officials did not directly acknowledge the affectees' experiences. Sabsire remarked:

> If I were to say we were constructing something between Talagang
> and Mianwali, where there is nothing, it would still take us 2 years
> to complete all the procedures. This is Pindi. There are people here.
> All these formalities take time. It's been a while since section 4
> happened and they [officials who initiated the process in 2010]
> probably forgot. No one has time. No one is interested. Whoever is
> appointed just prays that nothing comes up during their time, else

they will have to deal with these problems. Here in Pakistan, there
are going to be issues like this (Sabsire, official, interview, 16th May,
2023)

Although he refers to standard procedures and formalities as time consuming, the blame for the gap in this particular case is shifted to people. Their presence is problematized by juxtaposing it with areas where there is 'nothing', thus forming a causal relation between the delay and residents of the land to be acquired. Therefore, consequences of the gap are portrayed as self-inflicted (by people). Similarly, the objections raised by people are framed as 'these problems' and 'issues', that characterizes their resistance as incendiary, instead of contextualizing it as a reasonable reaction elicited by exploitative practices. Rather, these practices are normalized by drawing on what Wodak (2011) refers to as 'politics as usual'. The officials frequently used 'Pakistan as usual' which shifts responsibility and blame from themselves and the institution. It is expressed through casual phrases 'probably forgot', "no one is interested" and "no one has time". The disinterest reflects prevalent bureaucratic practices which also presents the resultant uncertainty faced by the affectees as normative "Here in Pakistan, there are going to be issues like this"

Another official justified the gap by presenting it as a rational decision-making process and simultaneously discrediting the affectees' concerns by marginalizing them. He stated:

It's about priorities, really. It's a dam being made in the mountains;
it does not involve the normal public. Like I would say this road [F-
7, Islamabad] is damaged, so it should be maintained because all the
public is getting disturbed. There would be a point of emphasizing it
or paying attention if it disturbed the main public (Mirman, official,
interview, 29th April, 2023)

He uses 'mountains' as a metaphor to represent underdevelopment, establishing the affectees as others by association, as opposed to the 'normal public' that lives in the city of Islamabad, which has been portrayed as the epitome of urban development and modernization (see Hull, 2012 for details). Based on this distinction, he makes the

grievances of the affectees a non-priority, as opposed to 'all' the public if they were getting disturbed by the road damage. This applies the same instrumental rationality as mentioned in section 1, whereby not only are the affectees individualized against 'all', 'main public', but that individualization results in dismissal of their concerns by reducing the affectees to peripheries.

While talking about uncertainty, the affectees stated that a condition of vulnerability prevailed due to the gap, where they were prone to exploitation by the surrounding private society developers. The accounts reveal that the affectees were subjected to pressure by the developers to sell their land, some under the guise of government representatives.

> No one came to us after 2010 from the government. They were silent.
> Private society developers have been coming to us, telling us that the
> government will not give us much. Just 1 lac per 0.125 acres. We
> would be better off selling our land to them, get maybe 6-8 lacs per
> 0.125 acres (Afatsum, affectee, interview, 13th May, 2023)

One of the elders of the community frustratingly mentioned:

> It's all messed up, some people got money, some didn't. Look
> [pointing towards an empty piece of land], those were the *shamlat*[2]
> from our village that were sold. People sold them willingly, one by
> one. Some even sold their houses and left. What can they do? They
> did it out of fear and uncertainty. Obviously if they are getting a
> better deal from somewhere else, they will take it. Who knows what
> will happen in the future, whether they will get anything at all
> (Ferham, affectee, interview 27th April, 2023).

In between the villages were also barrier entrances to private housing society. During the field visits, the researcher observed occasional convoys of army and security

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[2] Shamlat lands in a village which is jointly owned and possessed by the landowners of that village and is meant to be used for the common purposes of the village community.

vehicles passing through the village towards the private society. This reflected affectees'
concern regarding their land being undervalued despite it being in the close vicinity to
developed housing societies. It also showed their skepticism about the dam being actually
made, since some of them expressed how state and the private societies were incahoots to
get the villagers' land. A member of the village explained how people who are selling their
land to the developers are being exploited:

> They [developers] give a *bayana*[3] cheque of 200-300 rupees on
> stamp paper[4], and then give a cheque of 4-5 lacs on the same paper.
> They survey and measure the land, and tell false measurements to
> people... Like someone has a land of 0.3 acres, they will say, it's 0.25
> acres, because how would people know what kind of measuring tools
> are they developers using, or the method... People don't know these
> technicalities (Rakim, affectee, interview, 28th, April, 2023)

Rakim's account exhibits an administrative appropriation of customary
measurements which are bound to a particular land. It creates a knowledge asymmetry
through standardization, which leaves people vulnerable to exploitation and subject to a
systematic mismeasurement of land. Hence, affectees find themselves in a conundrum,
where they are put under pressure to sell their land for a supposed incentive to a better
payoff, yet they are still subjected to unfair practices. Additionally, Rakim expresses
discontentment over the prevailing condition of people increasingly leaving, asserting that
when more land is sold, the harder it becomes to resist and have their demands fulfilled as
a community. It is a form of disintegration. All factors combined, the situation becomes a
'calculatedly unpredictable' control of time, which Herzfeld (2009) has observed as a
strategy to sabotage resistance. Thus, by the power of silence, people have been effectively

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[3] Bayana is a formal agreement written on stamp paper with related conditions set by both the buyer and the seller. It is usually paid one week after the token money.

[4] The non-judicial stamp papers are widely used in recording the statements of agreement/deeds or the statements deeds related to property sale/purchase. The statements recorded on these papers are used as a proof of transactions and have a historic and cultural value for the citizen.

controlled through conditions of uncertainty and exploitation. Their land, except the houses, has slowly been bought by the developers over time.

