

# ***Pakistan's Cultural Policy Landscape: A Review***

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Cultural Policy is gaining significance internationally as a discipline of academic study and research given the centrality of cultural and creative concerns to the demands of the twenty-first century. Countries around the world have also increasingly invested in the arts and culture over the past few decades given their value as engines of economic growth and social cohesion. Indeed, cultural policy is considered an important tool of promoting a shared identity, collective memory, and intercultural dialogue besides bringing economic benefits that together improve the global image of a country. In case of Pakistan, however, despite the massive potential of its rich cultural heritage for social and economic prosperity, the country has not been able to develop and implement a comprehensive cultural policy effectively. Indeed, Pakistan has not yet ratified the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions that has been at the heart of cultural policymaking internationally. This review paper is focused on outlining the potential of culture as a strategic sector to boost social cohesion, economic growth, and cultural diplomacy for Pakistan through an analysis of*

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*the available cultural policy documents. The paper is divided into three parts: The first part dwells on the concepts of “culture” and “cultural policy”, outlining their socioeconomic value in the contemporary globalized world; the second part traces the trajectory of the sporadic history of cultural policy in Pakistan and analyses its current state within the framework of the key policy drivers in the international cultural policy literature given by Trembath & Fielding; and the last part provides major findings and recommendations of this study. The paper concludes that Pakistan’s socioeconomic challenges require a strategic approach to devising national and foreign cultural policies that foster healthy avenues of social engagement, an inclusive national identity, sustainable economic growth, and international diplomacy.*

### **Introduction**

Cultural Policy is gaining significance internationally as a discipline of academic study and research given the centrality of cultural and creative concerns to the demands of the twenty-first century. Indeed, the concept of cultural policy became prominent particularly in the postwar period, however, it was the early 1990s that came to be known as the "cultural policy moment".<sup>1</sup> Policies addressing culture became relevant given “the increasing economic importance of the cultural, media, and heritage industries, the changing balance of the relationship between work and leisure in postindustrial societies, and the regulatory challenges posed by an increasingly global media and communications order.” This led to an interest by modern governments in “regulat[ing] how cultural resources are produced, distributed, and used with a view to shaping the cultural and moral attributes of their citizens.”<sup>2</sup> Over the past few

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1 Deborah Stevenson, *Art and Organisation: Making Australian Cultural Policy* (St. Lucia: UQP, 2000), 36.

2 T. Bennett, “Cultural Policy,” in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (Amsterdam: Elsevier Ltd., 2001), 3092-3097.

decades, developed economies like the U.K., Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and several European countries developed comprehensive cultural policies to promote the arts, support artists, develop art institutions, and provide citizens opportunities to access cultural activities for a healthy social experience. Rising Asian economies followed suit with South Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, and China emerging as significant cultural forces in the international context. However, in case of Pakistan, despite the massive potential of its rich cultural heritage for social and economic prosperity, the country has not been able to develop and implement a comprehensive cultural policy. Indeed, Pakistan has not yet ratified the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions that has been at the heart of cultural policymaking internationally.

This paper is focused on outlining the potential of culture as a strategic sector to boost social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, economic growth, and cultural diplomacy for Pakistan. Given that this is a review paper that analyses Pakistan's cultural policies in light of the international cultural policy literature, primary research materials for this study include provincial and national cultural policy documents produced over the last two decades while secondary sources include cultural policy documents of other countries; UNESCO declarations and reports; and op-eds on Pakistan's cultural policy. The theoretical framework of this study comes from the key international cultural policy drivers given by Trembath & Fielding.<sup>3</sup> The paper summarizes, analyses, and evaluates Pakistan's cultural policy documents vis-à-vis the above framework to identify the gaps against which recommendations are provided.

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<sup>3</sup> J. L. Trembath & K. Fielding, "Behind the Scenes: Drivers of Arts and Cultural Policy Settings in Australia and Beyond," *A New Approach* (Australian Academy of the Humanities, 2020), 9.

## Culture

UNESCO defines 'culture' "as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group," which include "art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs."<sup>4</sup> This can be juxtaposed to a more abstract conception of culture by Nastasi *et al.* as "a dynamic system of meanings, knowledge, and action, which provides individuals with socially sanctioned strategies to create, interpret, analyse, and recreate their world and experiences through their interactions with each other."<sup>5</sup> Kluckhohn concurs in conceiving culture as "[p]atterned ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting, acquired and transmitted mainly by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artefacts." For Kluckhohn, "the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values."<sup>6</sup> In other words, we live our culture in our daily lives in profound ways; from the food we eat to the attire we don, the languages we speak, the celebrations we observe, and the values we abide by. Culture, therefore, has "great symbolic value as an expression of identity and lifestyle" that shapes a collective cultural identity besides situating the cultural life of a people in a globalized society. Indeed, the diversity of cultural identities and their exchange with other cultures based on

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4 UNESCO. *UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000124687.page=67>.

(Paris: UNESCO, 2002), 62.

5 Bonnie K. Nastasi *et al.*, "The Meaning and Importance of Cultural Construction for Global Development," *International Journal of School & Educational Psychology* 5, no. 3 (2017): 137-40,

<https://doi.org/10.1080/21683603.2016.1276810>.

