

## **Framing the Pashtun Question: A Study of PTM's Political Discourse in the 2024 Pashtun National Jirga**

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### **Abstract**

The Pashtun National Jirga has emerged as a critical institution for restoring social order in the Pashtun belt. This paper examines the speeches of the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) leadership, particularly those of Manzoor Pashteen, at the Pashtun National Jirga in October 2024, through a qualitative content analysis. This paper adopts Framing theory to analyse how PTM leadership has diagnosed socio-economic and political grievances, proposed effective solutions, and motivated a collective resistance. The findings through frames not only identified systematic marginalisation, historical trauma, and state negligence in the speeches of the PTM leader but also called for the strengthening of indigenous institutions like Jirga, demilitarisation, economic justice, and legal reforms.

**Key Words:** Jirga, Grievances, Manzoor Pashteen, Pashtun, Marginalisation, Demilitarisation, Identity, And State Repression.

### **Introduction**

The Pashtun Qaumi Jirga has become a crucial institution for raising a unified voice regarding the decades-long grievances of the Pashtuns. The research aims to analyse the socio-political and economic grievances articulated by the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) leadership during the Pashtun Qaumi Jirga, held from 11 October to 14 October 2024. According to the Pashto Descriptive Dictionary, “Jirga” originates from the language. This term denotes gathering a few or a large number of people. Traditionally, the Pashtun Jirga is a “tribal” conflict resolution mechanism with a history spanning centuries in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It has a history of functioning as a critical institution for conflict resolution among Pashtuns to maintain social order. Furthermore, Jirga still carries potential in a rural commune (Yousaf, 2021). Jirga is usually a traditional platform that embeds consensus-based decisions to protect the fundamental rights of the Pashtuns. The Jirga has unified the voices of different segments of Pashtuns amidst a surge in terrorism, economic challenges, and displacement.

Participants were urged to discuss and decide on the most urgent matters affecting our people. The Pashtun belts in Pakistan have endured immense adversities, particularly during the U.S.-led “war on terror.” Aligning with the US against

terrorism has consequently felt the urgency of seven military operations backed by the US in the tribal areas of Pakistan. This destabilised the Pashtun region and created catastrophes, including the displacement of locals, refugees, casualties, and the destruction of businesses (Jafri, 2021). The trust between the state and local Pashtuns has further eroded after the surge of terrorism, particularly post-Taliban return to Kabul in 2021.

In response, these tribal communities established alternative dispute resolution mechanisms that supplement the state's formal court system, focusing on consultation and consensus to restore justice. They became victims of the 'war on terror' in four distinct ways. First, they suffered directly from the war. Curfews limited access to basic facilities such as healthcare, water, and food, and collateral damage through firings, airstrikes, and bombings compelled the locals to leave their region. The Taliban had started advocating extremism through local youth, especially among employed graduates, to fight against the US and its allies, including Pakistan. More importantly, the youth were encouraged to engage in extorting the local business community and in executing tribal vendettas.

Tribal elders resisted the oppression of their people, and the Taliban began assassinating them and targeting their families. Third, government-backed peace committees, intended to maintain law and order, have often contributed to violence by targeting barber shops, music stores, and girls' schools under the pretext of enforcing religious norms. Finally, the integration of thousands of Taliban defectors into Pashtun areas has exacerbated ethnic profiling, with state policies conflating Pashtun with extremism, leading to harassment at checkpoints, extortion, land mines, enforced disappearance, and targeted killings of tribal elders (Jafri, 2021).

Academic studies on ethnic marginalisation and social movements are leapfrogging. PTM is mostly covered based on its historical roots and political implications. The discursive strategies used by the PTM leaders to frame the grievances of the Pashtuns are still untheorized in the academic literature. This makes academic enquiry imperative into the textual and thematic dimensions of the discourse created in the Pashtun Quami Jirga (PQJ) by PTM leaders. The research is not intended to endorse or oppose the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) objectives; rather, it aims to seek an academically rigorous analysis of the PTM's leader discourse.