It was mentioned by almost all the officials that after the issuance of section 4 notification, people cannot sell or purchase land, making all the aforementioned agreements between societies and the affectees illegal. When asked about the private societies' involvement in purchase of the affectees' land, some of the officials either expressed unawareness by saying 'we don't know', 'maybe, who knows', or shifting the responsibility to another official by mentioning that 'it's the commissioner's or *patwari's* (Revenue Department official) job to manage these things':

> Every department has a capacity. A commissioner can do only so much. He should deal with coronavirus, manage dengue, and malaria campaigns and do this as well? They [affectees] will happily sell their land to these societies, after all people want more money. They will see where they are getting more benefits (Narlsan, official, interview, 20th May, 2023)

He uses group polarization to justify the government's absence from regulating unlawful purchases. By using departmental capacity as an excuse, he presents the commissioner in a positive, sympathetic light: well-intentioned but overburdened: "can only do so much". "Do this as well?" is posed as a rhetorical question, where requiring the commissioner to oversee land acquisition process is presented as an outrageous expectation given all the other things he has to deal with. In the same statement, the official criminalizes the affectees- negative other-presentation by implying their willingness to engage in illegal transactions. "People want more money" characterizes them as socially and morally deviant. "After all," naturalizes their behavior as dispositional instead of situational i.e. the sale of their land is motivated by inherent greed instead of as a condition of exploitation caused by government's absence. He further depicts people as ill-intentioned by establishing that people will disregard law over monetary benefits.

One of the officials deflects blame from himself and the institution by using the bad apple tactic:

> It's patwaris job to do these things inform people… you know if you read the revenue manual, its 200 page and the first 100 pages are about the patwari, it says, patwari is a fraudulent person (Tarshauf, official, interview, 5th June, 2023)

Lakoff (2008) uses the metaphor 'one bad apple spoils the barrel' to explain how organizations (barrel) protects itself by targeting or convicting an individual (bad apple) as being immoral inside the otherwise good organization. Tarshauf identifies the patwari as the bad apple, who is responsible for enabling the illegal sale and purchase of land. He refers to a bureaucratic document to solidify his deflection of responsibility. Thus, the statements of the officials reveal that neither did they bear any responsibility for the gap nor any consequences of the gap on the affectees.

One of the most common reasons for the gap given by the officials was the duration of feasibility study for the site. As mentioned earlier, section 4 was issued in 2010. The PC-1 (2018) further mentions, "Primary and then detailed surveys were conducted in December 2014, February 2015 and March 2015". The reason behind the long duration of feasibility was asked, upon which one of the officials explained:

> Initially we had this concept that these are small dams, not Mangla or anything that we get a feasibility study done by experts… It was a perception, when this organization was established back in 74… we just have to make small dams... what do we need to do really... (Sabsire, official, interview official, 16th May, 2023)

In Pakistan's context, 'we' is mostly used generally to represent the country as a whole, instead of a single institution or a specific number of people. This is a form of im-personalization, which is used to obscure agencies to avoid personal or institutional blame. The official uses high levels of generality and abstraction to allude to inadvertent decision-making. However, he neutralizes the responsibility of inexpert feasibility by calling it a

'perception'. This depicts the decision as well-intentioned instead of irresponsible. The decision/perception is then supported by a quasi-argument/topoi that is built on questionable plausibility (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001). Sabsire claims that the perception was based on technocratic rationality determined by size i.e. Mangla (larger dam) would require expert feasibility while a smaller dam could be built without it. In the continuation of the explanation, Sabsire uses 'Pakistan as usual' to justify the delay in feasibility study for Dadhocha as well:

> It was because the land acquisition process [for Dadhocha] was initiated beforehand, but feasibility was done later… In good countries, the feasibility is done beforehand and then the process starts… Over here [Pakistan], implementation is initiated first, then we sit and think about what we actually have to do. (Sabsire, official interview, 16th May, 2023)

A field officer who had interaction with the affectees during all the procedures remarked:

> When we went to do the feasibility study, people wouldn't let us take the survey… They knew if we approve of the site, the dam will be made… In some cases, we even had to take the police. (Mirman, official, interview, 29th April, 2023)

Mirman uses reversal to blame the victim i.e. it was the affectees who caused the delay in feasibility. He criminalizes affectees by claiming that they are against the survey, against the dam, and thus against the larger public interest/survival of people. This criminalization legitimizes the use of force by 'police' against them.

The officials also mentioned the issue of 'site change' which delayed the feasibility. Hereinafter, 'site 1' will be mentioned as the original site of the dam proposed in 2006; 'site 2' is the proposed location change by the private societies. Narlsan explained, "They [private society developers] also said to change site 1, shift it a little higher to site 2 because we have already developed site 1… It was decided that site 2 is not feasible as per recommendation [of the experts]"

Diaods views the site change situation as:

> People also came up to us and said we have our graveyards, houses
> and schools... shift the dam... It's like this… I go and ask a street
> vendor to remove his cart… He says... Look at that vendor... He also
> has his cart there, why is his cart there... Yes, I admit the other vendor
> has wrongfully placed his cart, but the first one shouldn't say that
> about someone else... That's not right... They should only see what
> they themselves are doing... You can't justify it like that... So, in this
> manner they said why our village... Shift it someplace else... (Diaods,
> official, interview 5th June 2023)

While both the private societies' and the affectees are presented as obstacles to the dam construction, there is a significant contrast between how both of these are represented in the officials' statements. It instantiates Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) theorization of hegemony in political processes as functioning of two divergent 'logics' simultaneously i.e. logic of difference that constructs divisions and differences, and the subversion of preexisting differentiation through logic of equivalence. Fairclough (2003) notes the working of these logics in texts, as exemplified in the statement. The official uses logic of equivalence to hide the existence of hierarchy by referring to them both, the affectees and the societies, as 'street vendors'. This creates an illusion that they both have similar social positions to make demands and have the same level of grievances. He then discards the reasoning of the affectees making similar demands by employing a moralistic fallacy i.e. its not right to justify your own wrongdoings on the basis of someone else's wrongdoings. He acknowledges the wrongdoing of the other vendor but only asks the first vendor to remove his cart. This indicates that it is only the affectees that will suffer the consequences of their 'wrongdoing'. Thus, he simultaneously uses the logic of difference in which power asymmetry materializes in two ways: First, the consideration of site change, and thus another feasibility study was undertaken upon the society's demand while the affectees demands were discarded; Second, affectees were not considered as significant stakeholders in the decision-making process for site change, since decision for site change only involved

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interests of the societies and the government. This is evident in Zawan's (Malikpur) statement:

> The assistant commissioner called us for a hearing… There was also some brigadier… They asked us to surrender our land... said 'look we have also surrendered our plots...' They tried to convince us. Said 'you won't get money for the shamlaat… I said why? Its community owned; we should be getting compensation for that...' It's really no use, they are trying to pressurize us. What will they do for us? They can't even get us fair compensation... We found out later they had some agreement on the side.Without us. (Zawan, affectee, interview, 21st May, 2023)

In 2020, an addendum for acquisition of additional land was issued, which signified a change in the site 1, bringing in substantial land of the affectees in the dam location. The following section will analyze the events ensuant of the addendum.