6 C. Kluckhohn and W.H. Kelly, "The Concept of Culture," in *The Science of Man in the World Culture*, ed., R. Linton (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), 86.

mutual respect form “the preconditions of developmental processes.” Cultural creativity “influence[s] innovation processes which enable a greater exploitation of the potential of a social reality for the appropriation of its own development processes or the resolution of its problems.” Cultures lend “‘added value’ to the configuration of citizenship, through cultural life” that encompasses cultural norms, traditions, events, sites, services.<sup>7</sup>

Thus, besides being a source of community building, culture contributes to “the dynamics of development and economic growth” in contemporary societies by generating both direct and indirect impacts.<sup>8</sup> This paper, therefore, situates culture within a three-part framework of its “intrinsic,” “social”, and “economic value” that has been demonstrated by various studies. The “intrinsic value” of culture lies in the enriching experience it offers that promotes “personal wellbeing” and “life satisfaction; the “social value” of culture stems from its impact on “educational attainment”, “physical and mental health”, and the concomitant “community cohesion”; and the “economic value” of culture is grounded in its contribution “to economic growth and job-creation.”<sup>9</sup> Therefore, the significance of devising cultural policies for socioeconomic benefits has increased in recent years given the multifaceted direct and indirect benefits of the arts and culture.

### **Cultural Policy: A Literature Review**

In 1964, the 13<sup>th</sup> General Conference of UNESCO solicited a declaration on global cultural cooperation from the Director General and the Executive Board. This resulted in The

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7 Alfons M. Sempere, “Cultural Cooperation,” *Periférica Internacional. Revista Para El análisis De La Cultura Y El Territorio*, 19 (2018): 167–177. <https://doi.org/10.25267/Periferica.2018.i19.17>.

8 Sempere, “Cultural Cooperation,” 8.

9 DCMS, *The Culture White Paper* (Crown: 2016), 15.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/510798/DCMS\\_The\\_Culture\\_White\\_Paper\\_3\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/510798/DCMS_The_Culture_White_Paper_3_.pdf).

Declaration of the Principles of International Cultural Co-operation that was adopted at the 14<sup>th</sup> General Conference in 1966. This ushered in a founding era of the “new cultural policy”<sup>10</sup> and gave rise to the field of “cultural policy studies” that was marked by the establishment of the Association of Cultural Economics and the Center for Urban Studies at the University of Akron in the 1970s; a series of conferences on the interconnections of culture, economics, and social theory in the Nordic region, Western Europe, and North America; specialized journals of theoretical and empirical studies on cultural policy; extensive policy inputs for art and culture thinktanks; and, finally, the noteworthy European cultural ministers’ conference in Helsinki in 1972.<sup>11</sup> Although the UNESCO declaration never used the term “cultural policy”, the program itself was responsible for disseminating “cultural policy as a concept and as a governmental structure” globally. Between 1969 and 1999, a total of 71 national reports were published in the UNESCO Series Studies that elaborated their respective investment in cultural policies. Indeed, most countries that produced reports of national cultural policy in the UNESCO series also went on to establish a ministry of culture except for Australia, Canada, and the United States. Given that the UNESCO program emphasized differences as opposed to similarities, countries embraced it as it posed no “threat to national sovereignty.”<sup>12</sup>

Australia was among the first countries to formulate an official cultural policy titled *Creative Nation* released in 1994 that drew on a combination of information technology, global

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10 Geir Vestheim, “UNESCO Cultural Policies 1966–1972 – the Founding Years of ‘New Cultural Policy’,” *Nordisk Kulturpolitisk Tidsskrift*, 22, no.1 (2019): 174-95. <https://doi.org/10.18261/ISSN2000-8325-2019-01-10>.

11 Toby Miller & George Yúdice, *Introduction: The History and Theory of Cultural Policy* (London: Sage, 2002).

12 Pertti Alasuutaria & Anita Kangasb, “The Global Spread of the Concept of Cultural Policy,” *Poetics* 82, (2020): 101445.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.poetic.2020.101445>.

culture, and digital media to affect a shift from an exclusive “art for art’s sake” approach to a commercial project that would quantify art in monetary terms.<sup>13</sup> ‘Creative Nation’ has significantly reshaped Australian national identity as inclusive and multicultural. The 1994 policy broadened the definition of culture beyond high art to include “television and film, regional community festivals, radio, school programs, libraries, and information technology”, and the 2013 Creative Nation follow-up further expanded it to include reality television shows, iTunes, community radio, etc. Besides promoting the arts and culture, as of 2020, Australia’s cultural and creative economy was contributing A\$111.7 billion (6.4 percent) to the economy and employed 868,098 people (8.1 percent).

The UK was the first country to develop a creative industries policy that was based on four key themes: “access, excellence, education, and economic value.”<sup>14</sup> Labor’s renaming of the Department of National Heritage as the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) was aimed at harnessing culture to the economic policy in order to build an “enterprise economy for the 21st century.” Culture was linked to the arts, media, and digital technologies to align “British creativity” with “intellectual capital” in order to foster economic growth. A major initiative of DCMS was the establishment of a Creative Industries Task Force (CITF) that was to review the contribution of 13 creative sectors to the British economy to provide policy recommendations. While the 1998 DCMS Mapping Document cited the creative industries to be worth 5 percent of national income, the 2001 Mapping Document recorded an 87.5 percent revenue increase from 1998, thus moving CCIs from margins into the

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13 “Paul Keating’s Creative Nation: A Policy Document that Changed US,” *The Conversation*. October 29, 2014. <https://theconversation.com/paul-keatings-creative-nation-a-policy-document-that-changed-us-33537>.