### **Literature Review**

The decade of the 1970s was marked by intense Cold War rivalry between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. In 1979, Afghanistan became a playground for the global power competition, which has destabilized the whole region. Pashtuns, being on both sides of the border, were goaded to engage in the foreign war between the US and USSR. Consequently, internal groups were created and supported opposing groups; one was in favour of Mujahedin backed by the US through Pakistan, and the other was staunch supporters of the USSR. After the withdrawal of the USSR forces, internal divisions fueled civil war over maximizing political power. When the Mujahedin controlled the driving seat of the political wheel in Kabul with the help of Pakistan, they were blamed for supporting and having a strong alliance with Al Qaeda after the 9/11 attacks. In response, the US initiated a war against terrorism and to topple the Taliban government in Kabul (Khan, Wazir, & Khan, 2019).

The paradoxical role of the Pakistan military after the events of 9/11 was to launch operations merely against the “Bad Taliban” while simultaneously appeasing the “Good Taliban”. Pashtuns were the major affected ethnic group in counterinsurgency operations in the region. The colonial-era laws, like the Frontier Crimes Regulation (FCR), are how the state has been isolating the FATA from the rest of Pakistan. This further increased resistance against the state-imposed atrocities (Zahoor, 2020). The ambivalent stance of Pakistan during the ‘war on terror,’ such as supporting and giving safe havens to the leaders of the ousted Taliban. On the other hand, encouraging all efforts of the ‘war on terror’ has brought severe consequences in the Pashtun belt.

The influx of Afghan Taliban fighters into the Pashtun belt, particularly FATA, has served as a home for the Taliban fighters to resurge in insurgency activities. The Pakistani state mobilised an army in this region to prevent any radicalisation and extremism within Pakistan. This resulted in the region being a militarised zone. The damages done to the local population, such as the killing of innocent civilians, devastation of social life, and frequent strikes by the United States, have alienated the local Pashtuns (Stanikzai, 2021). In 2007, the local and foreign militants started fighting against the State of Pakistan under the umbrella of the newly developed militant organisation TTP (Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan). Political chiefs raised their voices regarding the development of militancy in Waziristan.

The local populations were suffering from both actors, the violence of militant outfits and the response of the state to their activities. After several military operations, it was claimed that militancy had been rooted out in the FATA, including other Pashtun belts. However, this assumption was proven wrong after the Taliban regained power in Afghanistan in 2021. Numerous terror-related activities were noted in the Pashtun belt over the last four years, which have again destabilised the region (Mahsud, 2024). Pakistan's government plans to launch military operations against terrorism in the Pashtun region of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly after the criticism of Chinese officials over the deteriorating security environment for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project. It has invoked a strong response from the Pashtun, who have already endured the previous military operations. Afrasiab Khattak, a former senator and senior political leader of the National Democratic Movement, stressed that Azm-e-Istehkam will lead to intense bloodshed and massive displacement.

The leadership of the ethno-nationalist movement, like PTM, is organically derived from grassroots social work, unlike under political patronage. It is important to keep in mind that the PTM leadership is mostly educated youth, particularly students who have humble backgrounds. More importantly, they have experienced displacement, violence, and profiling (Borthakur, 2024). PTM originated from the internally displaced university students' movement that started in war-torn South Waziristan. Initially, the movement was meant to advocate solely for the Mehsud, a Pashtun tribe. They got attention from the Pashtun community from city to city. When they reached Peshawar on the third day. They decided that the Mehsud Tahafuz Movement (MTM) should be renamed the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement. Because of the grievances that all the Pashtuns faced. The first Pashtun Jirga was organised on

Feb 1, 2018, in the form of a sit-in. The then-government imposed a ban on the movement to prohibit them from organising the Jirga due to concerns about national security and sovereignty (VOA News, 2024).

The permission was granted with the assistance of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government to hold the event. The jirga will focus on autonomy (defining the self-governance of Pashtun lands and how to protect the rights of Pashtuns to make decisions about their future). Language & Culture (preserving and promoting the Pashto language, literature, and cultural heritage). Geography (safeguarding the territorial integrity of Pashtun lands). Economic Conditions (Creating pathways for economic development and reconstruction after years of conflict). A core objective of the Jirga is to prevent the recurrence of foreign-imposed conflicts, especially the spectre of a renewed “dollar-sponsored war” on Pashtun soil. The Pashtun belt has suffered from the devastation and displacement caused by the decades-long war. The Jirga will provide a collective response to the internal and external forces that are destabilising the region again. The Jirga is planned to discuss the pathways for restoring peace, justice, dignity, and self-determination. The Jirga has invited every individual, irrespective of their tribe and profession, to contribute to the collective wisdom in shaping the prospects of the Pashtun community (Pashtun Jirga, 2024).