4.4 Setting Displacement in Motion: Land Acquisition and Powerlessness of the Affectees

This section is constructed around 3 events that materialized on the issuance of the addendum in 2020: (1) addendum itself which authorized the government to acquire additional land; (2) the addendum was legalized through section 17(4)(6) of LAA 1894. This section invokes urgency by allowing the government to acquire and possess land within 48 hours. (3) According to the LAA 1894, the compensation rates given to affectees for land acquisition are based on market rates of the year in which section 4^4 is issued. Since the addendum was issued in 2020 as an extension of the 2010 section 4 notice, it enabled the government to compensate affectees based on 2010 rates, instead of 2020 rates. Thus, the affectees filed a petition against the 2020 notice in high court on the basis of unfair compensation. While the High Court ruled in affectees favor, the government challenged the decision in Supreme Court. Each event will be analyzed in the aforementioned sequence.

4.4.1 *Rationalization of Addendum through Feasibility*

As analyzed in the previous section, the official statement given by the state in the court confirmed the location of the dam as site 1. This was reiterated by the officials during the interviews. However, a contradiction presented itself in 2020 when an area of 997.12 acres was increased to 1840 acres. This significantly changed the location of the dam from site 1 to site 2, which in the previous statements was denied by the officials. This has been observed in the High Court decision as:

> Report and para-wise comments submitted by the respondents reflect that the request was made by responded No.6 for shifting the Dam Site 6 Kms upstream of the original Dam site which was not acceded to and thereafter, the present Government has made statement before the Hon'ble Supreme Court that the dam will be constructed at the same site which was first chosen and selected. This statement shows mala fide on the part of the respondents as it reflects that the government officials used to negotiate with the mighty property dealers to save their land in order to benefit them, but no effort was, not to speak of protection of right of ownership of lands of the poor land owners, made to give even proper compensation to them (Writ Petition No. 2038/2020, High Court Judgement, 2nd February. 2021)

While employing the technocratic rationality as normative *modus operandi* for intervention and change in socio-spatial structures, the Small Dam Organization justified the change as apolitical necessity:

> The pond area and proposed location of the dam was re-surveyed to finalize construction drawings. During the re-survey it was realized that some of the lands included in the original notification under section 4 of the Act ibid are not required while some other lands will be necessary for allowing the construction to continue. Accordingly, addendum to the original notification was published on 12.03.2020

(Departmental Reply to Supreme Court, Small Dams Organization,
1st September 2021)

The departmental reply is a response to an explanation required by the Supreme Court over the addendum. Technocratic rationality i.e. 're-survey' primarily underpins the decision for addendum yet the grounds for re-survey are lexically reflective of a flexible planning process. Regardless of master plans, most often the land use regulations are subject to bargaining and negotiation processes determined by ad hoc decision. This is evident by the use of phrases 'proposed location' and 'finalize construction drawings', which underplays the issuance of section 4 by portraying site 1 as a provisional location, thus allowing a justifiable change in the site. Implementing the logic of difference and equivalence, the drastic change in site is obscured by an immeasurable value "some other land", which is further used to falsely equate both the excluded and included lands as proportional. It is disproportionate since both the lands are assigned distinguishing values i.e. the removed land is "not required" but the added one is "necessary". The land demarcated as necessary forms a discursive closure, precluding any margin for alternatives, and thus, enabling displacement.

An official explicitly reveals the working of the addendum:

> You declare how much land you need when you issue section 4. If you need to make a change, you can issue 17(4)(6)[5]. No changes can be done after that. However, the change should be minor, for instance, if there is a written error like writing a 1 instead of 10 or adding 2-3 acres more to the original acquisition requirement. But… what we did was… we removed half of the land that was in the original requirement… and added the land of those people who didn't have the slightest clue that their land would be acquired for the dam... We did that on the basis of dam design and feasibility (Hausat, official, interview, 5th May, 2023)

The topos of law and topos of rationality work in conjunction to validate the drastic change in site. The LAA provision of minor changes is abused by removal of significant

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quantities of land. Yet the misuse of the law is by-passed by providing technocratic reasoning "basis of design and feasibility". The inalterability of the decision is ensured "no changes can be done after that" by using the same LAA provision they exploited i.e. 17(4)(6). Thus, the maneuvering of land regulations on the basis of technification, and on a broader level, tied to a national cause (as analyzed earlier), becomes unquestionable. This decision brings into its fold, and impacts "people who didn't have the slightest clue", indicating affectees' lack of agency in decisions regarding their own land and livelihood.

Even when questions are raised, especially by the affectees, they are invalidated. One of the concerns shared by the affectees during the interviews was that the previous location i.e. site 1 was feasible, while site 2 had been selected for political purposes. This observation was made by several affectees who had knowledge about the nature/topography of their land. The response to this statement by one of the officials was as follows:

> It's simple. If you ask an illiterate person… Or even a literate person... Anything about the dam, or its structure... We self-proclaim competence, and then call the government incompetent... How can we know all these things? The person sitting on the chair knows… What is happening... Alignment and structure... It changes according to that… How can we know? (Werham, official, interview, 20th May, 2023)

Werham establishes a tiered power hierarchy by presenting multiple levels of knowledge asymmetry and grounds his claim in a commonsensical logic "it's simple". In the first tier, he frames 'literacy' as technocratic/scientific knowledge which indirectly categorizes protestors/affectees as 'illiterate', thus negating their concerns. It is interesting to note that, as an engineer and 'literate', although he represents advocacy of technocratic knowledge, he immediately disregards his position- "how can we know?". This reduces him to the notion of 'just doing my job'- an obscured agency which effectively shifts the responsibility of decision-making and its consequences from him. The second tier is thus presented by literacy but is subsequently distinguished from the third tier i.e. knowledge

claims are truth claims when backed by authority/power (see chapter 2). Essentially "Person sitting on the chair" alludes to an authoritative figure, who 'knows' the 'alignment and structure'. Therefore, the site change based on technocratic knowledge that is condoned by authority is legitimate, which automatically delegitimizes the affectees' concerns as they represent the opposite of authority and literacy.