14 Ieva Moore, “Cultural and Creative Industries Concept – A Historical Perspective,” *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 110 (2014): 738-46. doi: 10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.12.918. 744.

mainstream. These documents were instrumental in defining, highlighting, and establishing an international policy discourse for creative industries, thus rendering the latter itself “a successful British export.”<sup>15</sup> As of 2018, the Britain’s creative industries sector was growing over five times faster than the national economy, 7.4 percent on the previous year with an economic contribution of £224.1 billion.<sup>16</sup>

The EU represents another success story of creative economy where culture is viewed as an engine of economic growth as well as soft power. Motivated by the fact that the European Union lacked a “cultural relations strategy,” the European Commission mandated a consortium of eight cultural organizations, institutes, and consultancies in 2011 to propose such a strategy. Prior to that, the EU launched its Culture 2000 program with a budget of €236.4 million dedicated to preserving and promoting the EU’s cultural heritage. The program ran until 2006 and provided grants to cultural cooperation projects in three categories: specific annual activities, multiannual activities, and special cultural events. Likewise, as part of the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020, the European Union invested €300 million on cultural cooperation initiatives, particularly via the Development Cooperation Instrument, the European Neighbourhood Instrument, the European Development Fund, and Horizon 2020. Today, the creative economy in the EU employs 8.7 million people; generates €558 billion of profit; and includes 1.2 million companies and 1,784 creative clusters.<sup>17</sup>

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15 T. Flew, *The Creative Industries: Culture and Policy* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2012), 9-11.

16 “UK’s Creative Industries Contributes almost £13 Million to the UK Economy Every Hour,” February 6, 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uks-creative-industries-contributes-almost-13-million-to-the-uk-economy-every-hour>.

17 “Culture Matters,” *Culture and Creativity*. November 27, 2022.

<https://www.culturepartnership.eu/en/page/culture-matters>.



Following in the footsteps of Europe and Australia whose policy initiatives saw their Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) grow exponentially, countries around the world started investing in cultural endeavours given their potential for sustainable development and cultural diplomacy. One of the earliest examples is South Korea; setting off in the 1990s with dedicating 1 percent of its annual budget to supporting creative industries to ramp up their international standing, South Korea has most successfully developed its creative economy.<sup>18</sup> In 2019, the “Korean Wave” (Hallyu) contributed US \$12.3 billion to the economy besides having augmented South Korea’s global influence significantly. Focused on deploying culture for both economic growth and soft diplomacy, South Korea promoted the internationalization of Korean culture through robust marketing of its cultural goods and services.<sup>19</sup> This led to an unprecedented growth of Korean culture including music, movies, TV drama, online games, and Korean cuisine as well as boosting cultural tourism and export revenue. Indeed, South Korea supposedly has the greatest global influence per capita.<sup>20</sup> In 2020, the total sales revenue of South Korea’s content industry totalled around 128.3 trillion South Korean won.<sup>21</sup> This success story owes greatly to the government’s initiatives to actively support cultural endeavours through effective policymaking.

China represents another example of a rapidly growing creative industry. To implement the UNESCO 2005 Convention at both national and international levels, the

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18 Flew, *The Creative Industries*, 44.

19 Ien Ang, Yudhishtir Raj Isar & Phillip Mar, “Cultural Diplomacy: Beyond the National Interest?,” *International Journal of Cultural Policy* 21, no. 4 (2015): 365-81, DOI: [10.1080/10286632.2015.1042474](https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2015.1042474), 374.

20 Trembath & Fielding, “Behind the Scenes,” 9.

21 “Sales Revenue of the Content Industry in South Korea from 2014 to 2020,” November 27, 2022. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1155001/south-korea-sales-revenue-content-industry/>.

Chinese government took significant measures over the past decade that resulted in substantial growth. Indeed, China is home to the world's biggest cultural and creative industry. In 2015, China recorded the world's highest creative trade surplus (\$154 billion). Like the Western models, China's CCIs are grounded in economic potential and development and have resulted in urban transformation. In 2020, China's CCI revenue was \$1.53 trillion. Indeed, China is committed to developing the creative industry for generating employment, growth, and soft power through promoting Chinese culture abroad.<sup>22</sup> Besides, Japan, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, and Singapore are among the rapidly growing agents in the international CCIs landscape where Pakistan remains inconspicuous mainly due to a lack of policy formulation and implementation.