The demands that were stressed in the speeches of Manzoor Pashtun have been endorsed by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly by forming a committee and a subcommittee to present all the suggestions about the PQJ demands to the chief minister as the chair, along with 45 other lawmakers. Demands such as restoration of peace, armed and unarmed withdrawal from the region within two months, demilitarisation, war damages, and advocating for the martyrs and missing persons would be considered seriously (Dawn News, 2024). After creating PTM in 2018, they have used nonviolent methods, including jalsas, sit-ins, demonstrations, and long marches to advocate for the rights of Pashtuns. They used Jalsa, one of the effective tactics, to disseminate their message. Around 50,000 people attend these gatherings to listen to the speeches of their leaders (International Centre on Nonviolent Conflict, 2021)

#### PIPS 2024 70% BLA and TTP, afghanis

The concept of framing in social movement studies was derived from Goffman's 1974 work. Social movements embody ideas and pre-existing meanings stemming from unexpected events and the existing structural setup. However, the actors involved in movements perform as agents who continuously engage in efforts to produce, interpret, and maintain meanings. This is meant to influence diverse audiences such as supporters, antagonists, and neutral observers (Benford & Snow, 2000). The application of framing theory is incredibly important to understand how PTM leaders like Manzoor Pashteen frame grievances. His diagnostic frame identifies problems from which Pashtuns are suffering: enforced disappearances, human rights violations, and socio-economic marginalisation. Similarly, the prognostic frame identifies solutions, including convening the Qaumi Jirga, demilitarisation, and greater inclusion in socio-economic affairs. Lastly, the motivational frame asks for peaceful resistance and unity among Pashtuns.

### **Theoretical Framework and Methodology:**

Goffman (1974) argued that frames are the “schemata of interpretation.” Frames help to make events or occurrences meaningful and thereby function to organise experience and guide action. Collective action frames also perform this interpretive function by simplifying and condensing aspects of the “world out there,” but they are intended to mobilise potential adherents and constituents, to garner support, and to demobilise antagonists.” (Snow & Benford, 1988) This study adopts framing theory (Snow & Benford) to analyse how socio-political and economic grievances are articulated by the PTM leaders, particularly Manzoor Pashteen. It encompasses three main dimensions: diagnostic frames help identify problems, prognostic frames aid in finding solutions, and motivational frames encourage collective efforts.

The study has used Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) to understand the meaning and interpretation of the PTM leadership, particularly Manzoor Pashteen's socio-political and economic grievances. QCA is rooted in qualitative research traditions and provides a systematic approach to analysing the content form of communication. The analysis process has three phases: data collection, coding, and interpretation. At first, the speeches of Manzoor Pashteen were transcribed from Pashto into English, and relevant textual material was selected based on the research question. An important characteristic of QCA is its collaborative coding. Although QCA can be performed individually, more than one author will enhance reliability and ensure that the analysis contains different interpretive perspectives, reducing subjectivity and allowing a more nuanced understanding of the material (Kracauer, 1952). QCA is considered different from other qualitative methods mainly because of its focus on what is being said and how it is being communicated while acknowledging both the form and the content of the speaker. (Schreier, 2012) This makes QCA applicable for understanding socio-political narratives, like in the speeches of Manzoor Pashteen.

The primary data consists of four long speeches, each with a duration of 22, 40, 32, and 26 minutes, respectively; the total time is approximately 2 hours and 20 minutes. The speeches were derived from Facebook and then translated manually from Pashto to English. Being a native Pashto speaker and part of the Pashtun community, the researcher knows linguistic understandings and cultural familiarity, which are essential for accurate transcription. Such knowledge is crucial, particularly in understanding the emotional and historical appeals that are used in the speeches.

### **Research Objectives**

The study aims to critically analyse the socio-political and economic grievances of the Pashtuns, articulated by the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) through Manzoor Pashteen's speeches at the October 2024 Pashtun National Jirga. By adopting Snow and Benford's framing theory, the study seeks to understand by using diagnostic frames how PTM constructs grievances, employing prognostic frames to explore the solutions, and motivational frames for collective action to combat the repression.