4.4.2   *Section 17(4)(6): Muting the Voices of Affectees through Urgency*

As mentioned above, section 17(4)(6)[5] of LAA 1894 allows the state to acquire and possess land for public purpose within 48 hours by invoking urgency. It also enables the state to waive off Section 5 and 5A[6] of the act, which allows affectees to object to the land acquisition within 30 days of issuance of section 4. The rationale for implementing urgency was asked by the state officials, presented as follows:

> That is because there were delays before at the government's end...
> Now that it has been approved... Money submitted... It's like if a train
> is late, we shouldn't delay it any further… What happened before,
> happened, and now the Supreme Court has even approved… we
> wanted to do it in the first place anyway... It was delayed because of
> other things, courts, people etc. (Sabsire, official, 16th May, 2023)

The question about urgency is addressed evasively which keeps the organization away from enactment and impacts of the decision. The delay and its consequences are watered down by plugging in the analogy of 'train is late'. This is commonly used in Pakistan to allude to problematic practices which are posed as normative in order to deflect

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[5] Section 17(4)(6): Special power in cases of urgency.– (1) In cases of urgency, whenever the [Commissioner] so directs, the Collector, though no such award has been made, may, on the expiration of fifteen days from publication of the notice mentioned in sub-section (1) of section 9, take possession of any land needed for public purposes or for a Company. Such land shall thereupon vest absolutely in the Government, free from all encumbrances …., the [Commissioner] may direct that the provisions of sections 5 and 5-A shall not apply…

[6] Section 5 and 5A:.. Hearing of objections.– (1) Any person interested in any land which has been notified under section 5 as being needed for a public purpose or for a Company may, within thirty days after the issue of the notification, object to the acquisition of the land or of any land in the locality.

or trivialize its effects. In this specific context, it reflects the pervasive, yet normalized delays in governmental and bureaucratic procedures. These are expected as common parts of the standardized practices rather than seen as anomalies. The blame of the delay is deflected "we wanted to do it in the first place" and then shifted to people "because of other things, courts, people."

As analyzed previously, these delays had serious consequences for the affectees. However, "what happened before, happened" creates a discursive closure by framing the delay and its effects as confined to the past, instead of having a continuous long-term impact. It also signifies arbitrariness in which accountability is virtually made impossible. It also conceals the loci of power, hence, responsibility. This reduces the significance of the delay, and resultantly, mutes the grievances of the affectees and obstructs their approach to seeking remedial measures. It manifests in non-discursive practice when urgency allows section 5 to be waived off, the very section that provides the affectees right to object. An official justifies it as follows:

> We waive it off because we don't have time to listen to people's
> objections... It's because the project is a bit… Of public importance
> you know... So, it was something of an emergency... We waive it off
> in these processes. (Diaods, official, interview, 5th June, 2023)

Diaods's statement reflects Harvey's (1994) conceptualization of time as a social construct, whereby the determination of time emanates from power structures that is effectively naturalized to purport time as apolitical. The official exploits the notion of time to render the people's right to objection as inconsequential. He validates his claim by invoking the greater good rationale of "public importance". The syntax of his assertion is also of due consideration here. "We waive it off/in these processes" at the start and end of the statement is stated in a present tense, indicating the withdrawal of section 5 as a standard practice. However, the following sentence connects the rationale of time to 'the project' in question, presenting it as a perfectly logical mode of action- an exception due to 'emergency' in this case. Thus, the manifestation of power through time takes the form

of a regulation, enabling the state to form a temporal truth claim through topos of law. An affectees notes:

> They have been delaying it for so long. What's the emergency now? Upar wala said there's water shortage, now suddenly there's water shortage. Has there not been a water shortage for a while now? (Rakim, affectee, interview, 28th, April, 2023)

His question reveals the affectee's awareness of the state's contradictory discourse, the authoritarian tones and the consequences the urgency carries. The water shortage, the *raison d'etre* for the dam, has been reiterated in the state's official discourse. When tied to a time constraint 'emergency' as in the previous statement, it legitimizes not only displacement but dispossession without due process. *'Upar wala'*, literally translates to 'one from above' which is used to refer to someone in the place of authority. While not denying the existence of water shortage, he questions the validity of a need-based emergency which is based on authoritarian rationale. It's a contradiction based on a social construction of time and space, how the meaning of time is controlled by power. This is especially frustrating for the affectees when they have been caught in a perpetual limbo of almost 10 years silence by the state, and yet their rights have been taken away by invoking a shortage of time.

The following remarks by various officials reveal a larger picture of where the affectees are positioned within the development projects, and how their voices are muted legally, eventually depriving them of their rights. Considering the matter of time constraint, the officials were asked that the dam construction is still being delayed due to litigations regarding fair compensation, so why don't they listen to the objections beforehand.