### **Cultural Policy: A Conceptual Framework**

Culture and the arts help build the reputation of a country both internally and externally; they shape a collective identity around common interests and values. Given the increasing social and economic value of culture, governments around the world are more committed to harnessing cultural resources to shape cultural identity and increase cultural diplomacy. However, today, the state no longer enjoys monopoly in cultural policies as other actors and stakeholders have also become increasingly important and are factored into any conception of cultural policy. Miller and Yúdice explain the link between culture and policy in two "registers": "the aesthetic" and "the anthropological."<sup>23</sup> In the former, "artistic output emerges from creative people and is judged by aesthetic criteria, as framed by the interests and practices of cultural criticism and history."<sup>24</sup> However, the anthropological register "takes culture as a marker of how

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22 Trembath & Fielding, "Behind the Scenes," 96.

23 Miller and Yúdice, *Introduction*:1.

24 Miller and Yúdice, *Introduction*: 1.

we live our lives grounded by language, religion, custom, time and space.”<sup>25</sup> Hence while “the aesthetic articulates differences within populations the anthropological articulates differences between populations.” Cultural policy forms “a bridge between the two registers”; it encompasses the institutional support that is directed at “both aesthetic creativity and collective ways of life”. Cultural policy is thus expressed in “systematic, regulatory guides to action” that countries and organizations devise to achieve their respective goals.<sup>26</sup>

Globally, government agendas on cultural policy are generally focused on the following areas: promotion of the creative industries as “sources of innovation, growth and structural change”; role of the arts and culture in employment and income generation; advancement of the creative and performing arts; regulation of intellectual property in cultural goods and services; and the preservation of cultural heritage.<sup>27</sup> This paper, in particular, draws on the cultural policy framework developed by Trembath & Fielding that identifies four key policy drivers (KPDs) in the international cultural policy literature over the last 70 years (1950-2020).<sup>28</sup> (i) collective identity, (ii) reputation-building, (iii) social improvement, and (iv) economic contribution. In what follows I elaborate each one of these to provide a framework in which the analysis section will review Pakistan’s cultural policy documents.

### **Collective Identity**

The main policy driver in cultural policies globally is the notion of Collective Identity that views “arts and culture as a

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<sup>25</sup> Miller and Yúdice, *Introduction*: 1.

<sup>26</sup> Miller and Yúdice, *Introduction*: 1.

<sup>27</sup> David Throsby, *The Economics of Cultural Policy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), ix.

<sup>28</sup> Trembath & Fielding, “Behind the Scenes,” 15.

tool to help groups of otherwise disparate individuals to unite around a collective identity,” building on their commonalities while being conscious of their differences. This driver is grounded in “developing and maintaining strong and cohesive cultural narratives, either for a nation as a whole or for specific societal sub-groups.” Trembath & Fielding explicate three approaches within this model: ‘the engineer approach’ exemplified in the concept of “nationing” given by Rowe *et. al.* to refer to developing of a national culture through relevant policymaking. Nationing allows citizens to understand their nation’s “legitimacy” and to see “themselves reflected back through that collective national culture.” This, however, must be accompanied by ‘the unity in diversity approach’ which encourages “multiculturalism as the common bond” as evident in the European Union’s “localized interpretations of its centralized cultural policy while also building up a sense of a ‘European cultural identity’”. Finally, ‘the cultural maintenance approach’ views the arts and culture as “transmitting identity over generations” without reifying the former. While different governments may prefer different approaches, all three are undergirded by the notion of a collective identity shared by diverse groups of individuals.<sup>29</sup>

### **Reputation-building**

This policy driver is grounded in viewing the arts and culture as means to building “the reputation of a country, region, organisation or individual” by associating the latter with “standards of excellence as defined by relevant stakeholders.” Reputation-building drivers produce two types of actions: while the Internal reputation-building uses the arts and culture “to build an individual’s, organisation’s, or region’s reputation with internal stakeholders (such as constituents, residents, members or employees)”, the External reputation-building is focused on building “the reputation of an organisation or region with external

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29 Trembath & Fielding, “Behind the Scenes,” 16.

stakeholders.” This is reflected in the endeavours of cultural diplomacy, promotion of a country’s artists and cultural productions abroad, and promotion of the arts and culture for domestic and international tourists. The reputation-building driver is expressed in one of the three models, i.e., patronage, cultural democratization, and elite nurturer, which despite prioritizing different kinds of relationships converge on their “emphasis on excellence and its capacity to refract a positive light over those who support it.”<sup>30</sup>

### **Social Improvement**

This policy driver views arts and culture as sources of spillover benefits in areas of social value e.g., “education, mental and physical health, disaster recovery, community- and amenity-building and the promotion of greater acceptance of different types of people within society.” Policies focused on social improvement emphasize the value of making appropriate and meaningful creative content readily available to people for consumption in order to generate beneficial spillover effects. Again, there are three cultural policy approaches to this driver: cultural democracy that provides access to participation in arts and culture as a basic human right; the architect approach that “align arts and cultural activities with social welfare objectives”; and culture 3.0 that incorporates technology to maximize participation in culture. All three approaches are focused on “tackling social improvement as their primary purpose for encouraging and promoting arts and culture in society.”<sup>31</sup>

### **Economic Contribution**

This policy driver views arts and culture as sources of economic development for nations through income generation, employment, and innovation. This is reflected mainly in the cultural and creative industries policies. Key elements of the economic contribution policy driver include

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30 Trembath & Fielding, “Behind the Scenes,” 19.

31 Trembath & Fielding, “Behind the Scenes,” 22.

three models; the welfare model “assumes market failure and the need for subsidies” thus not taking “full advantage of the benefits” that the creative industries offer to the wider economy; the culture 2.0 model is founded “on notions of entrepreneurialism and competition” and “growing the most financially viable industries within the creative industries cluster”; and growth and innovation model views the creative economy “as a ‘driver’ of growth, or even part of the innovation system that fuels change and adaptation in the economy.” However, income generation is not the only purpose of this approach since the indirect contributions of creative economy through “catalysing creativity and innovation within other industries” is significant.<sup>32</sup>

As evident in the discussion above, while all four cultural policy drivers are focused on creating meaningful cultural engagement opportunities for the populace; supporting stakeholders through multiplying economic avenues; and fostering cultural diplomacy, they also emphasise an inclusive conception of culture that fosters both personal and collective wellbeing and steers clear of any mode of cultural exploitation. In doing so, these four policy drivers along with their respective models and approaches provide a suitable framework for this study. To what extent does cultural policy in Pakistan address these KPDs will be ascertained with a critical engagement with the available provincial and national culture policy documents. The gaps that this analysis identifies will inform the recommendations provided by this paper.

### **Cultural Policy in Pakistan**

It was as early as 1968 that the first “Report of the Standing Committee of Art & Culture” was presented to the Ministry of Education; however, it was set aside until the 1970s. In 1975, the Bhutto government complied the Faiz Report, named after the legendary Pakistani poet Faiz Ahmad Faiz;

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32 Trembath & Fielding, “Behind the Scenes,” 25.

however, once again, the report was not fully implemented. Pakistan's first ever formal Culture Policy was released on August 31, 1995, that recommended the establishment and upgradation of a cultural infrastructure.<sup>33</sup> However, the policy failed to be implemented until 2005 and was replaced by a fourth draft in 2008. This policy was also laid off given the devolution of the Federal Ministry of Culture in the wake of the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment. In 2016 Federal Ministry of Information, Broadcasting & National Heritage assigned to Lok Virsa the task of developing a national cultural policy that resulted in the launch of the first formal national culture policy in 2018 at the conclusion of the National Artists Convention and CPEC Cultural Caravan. Later, the government approved the "Charter of Demands" for the policy put together by over 500 artists from across the country. However, the task of developing a framework for the charter's implementation met little success as there was a change of government soon after.<sup>34</sup> The 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution resulted in the devolution of the culture ministry, giving provinces legislative and financial autonomy. This decentralization resulted in the formulation of provincial cultural policies focused on promoting local identities as integrating the nation. What follows is the analysis of the reference cultural policy documents currently available: Pakistan Culture Policy 2018; Culture Policy Khyber Pakhtunkha 2018; The Punjab Arts & Culture Policy Framework 2017-2022; and Culture Policy Punjab 2021.

### **Pakistan Culture Policy 2018(PCP)**

The PCP is Pakistan's first formal national cultural policy after the 1995 version that envisions a "futuristic vision of a

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33 Imdad Hussain, "The Strategic Side of Creative Industry," *Express Tribune*, March 21, 2021; <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2290478/the-strategic-side-of-creative-industry>.

34 "New Cultural Policy to Focus on Harmony, Ethnic Diversity," *Express Tribune*, June 8, 2018; <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1730358/new-cultural-policy-focus-harmony-ethnic-diversity>.

peaceful, prosperous, pluralistic and democratic society” through identifying 11 areas of policy intervention:<sup>35</sup>

1. Promotion of Visual Arts
2. Promotion of Theatre
3. Promotion of Music and other Performing Arts
4. Folklore and Traditional Culture
5. Archeological Sites and Presentation of the Tangible Culture
6. Inculcating Cultural Principles and Priorities into the Younger Generation
7. Intangible Culture, Literary Traditions and its Documentation and Promotion
8. Film, Radio and Television: A Mode of Promoting Diversity of Culture
9. Protecting the Culture of Neglected and Minority Communities
10. Endangered Cultures, Cultural Sites, Crafts and Languages
11. Promoting the Pluralistic Face of Pakistan Internationally

At a first glance, the PCP seems to be inclusive of all four KPDs above. In envisaging “a distinct, enriched and integrated national cultural identity”, the PCP directly addresses the first KPD, i.e., ‘Collective Identity’. Indeed, in repeatedly emphasizing the need for “a pluralist narrative” instead of “a monolithic worldview” which takes “sameness” as “harmony”, the PCP combines ‘the engineer approach’ with the unity in diversity approach. This is envisioned through a proposed institutionalization of culture through educational practices, which is a recurring theme through the

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35 Ministry of Information, Broadcasting, National History & Literary Heritage. *Pakistan Culture Policy 2018* (Government of Pakistan, 2018), 15.



policy draft. The draft emphasises “institutionalized teaching of the arts” through reforms in the school, college, and university curriculum, teacher training, and enrichment programs at both provincial and federal levels in order to propagate “a new pluralist narrative.”<sup>36</sup> Moreover, in stating the need for national “pride associated with our living heritage [that] needs to be transferred to the posterity” through underscoring the need to “inculcate cultural principles” into the youth, the policy is also inclusive of ‘the cultural maintenance approach’. It emphasizes the need “to draw from our past traditions of compassion and coexistence, take strength from the therapeutic value of culture and carry the nation forward in a peaceful manner.”<sup>37</sup>