> If we start listening to them, there will not even be a section 4. Nothing can be made in Pakistan then (Mirman, official, interview, 29th April, 2023)

The official uses a conditional clause 'if' to establish a causal relation between the

dispensation of rights 'listening', as directly contradictory to development, signified by 'section 4', which is used to initiate land acquisition i.e. If people are given due process, it will obstruct developmental projects. It reifies the technocratic discourse that illustrates mega-structures as integral to the modernist developmental outlook i.e. nothing can be 'made' in Pakistan then. Thus, whether it is the physical agency of people, a matter of their emotions and cultural preservation, seeking of fair livelihood or voicing their concerns through standardized procedures, they are always described as obstacles to 'progress'. Another official justified it as:

> It's the commissioner's job to listen to the objections... We assumed that... A 17-scale officer will not lie... You know what we mean when we say something is attested? It means it's verified. It's correct. You know people's objections like we want a graveyard or our schools will be affected or shift the dam, pay us enough money etc... These cases are often sanitized... That puts an end to it. Same with this case, the application just remained unprocessed... We are told it's fine, they don't hold any value… We should acquire the land... When something happens, we'll deal with it then. (Werham, official, interview, 20th May, 2023)

The official acknowledges the malpractice, but he shifts the responsibility to the commissioner. It is interesting to note that the malpractice is legalized technically by following streamlined processes of validation. An 'attested' document creates 'paper truths', which materializes into the reality faced by the affectees. In this way, objections are 'sanitized'. This holds similar notions to 'performing a surgery' (Section 2), where the objections of the affectees connote to an unhygienic, unwanted occurrence that needs to be cleaned or made palatable. Zawan recounts the process:

> We saw the date of the notice. They told us after three months had gone by, so we wouldn't go and complain in court. Commissioner came and told me to convince people… to not resist during the process… I said I know you people are being unfair. The

commissioner would come and ask about our objections, then they would send patwari. I said you people are not even considering basic things that we have asked for. Give us a graveyard first of all, where are we supposed to bury our dead? We wrote our demands, asked for a model village like they provided in other cases. Or give us plots in exchange for our lands. They aren't even giving us enough compensation. (Zawan, affectee, interview, 21st May, 2023)

His experience elucidates that on one hand, waiving off section 5 deprives affectees of their right to object. On the other hand, through performative listening or instrumental participation, they are led to believe that their objections are being processed through application but it does not "hold any value". Affectees are rendered powerless in form of discursive closure, where the authoritarian law and bureaucratic practices control what the affectees can talk about and how far is their discourse allowed to manifest substantively. A mobilization of bias takes place when affectees' other demands are disregarded, and in this case, they are confined to the demand of compensation only.

4.4.3   *Deprivation of Affectee Rights to Fair Compensation*

The issuance of addendum in 2020 on 2010 section 4 notification enables the state to compensate affectees on 2010 rates. The state also initiated the construction of the dam without giving due compensation to the affectees. In order to get fair compensation and stay order on the construction processes, the affectees filed a petition in the High Court, as Zawan stated:

The high court ruled in our favour, asked them to issue a fresh notice for land acquisition. You see over there? [points to construction work], they started to construct the spillway without the new notice. How can they just start the work without acquiring land and giving us proper compensation first? So, I went to the court and got the stay order. (Zawan, affectees, interview, 21st May, 2023)

Having been faced with litigations, one of the officials exclaimed:

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You know people's cases wouldn't have even been heard in the court if it wasn't for the private society's stakes involved. Because it is against the Government of Punjab. That's why they dragged it from 2010-2020… Otherwise, these affectees' land was in janglat [wilderness]... Whatever we had given them for compensation, they would've obediently taken it... So many dams have been made, no one ever came. People are suddenly going to courts for compensation in this case. (Hausat, official, interview, 5th May, 2023)

The affectees' lack of agency is blatant as Hausat presents a contrast on multiple levels. 'People' is different from 'Private society' because of their association with what the nature of their land represents in the dominant development discourse. A private society is a manifestation of modernization and urbanization, the idea of which has been on the forefront of development programs. The affectees on the other hand are related to 'janglat' i.e. wilderness. It discursively characterizes the affectees' home as opposite of 'developed', which justifies and enables an intervention. Moreover, a land in wilderness suggests it is of lesser value so meager compensation is validated. Thus, by being associated with land, people must be subservient to the state without resistance i.e. 'obediently taken it [compensation]'.

The contrast in land also represents power asymmetry in access to justice since people's case would not have been heard "if it wasn't for the private society's stake". It reveals the selective authoritarian nature of the state where affectees cannot seek justice "against the government of Punjab". In a way, it is what Waheed (2021, p. 209) describes as the difference 'constituted based on the materiality that reinforces and represents the socially constructed realities'. The social reality of the affectees based upon materiality persists through exploitative practices as acceptance of insufficient compensation is presented as normative.

The LAA (1894) lays down the procedure to decide compensation rates on the basis of the market rate. While discussing compensation rate issue during an interview, an official explained:

> We don't do it at market rate… We see the rate at which property/land etc has been sold in the past 5 years... You know how you make an entry on a register... Say the property is sold at 50 lacs… We have them write it as 30 lacs, to avoid tax. It's a practice you know. Then we take its average, and the district pricing committee decides and confirms the rates (Narlsan, official, interview, 20th May, 2023)

Additionally:

> Yes, it's true. We can't add an addendum on 2010 notice, but we did it because if we give them new rates, the cost will double. That would have been a question in itself, why did the cost of this project increase so much. (Mirman, official, interview, 29th April, 2023)

In both the statements, the unfair rate of compensation is authorized with the selective use of regulation, to enable certain actions, while bypassing other requirements of the act. The decision-making is navigated on the basis of the state's interest i.e. the 'truth' becomes a rule that can be bent. This means that where necessary, authoritarian claims, purported to be set in stone, are modified to achieve certain ends. Where the law requires compensation to be given on market rates, it's a 'practice' to give it on DC rates, which results in land being sold at a lesser value. In most land acquisition cases then, affectees already get lower rates than prescribed by the act. However, in this case, a conditional causal relation is established again, where if compensation is given at current rates, the cost of the project will 'double' or "increase so much". It is interesting to note that a particular discursive closure has taken place, where the emphasis is only put on compensation as a contributing factor to the cost inflation to justify lesser rates. Yet, other factors are disregarded such as the delay of 10 years resulting in an increase in construction and contractor costs etc. Bending these rules becomes a truth in itself whereby "making an entry in the register" and issuing addendum on 2010 notice shapes the reality of the affectees i.e. whatever number is written on paper actualizes the terms of their livelihood. Thus, by invoking topos of finance, economic decisions of the state takes precedence over

affectees, since affectees livelihood in terms of compensation is expendable. In a way, the sacrificial undertones permeate all spheres where affectees are concerned, whether it is the displacement for the 'greater good' or their right to fair compensation withdrawn to save cost on the project. At the time of completion of this research, the affectees have continued to fight for their right to fair compensation.