In its desire to promote “the pluralistic face of Pakistan internationally”, the 11<sup>th</sup> area of policy intervention addresses the second KPD (reputation-building); however, this reference to “external stakeholders” is not accompanied by input on the “internal stakeholders”. Besides, comprehensive policy recommendations for collaboration with the stakeholders are lacking with little, if any, information on “linking support source with excellence,”<sup>38</sup> except for a passing reference to the need for “stakeholders to facilitate and empower the cultural industry.”<sup>39</sup> The policy focus is more provincial and national while recommendations for foreign culture policy or cultural diplomacy are not extensive. Indeed, while the policy document promises that ‘the UNESCO 2005 Convention’ will “be signed and ratified in near future;”<sup>40</sup> four years on, it has still not been ratified. Almost all areas are aimed at the third KPD (Social

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36 Ministry of Information, Broadcasting, National History & Literary Heritage. *Pakistan Culture Policy 2018*, 49.

37 Ministry of Information, Broadcasting, National History & Literary Heritage. *Pakistan Culture Policy 2018*, 17-18.

38 Trembath & Fielding, “Behind the Scenes,” 19.

39 *PCP*, 71.

40 *PCP*, 10.

Improvement); however, the description entails generic statements without outlining the specific spillover effects of the arts and culture in other areas of socio-economic development. Most content reflects an understanding of 'the cultural democracy approach' that conceives participation in arts and culture as a basic human right; however, 'the architect and the culture 2.0 approaches', especially with a focus on technology rarely figure. Likewise, while the fourth KPD (Contribution to Economy) is implicit in all areas of intervention in the form of concrete steps enlisted under each, there is no comprehensive mechanism conceived for their execution. Furthermore, whereas the international policy literature this KPD focuses almost exclusively on the creative economy, the PCP neither makes any reference to CCIs nor reflects any knowledge or understanding of their current international standing. In this respect, the PCP reads like the most dated drafts of all policy documents under consideration here as it makes no reference to cultural and creative industries.

### **Culture Policy Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2018 (CPKP)**

The CPKP published in January 2018 by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the first such provincial policy that includes 7 areas of intervention:

1. Cultural & Natural heritage
2. Visual Art & Craft
3. Performing Art & Celebrations
4. Languages & Literature
5. Gastronomy/Cuisine
6. New Media/Interactive Media
7. Cultural & Creative Industries

Its goals and objectives include creating "an enabling environment in which Culture Heritage Sector can flourish and play a significant and defining role in nation building,

safeguarding of identity and socioeconomic development.”<sup>41</sup> As part of its extended objectives, the policy mentions all four KPDs. The first (Collective Identity) is made obvious in the policy’s “aim to develop a united, vibrant and prosperous community with its distinctive identity, personality and collective confidence & pride.”<sup>42</sup> Interestingly, however, each mention of the first KPD is also reinforced by the need to promote diversity hence investing in both the engineer and the diversity approaches. Besides, the unified identity that the policy draft conceives pertains to an indigenous identity reinforcing the national, religious, and social values.<sup>43</sup> Finally, in emphasizing the need “to walk into our forefather's footprints” while “imprinting footsteps for our descendants”, the policy reflects the generational transmission approach as part of the first KPD while also conceiving culture as other than “static”.

As for the second KPD, the policy makes references to the need for the “involvement of civil societies for promotion of cultural heritage at all levels including national and international”. While this is more advanced than the PCP’s passing reference in this context, the CPKP also does not list tangible steps for its implementation. Like the PCP, however, the CPKP also is invested in the third KPD (Social Improvement); however, the focus of this is mainly the architect approach whereby a social welfare model is recommended whereas the cultural democracy and culture 3.0 approaches are only implicitly stated. Finally, the CPKP significantly departs from the PCP in listing cultural and creative industries as a distinct area of policy intervention. The policy draft recognizes the potential of culture for

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41 Directorate of Culture, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Culture Policy for the People of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2018), 16.

42 Directorate of Culture, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Culture Policy for the People of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*, 14.

43 Directorate of Culture, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Culture Policy for the People of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*, 32.

“sustainable economic development” and its linkage with the “digital environment.”<sup>44</sup> However, it switches between listing CCIs as an independent intangible heritage alongside tangible heritage and including the latter within the CCIs. Besides, policy input for the CCIs is generic with no recommendations for specific sectors while the international dimension of the CCIs is also lacking. Where the draft does comment on the CCIs, it adopts the welfare model as opposed to the culture 2.0 or growth and innovation model.

As is evident from this discussion, the CPKP is a relatively updated document that reflects a better understanding of the key international cultural policy drivers compared to the PCP. However, one of the major gaps of the policy is the lack of a monitoring and evaluation mechanism, which renders implementation, already a challenge in Pakistan, uncertain.