The analysis of the state and affectees' discourse presented power hierarchies in the construction of the dam and the ensuing displacement and dispossession by utilizing dominant discursive strategies as tools for analysis. The following section presents a detailed discussion placed at a broader level, highlighting discursive strategies used in the social process of global megastructure construction.

4.5 Global Megastructures in the Social Process: A Discussion on Discursive Strategies at a Broader Level

The critical discourse analysis of the events of the Dadhocha Dam illustrate a comprehensive social process conceptualized by Fairclough (2013; 2009; 1992). The practical argumentation of the dam construction, techno-scientific rationalization, and authorization through LAA 1894 reveal workings of large, abstract structures emanating from hegemonic pre- and post-colonial western development ideologies. Moral evaluation and blame avoidance identify socially constructed ideas of good and bad values especially when problematizing affectees, and elucidate culture of responsibility or blame shifting in context of institutional procedures in Pakistan. These discursive strategies delineate a pathway to understand the dialectical relation of the Dadhocha Dam, where the discursive practices of policy, interviews and regulations materialize the non-discursive practices of dam construction, displacement, dispossession and marginalization of the affectees. This analysis also reflects broader structures and institutional practices within a global social process, as discusses below.

Esposito and Terlizzi (2023) contend that megaprojects are a critical yet understudied area in policy research, since discursive and institutional analysis of megaprojects can provide a valuable empirical case for understanding policy-making. Recent scholarship on the nexus of megaprojects and policy-making has focused on

narratives of multiple stakeholder or actors in the contested terrain of development. For instance, Rek-Wozniak (2023) in her study of Poland and Finland discusses the relation of discourses and practices of development in megaprojects through institutionalization, strategic ambiguity and neutralization of conflict to gain legitimacy. Similarly, Coticchia & Di Giulio (2023) highlight the strategic use and non-use of narratives to either silence or suppress public debate or achieve support for the construction of high-speed railway in Florence. By bringing forth various diverging claims, Tinti (2023) argues that hydraulic structures are sites where political imaginaries are socially constructed both materially and discursively. Contributing to the megaproject discourse, the Dadhocha Dam serves a case-study of dialectical relation, illustrating the power-hierarchies in structural, institutional and event-based legitimization of dam construction, displacement and dispossession of the affectees. Through critically analyzing the contextually and socially organized texts, the study has highlighted the discursive strategies used by the state to control the development sphere while determining and shaping the socio-material reality of the affectees in Pakistan.

The legitimization strategies of practical argumentation and techno-scientific rationalization have been predominantly used to justify the dam construction, as well as displacement while simultaneously problematizing the affectees. Antonio et al (2018), by building on existing theorizations, presents water resource management i.e. Hydroelectric dams in Brazil as a contested terrain of various groups, where techno-economic rationales, legislations and policies are used as a means for state and large corporations to achieve their ends. In such social processes, the affectees of the projects face discursive isolation. Ijabadeniyi and Vanclay (2020) in their analysis of South African discursive practices in mining contend that these practices perpetuate impoverishment through displacement since the techno-rational argumentation of ESIA is designed to transcend institutional checks while normalizing exclusion of the affectees in such projects. Abbink (2012), in the discourse analysis of dam construction on Omo River, Ethiopia, revealed that technocratic rhetoric was predominantly used by the state to legitimize dam construction while presenting itself as apolitical, which made the state-policy space as non-negotiable. The public debate on dams is absent because, on one hand, state projects the dam construction as a way to empowerment and self-sufficiency, on the other, the critics and the local population (affectees) are presented as obstacles to progress (Abbink, 2012). Akhter (2022)

while analyzing televisual ads of dam campaigns in Pakistan, contends that statist imaginaries of hydraulic development have for decades propagated a backwards, racialized representation of internal peripheries i.e. the rural to legitimize infrastructural interventions. This is aligned with the modernization theory which purports large infrastructures as catalysts for development (Akhter, 2022).

As analyzed in the previous section, practical argumentation and rationalization, when used in tandem with authorization and moral evaluation, serves as further grounds for exploitation and dispossession of the affectees. Hommes et al (2016) while studying the contested hydro-social territories in Turkey, highlighted that governmentality is enacted through engineering the perception of moral good by utilizing a positive discourse which portrays the Ilisu Dam as a symbol of nationalistic pride or a embodying a 'Great Turkey' outlook. Sturup (2009) implements Foucauldian conceptualization of governmentality (see chapter 2) and notes that megaprojects are deliberately presented as a solution to a particular problem, and thus presented as a necessity. This gives megaprojects a 'pharaonic flavor', which provides a ground for king-like justification for displacement of people, embedded in sovereign will of the government or interest groups (Boyce, 1990; Sturup, 2009, p. 867). As highlighted in the case-study, displacement was equated to God's will, presenting religious authorization. Similarly, in the study of Belo Monte dam in Brazil through the concept of Gramscian hegemony, the location was purported by an engineer as created by God specifically for the purpose of a dam (Bratman, 2015; Fearnside, 2006).

Authorization in terms of land acquisition and prevalent document regimes has also been emphasized in the study as the main practice to dispossess and displace people while justifying withdrawal of their basic rights in terms of compensation etc. While referring to the politicization of bureaucracy in Bangladesh, Mahmud et al (2020) highlight in the case study of Rampal power plant, how Property Rights and Allotment Law of 1974 and the Acquisition and Requisition of Immovable Property Ordinance of 1982 are used to not only regulate people's relationship to land on legal-institutional terms, but also marginalize and dispossess some categories of people without compensation. Peric and Maruna (2022) on the post-socialist discourse in megaprojects on Belgrade Waterfront in Serbia reveal a 'top-

top' governance and planning approach where legitimization is done through legal documents which, while fast-tracking the process, also protects controversies of public interest defined without public opinion or expert input. Moreover, public opinion or responses from the community to megaproject development are generally suppressed given the essence of authoritarian neoliberalism (Peric & Maruna, 2022). In this research, blame avoidance has been shown to be a commonly used strategy to legitimize institutional practices and exploitation of the affectees in Pakistan. However, it is important to emphasize that the strategies of blame avoidance have mostly been studied in terms of political discourse (see, for example Hansson, 2015; Hood, 2011; Wodak, 2011, 2006). Interconnected with blame avoidance is the discourse of silence or 'waiting period' as described by Harms (2013), which has practical implications for the affectees. Thus, this research contributes not only in bringing focus to blame avoidance and discursive silence as an imperative dimension of megaproject discourse, but also identifies a crucial gap in literature which is understudied, and can serve as a point of further research for institutional reforms. Moreover, by studying counter-strategies used by the marginalized people, this research emphasizes the need for further research in indigenous knowledge discourses in megaprojects, and socio-psychological impact of displacement as told by affectees, as well as affectees discourse as forms of resistance (see, for example Gilmore, 2015; Koenig, 2015; Oliver-Smith 2010, 2006).