### **The Punjab Arts & Culture Policy Framework 2017-2022 (PACPF)**

In February 2017, the Punjab government published its Arts & Culture Policy Framework for 2017-2022. The policy is envisioned to “revive and protect the cultural heritage of Punjab and to promote cultural activity and creativity for the economic, social and spiritual/personal well-being of the people of Punjab.”<sup>45</sup> The draft lists ten cultural sectors and five corresponding policy objectives:

1. Literature & Publishing Industry
2. Performing Arts (Music, Theatre, Dance)
3. Visual and Digital Arts (Art, Film, Digital media)
4. Tangible Heritage, Tourism & Festivals

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44 Directorate of Culture, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. *Culture Policy for the People of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*, 44-45.

45 Information & Culture Department, Government of the Punjab. *Arts & Culture Policy Framework for Punjab, Pakistan: Cultural Revival Roadmap (2017-2021)*. (Government of the Punjab, 2017), iv.

5. Intangible Heritage-Language, Craft & Traditional Knowledge & Gastronomy
6. Design (Architecture, Fashion, Textile, Advertising)
7. Creative Entrepreneurship
8. Culture & Education
9. Culture & Print, Electronic News Media
10. Culture & Gender

In its rationale to build “collective identity and social cohesion” while also “celebrating diversity within the culture,” the policy incorporates the engineer approach with the unity in diversity as part of the first KPD. Indeed, in identifying the exploitation of religion to forge a “singular identity” and the “exclusion of centuries of history and heritage”,<sup>46</sup> the policy builds on those two approaches to underscore the third approach i.e., the transmission of culture. However, once again, while the draft’s proposition of fighting terrorism through cultural reservoir addresses the first KPD, it does not provide concrete steps for implementation. The PACPF also addresses the second KPD in stressing the need for “image building of the country” to “attract further investment in the region and its people.” However, this is limited to “external stakeholders” while the notion of linking support with excellence through internal stakeholders is not dwelt on. While the third KPD (Social Improvement) was the major concern of the PCP and the CPKP, the PACPF invests equally in social improvement and economic contribution. One of the five policy objectives is aimed exclusively at “providing opportunities for economic development” by including an explicit reference to “creative and cultural industries.”<sup>47</sup> The draft, nevertheless, represents a limited

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46 Information & Culture Department, Government of the Punjab. Arts & Culture Policy Framework for Punjab, 10.

47 Information & Culture Department, Government of the Punjab. Arts & Culture Policy Framework for Punjab, v.

understanding of the international literature on CCIs, and its policy input in this context is sporadic. The PACPF also provides a “situational analysis of the cultural sector” explaining both existing strengths and challenges; while strengths include heritage sites, sufi pluralist philosophy, handicrafts, artists, and new media practitioners, the greatest challenge is terrorism.<sup>48</sup> However, concrete steps regarding fighting radicalism are not provided in detail. Besides, in omitting solid policy input for CCIs, the fourth KPD is not explored in depth.

While the CPKP reflected a more advanced understanding of the CCIs, the new media, and technology, the PACPF is more specific in conceiving a monitoring and evaluation framework, which is divided into two separate tiers. The top tier includes the CM Taskforce on Culture that includes its Chairman, the Secretary I & C, the Additional Secretary (Culture), the heads of the attached cultural bodies (PUCAR, LAC, PILAC), and selected political representatives and cultural professionals. The lower tier includes the executive committee of the Punjab Council of the Arts (PUCAR) and the resident directors of eight (8) divisional art councils who are assigned the work of implementation while also identifying a need for reforms.

### **Culture Policy Punjab 2021 (CPP)<sup>49</sup>**

In 2021, the Punjab government launched yet another cultural policy with a new title; however, the policy draft reads like a recycling of the PACPF 2017-2022. The mission, vision, and objectives of the CPP are practically the same as the PACPF with some phrasal amendments. The sub-sectoral division is also the same except for the addition of Gastronomy which figured in the CPKP.

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48 Information & Culture Department, Government of the Punjab. Arts & Culture Policy Framework for Punjab, 9-10.

49 Information & Culture Department. *Culture Policy Punjab 2021* (Government of the Punjab, 2021).

Together, an overview of all the cultural policy documents discussed above reflects a focus on the preservation of cultural heritage; cultural infrastructure; cultural institutions; cultural education and training; tourism; and promotion of diversity. Less focused areas are the development and regulation of cultural and creative industries; specific policy recommendations for cultural diplomacy and place branding; and an appreciation of the massive economic potential of CCIs for Pakistan's socioeconomic development. Thus, while all four key policy drivers of international cultural policy literature are implied in these documents, they are neither fully explored nor represented uniformly. For instance, all four policy documents underscore the value of diversity; however, it is not adequately reflected in the policy recommendations. At times, policy documents are self-contradictory; while both the CPKP and PACPF underscore inclusivity, they also bemoan "cultural invasions",<sup>50</sup> thus regressing to the engineer approach, which alone cannot materialize the social and economic value of culture in a globalized world. Indeed, the need for intercultural dialogue is lacking in all policy documents, apart from the CPKP's passing reference. Likewise, while the policies emphasise "freedom of expression", they also ratify censor board as reflective of cultural "values",<sup>51</sup> overpassing its potential for freedom of expression or lack thereof. A central theme running through all the policy documents is the need to promote culture through education reforms, curriculum, and training;<sup>52</sup> however, these comments are generic without explicit policy recommendations. Another major area of cultural policy that is not adequately addressed in these documents is foreign cultural policy and cultural diplomacy. While the documents make references to reputation-building through culture, cultural diplomacy is not dwelt on as a

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50 PCP, 18; PACPF, 21.

51 CPKP, 34.

52 CPKP, 33; PACPF, 26.

central component of contemporary cultural policy discourse. Finally, all three policies refer to culture's economic potential without dwelling on cultural and creative industries within an international framework *vis-à-vis* the development of cultural products and services for job creation and GDP growth. For instance, the CPKP mentions Peshawari "chappal" in passing as symbolic of the "rich creativity and talent of the region;"<sup>53</sup> however, it does not reflect on its export potential as a cultural good given the presence of an international market reflected in its appropriation by foreign designers. Finally, all policies understate implementation, monitoring, and evaluation challenges that have marred all cultural policy endeavours over the past several decades.

### **Conclusion**

The present paper analysed the current provincial and national cultural policy documents in Pakistan *vis-à-vis* the key policy drivers in the international cultural policy literature. The research concludes that a comprehensive cultural policy that addresses the needs of a multicultural world reshaped by the new media and technology and that links culture and creativity to innovation and development is not reflected in these documents. Such a policy must draw on the international successful models of cultural policies and the CCIs as well as the vision of UNESCO and UNCTAD. In light of the above review, this section lists major findings of this study and provides relevant policy recommendations.

### **Findings**

Currently, Pakistan does not have a comprehensive cultural policy in implementation that aligns with the international models of cultural policy developed over the past seventy years. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab have provincial cultural policies; however, they also need to be updated in line with the changing global trends *vis-à-vis* cultural and creative industries. Pakistan does not have a formal foreign

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53 CPKP, 32.



cultural policy, therefore, a huge potential for cultural diplomacy remains untapped. Where cultural policies are in place, a major challenge is effective implementation. Besides bureaucratic inertia and disinclination towards innovation, one of the key challenges has been the subsumption of the National Heritage and Culture Division (NHCD) into the Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training and the distribution of the cultural sectors across various ministries whose collaboration is required for effective implementation. Another constant dilemma is frequent change in political leadership whereby each incoming leadership is focused on “launching” a new policy as opposed to focusing on implementation and evaluation.

### **Recommendations**

To begin with, Pakistan needs to ratify the UNESCO 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions that is long overdue. This will allow the country to showcase its cultural diversity; avail UNESCO funding for CCI training projects; and boost CCI sectors for economic growth and cultural diplomacy. A Pakistan Cultural Policy Taskforce (PCPT) can be created that consists of a committee of experts with representation from all provinces and is assigned the task to draft, implement, and monitor a comprehensive cultural policy. The committee can work under the joint guidance of the following ministries: Federal Education, and Professional Training; National Heritage and Culture; Communication, Commerce; Foreign Affairs; Information and Broadcasting; Information, Technology, and Telecom; Interprovincial Coordination, and provincial culture ministries. The Committee should devise “A Plan of Action” on developing a national and a foreign cultural policy in consultation with stakeholders including federal and provincial ministries; cultural institutions and organizations; academic and research institutions; and civil society to solicit recommendations. The goals and objectives of this cultural policy should draw on the key policy drivers in the international cultural policy literature as well as the UNESCO

2005 Convention stipulations. Provincial governments must formulate provincial committees to draft (Sindh and Balochistan) and update (Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) their respective cultural policies that also incorporates the creative economy. The PCPT should also be assigned the task of implementation and evaluation.

Pakistan has an extensive diplomatic presence globally that can be deployed to enhance its soft image through cultural endeavours. A Pakistan Cultural Foundation (PCF) can be established under these missions on the models of the British Council, the United States Educational Foundation, the Goethe-Institute, the Japan Foundation, etc. The core vision of the PCF shall be the deployment of culture for economic and diplomacy objectives. The PCF's official mandate shall include the establishment of (i) a Pakistan Studies program to promote understanding of Pakistani culture and history to enhance its international image; (ii) educational and cultural exchange programs on the pattern of Fulbright, Commonwealth, Erasmus, or German DAAD to offer competitive fellowships to foreign nationals with the long-term objective of creating an international body of Pakistani alumni who will project the country's soft image globally; and (iii) literary and cultural festivals that feature Pakistani art, literature, music, dance, theatre, cinema, cuisine, clothing, handicrafts, etc. to enhance their market. Finally, the PCF can be engaged to hold the annual NAPA International Performing Arts festival in foreign countries to bring together a network of artists to promote their work and explore areas of collaboration.

Given Pakistan's multifaceted challenges, the country must realize the cultural dimension of social and economic development fully. Countering violent extremism, social volatility, and myriad economic woes necessitates that the country invests in a solid policy framework to address these challenges; to advocate equality and diversity; to rectify its international image; and to exploit the economic potential of its cultural reservoir. The first step in this regard is a strategic approach to cultural engagement and promotion through the

legislation of a national and foreign cultural policy that promotes an inclusive cultural identity; sustainable economic growth and development; and international diplomacy. Indeed, Pakistan's rich cultural and creative heritage has massive untapped potential that can be harnessed with effective policies at the provincial, national, and international levels.