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

If they make the dam, we will get displaced. Obviously a person who has been living here all their life, they are attached to their land... We are all one family over here. If they give us a place. Like a model town like they did in the Ghazi Brotha Project. We can all go there... We will sacrifice our land... We can't ask for resettlement right now. We will add it as a reference after we are done with the compensation writs. (Zawan, affectee, interview, 15th May, 2023)

Conversely:

The patriotism and sacrifices of the local population, especially the residents of Barwala, including Azari Sehal, Malikpur Azizal and Khanpur areas are commendable" (Liaquat Ali Chattha, Rawalpindi Division Commissioner, Dawn News, 8th October, 2023)

These statements continue to reveal the stark contrast in the reality perpetuated by the state, and how it manifests for the affectees. The hegemonic discourse prevails by portraying affectees as docile in the face of displacement, while simultaneously overshadowing the struggles of the affectees with the very same notion of a readily accepted self-sacrifice in the name of patriotism. The dam construction resumes, yet the conditions of the affectees remain the same as the perpetual wait for fair compensation continues. They are likely to be displaced without a secure livelihood, neither in the form of sustainable cash payments nor by way of relocation, as the Punjab government does not provide for a resettlement plan, despite its mention in the Dadhocha Dam EIA report. All of the processes are essentially "*kaghazi*" - on paper- as described by one of the officials. Being built on paper is the very practice that allows policy institutions to create the thin lines- loopholes which can be maneuvered around when necessary and converted into truths for people subjected to them.

Where regulations are used to enable and mobilize state-led endeavors, they are demarcated precisely to achieve a discursive closure which keeps out 'others' discourses. The oppressive power of the Land Acquisition Act, 1894 is availed by the state to expropriate land for 'public purpose' without addressing the dispossession. It is implemented selectively by wilful exclusion of provisions specified to bring the affectees relief at some level i.e. right to objects and fair compensation. The topos of law for state purpose trumps the topos of law for people since the law enacted by the state represents a bigger cause, a higher purpose, a nationalist ideology and a matter of survival. Those who contest it are depicted as being against all the values one must endorse and embody as citizens of that state. By this logic, the affectees, asking for their right to have a sustainable livelihood are instantly criminalized as anti-state.

Displacement is thus rendered inconsequential by naturalizing it as a normative and necessary process of nation-building. What represents a modern nation emanates from the western development ideas of urbanization and construction of mega-structures embedded in discourses of technocratic and scientific knowledge. The actualization of these discursive practices ensures control over natural resources, the peripheries, and regime consolidation.

Post-colonial Pakistan retains its colonial residues by embodying social institutions structured on power hierarchies. By embracing what Nehru termed as a 'disease of gigantism in India' (cited in McCully, 2001), Pakistan embarked on developing hydraulic structures under the regime of Ayub Khan in the 1960s, enacted as apolitical tools by the state machinery. In pursuit of power consolidation, dispossession and forced evictions without due process have become common-place. People on whose lands these monuments are built are essentially powerless in the face of pervasive bureaucratic practices which carry on the colonial legacies to maintain the dominant discourse and material practices.

In line with the scholarship of discourse studies, it is important to acknowledge that discourse on an object of research has multiple dimensions whose analysis or interpretation is contingent upon the specific conceptualizations or argumentations of a theory and methodology. Thus, depending on the purpose of the research, a discourse territory must

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be demarcated. Critical Discourse Analysis seeks to problematize the existing dialectical relations in the social process, and thus this study problematizes the normative nexus of development and displacement/dispossession. It does not argue for or against the merits of dams/hydraulic structures, but presents dam construction as a widely accepted practice in development through which displacement is normalized and trivialized. Through normative and explanatory critique, the discourse on hydraulic structures is arguably a polarized and contested space. The proponents of dams utilize techno-scientific knowledge embedded in need-based, human rights discourses, for instance, advocating dams as a sustainable solution for water conservation and a source for renewable energy, possibly contributing to reduction in carbon emissions (Ali et al., 2020; Bagher et al., 2015; Bayazit, 2021; Mohamud & Elkiran, 2023; Severnini, 2022).

Moreover, dams are delineated as a revenue-generating venture, seeking to harness development opportunities concerning tourism and employment (Kirmani et al., 2021; Naranjo & Castillo, 2021). Conversely, the critical stream of research shifts the focus towards implications of dams, for instance, acceleration of natural environment and terrains through administrative reordering, destruction of ecosystems, such as imbalances in aquatic life, disruption in river flows, impact on flora and fauna and increasing deforestation (Ali et al., 2020; Bagher et al., 2015; Barbarossa et al., 2020; Koç, 2022; Luorio, 2023). Further, dams are not only expensive, high-maintenance and time-consuming to build, but inefficient institutional practices increase the cost of projects (Luorio, 2023; Perera et al., 2021). They also result in displacement and dispossession of people from their homes thus undermining attempts for sustainable development (see chapter 2). However, these implications are often 'addressed' particularly through EIA and PC-1 (Bingham, 2010; Fearnside, 2006; Ijabadeniyi & Vanclay, 2020; Naheed et al., 2017). Thus, placed in this wider debate, this research notes that dam merits constitute the dominant development discourses, and by problematizing these discourses, it highlights that through access to power, the implications of dams are discursively engineered through various strategies to stabilize and maintain the development regime, while marginalizing other discourses.

5.2 Policy Implications

Through the theoretical and methodological framework of critical discourse analysis, the findings of this research highlight the significance of problematizing dominant development discourses in Pakistan to identify shortcomings in normative, standardized and institutionalized policy practices which materialize the socio-material reality for the marginalized population. This is elaborated in accordance with Fairclough's (2013; 2009; 1992) elements of social process i.e. social structures, practices and events, as follows:

While numerous studies (Azher, 2013; Haq & Haq, 2022; Kamran, 2019; Kayani, 2012; Naheed et al., 2017; Waqar, 2014; Yuefang & Ali, 2021) have highlighted the displacement caused by dams in Pakistan, and possible risks that the affectees face, this research contributes in identifying and problematizes the normative ideas emanating from larger structures that enable the displacement and dispossession through dams. Specifically, the *raison detre* for Dadhocha Dam is built on the widely accepted values advocated by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) i.e. equitable, efficient, sustainable and universal access to water. However, this research, through textual analysis contends that while these ideas are predominantly utilized in policies to represent a positive outlook of national goals and purpose of hydraulic structures, they effectively manage to marginalize the discourses of people who do not benefit equally from such policies, and thus undercut substantial progress towards achieving SDGs. In particular, while the construction of the Dadhocha Dam is purported to resolve the water shortage in Rawalpindi and Islamabad (SDG-6), simultaneously, it will aggravate inequality instead of eradicating poverty (SDG-1), since displacement and dispossession of the people of Malikpur (including other villages), will expose them to impoverishment risks, while it disproportionately benefits others. Not only this but the vision to 'make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable' (SDG-11), is undermined when displacement and dispossession leaves the affectees homeless and landless. At a policy-making level, there needs to be an alignment of ideas, goals and materialization of the policies at a practical level, where the SDGs and the underlying goals of Pakistan are interconnected and streamlined.

At an institutional level, this research finds that the standardized practices are commonly referred to by the state to portray the administrative processes of land acquisition as being 'by the book' and so legitimate despite their various consequences. However, affectees' discourse highlights that instead of these practices ensuring a democratic procedure rooted in dispensation of rights, it creates grounds for exploitation of the affectees. This not only requires a need for the standardized processes to be performed with utmost efficiency, but a third-party monitoring and evaluation in hydraulic projects also need to be incorporated at an institutional level to maintain a streamlined accountability procedure. This will not only democratize the land acquisition process by ensuring minimum financial and psychological cost to the affectees, but also result in effective utilization of state funds.

At the concrete event level i.e. construction of the Dadhocha Dam, the research illustrates the struggle of the affectees of Malikpur to have their demands fulfilled. As observed above, the materialization of this reality emanates from the structures and the institutional practice. Once structural and institutional level changes are made, the concrete events will materialize accordingly. It is imperative to ensure that with the construction of any hydraulic structure, or development project which induces displacement and dispossession, comes with a comprehensive framework for resettlement policies, restoration of sustainable livelihoods which not only compensate for the financial cost, but also take into consideration social and psychological cost of displacement and dispossession.

5.3 Limitations of the Study and Way Forward for Future Studies

The most common critique against the methodology of critical discourse analysis is that it is reductionist in the sense that it is built on investigating power hierarchies so there is limited room for surprising empirical results or insights (Keller, 2012). However, critical discourse analysis is applied through the lens of normative and explanatory critique hence it not only uncovers power in commonsensical discourse but also harnesses the critique of discourse to investigate the normative social reality that constitutes the discourse (Fairclough, 2015). The critique is also immanent in a sense that it provides a nexus of theory and empiricism by conducting a study to identify internal contradictions in the

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normative social reality rather than against measures external to that reality (Fairclough, 2015; Herzog, 2016). Thus, as mentioned above, it can be theorized across multiple disciplines and suggest changes to overcome the identified critique (Fairclough, 2015).

Moreover, while the methodology of CDA is also criticized for lacking objectivity (Aydin-Düzgit & Rumelili, 2019), however, as mentioned above, the 'interview-discourse' is tied to social and theoretical context which serves as the basis for questions as well as tools for analysis of the discourse (Ruiz, 2009). Additionally, context also serves as a compass for self-reflection on the part of the researcher (Paul, 2009).

Since the aim of critical discourse analysis is not generalizability, the findings of the research are predominantly case and context-specific. However, in accordance with Fairclough's (2013, 2009, 1992) conceptualization of the social process, the wider structures and institutions reflect the normative and general workings of the social process in a larger social context. This implies that parallels can be drawn to some extent, supported by relevant literature, with respect to the wider structures and institutions that enable the construction of dams and legitimize displacement and dispossession in Pakistan and can be used as guidance or reflection in similar events at a concrete level.

While the discourse territory for this case-study in this particular research has been demarcated with the construction of events and timeline, pertaining specifically to the textual analysis of rationale of dam construction, legitimization of displacement and concrete processes of land acquisition with respect to compensation, however, a lot of areas remain unexplored and can be studied further for a holistic understanding of this case-study in particular or in comparative analysis of other dams constructions. Within this case-study, analysis of the judicial process in terms of petitions, court judgements and departmental replies can contribute to a deeper understanding of the legislative reality for the affectees in displacement and dispossession cases. Additionally, although the involvement of private housing societies has been discussed briefly, it is important to explore the nexus of private urbanization and displacement to incorporate the existence of tiered power-hierarchies which shape the reality of the affectees.

Some areas of textual analysis touched upon social disarticulation and psychological costs of displacement in the form of importance of graveyards, association with land and a collective sense of community. These aspects can be further explored as Oliver-Smith (2006) contends that displacement is predominantly confined to economic aspects rather than including socio-psychological costs as well. Moreover, the gendered aspect of displacement and dispossession is still an understudied area. Cernea (2000) highlights that displacement exacerbates the social reality of already marginalized and vulnerable communities including women and children, so a gendered discursive aspect would reveal the socio-material reality faced by the aforementioned communities. Sahoo and Mishra's (2016) study on displacement and gender injustice in India provides a comprehensive depth and understanding of impoverishment of marginalized communities due to development projects. Thus, these areas can further be studied within the critical discourse framework to provide ground for policy reforms.

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