### **Research Questions:**

- How do PTM leaders, particularly Manzoor Pashteen, frame and articulate the grievances of the Pashtun community?
- What socio-political, economic, and cultural grievances are identified or presented as the primary causes of Pashtuns' sufferings?
- What remedies did the PTM leaders propose to address the grievances faced by the Pashtuns?

### **Analysis and Findings:**

This part involves Snow and Benford's framing theory to understand the speeches of Manzoor Pashteen at the October 2024 Pashtun National Jirga. Three mainframes, such as diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational, are used to dissect the speeches. More importantly, these frames are further divided into sub-themes that are thematically coded and explained using qualitative content analysis. Findings show how PTM constructs Pashtuns' grievances and seeks their solutions.

#### **1. Diagnostic Framing: Understanding the Causes of Pashtun Grievances**

Diagnostic framing plays an important role in the context of social movement theory to understand how the movement frames the problem and assigns responsibility or blame. During the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) in October 2024, diagnostic framing reflects the discursive strategy to reveal the lingering structural violence, identity marginalisation, state negligence, and militarization.

##### **1.1. Trauma and Dehumanisation**

In the speeches of Manzoor Pashteen, historical trauma is used by mentioning stories of mothers who lost children, women and children who were killed, and elders who were mercilessly murdered. "76584 Pashtuns were killed in this; almost 9522 casualties were killed alone, and over 213 women were killed in their homes." He also mentioned the marred schools, mosques, madrassas, universities, and churches. The killing of children and women is an unprecedented breach of human rights. "We have seen wars in the world, but there has never been a war in which they planned to target their children in educational institutions. Similarly, there is no war in which they have only planned to kill women. History has no precedent for such tragedies." These examples in the speech are intended to attract moral support and frame Pashtuns' anguish as a severe humanitarian catastrophe.

##### **1.2. State Negligence and Complicity**

Manzoor Pashteen, in his speeches, highlighted that the state is supposed to provide and secure fundamental rights for its people. Conversely, in the context of Pashtuns, the state of Pakistan is creating hurdles in demanding justice. Despite the warnings from intelligence agencies such as ISI and MI, PTM leaders bravely organised the Jirga. "No one was giving out loudspeakers for rent because the establishment ISI, MIA warned not to provide any speakers to us." This narrative reflects that the state is acting as a bottleneck against the democratic participation of Pashtuns. Similarly, the political elite is not serious about the grievances of Pashtuns. He mentioned, "The Missing Persons Bill of 2021 hasn't been passed in the Senate. Until this colonial system is here, PTM will give suggestions that this system cannot resolve

this issue.” Such narratives explicitly demonstrate the unresponsiveness and lack of interest in the problems of Pashtuns.

### **1.3. Ethnic Profiling and Identity Suppression**

Identity politics is a major factor in the diagnostic framing adopted by Pashteen's speeches. As he said, “Allah created different nations for identification, but they eliminated our identity.” This implies that the grievances of Pashtuns are interlinked with historical and regional dynamics. Ethnic groups like Punjabi, Baloch, and Kashmiri have their identities preserved and are the same in more than one country. More importantly, the 1893 Durand-Ruel Agreement, colonial and post-colonial, has systematically fragmented the Pashtun identity. He raised questions: “Why don't Germans or the French face this? Because every nation has a country that protects its language, culture, and values.” This argument leads to the claim that the Pashtuns are being targeted, and attempts are being made to erode their identity.

### **1.4. Militarization and Displacement**

The speeches of Manzoor Pashteen have repeatedly mentioned the impacts of militarization on the Pashtun region. The militarization under the guise of operations against terrorism has resulted in massive displacement and infrastructural destruction. The consequences of the displacement are documented, showing that over 5.7 million people became internally displaced people (IDPs), with 2.3 million officially recognised. He narrated an emotional story to demonstrate the impacts of the displacement. “There was a girl child who died surrounded by her family. They said we are IDPs, there was not enough space to sleep, and she was bitten by a snake.” His rhetorical strategy showcased the military's responsibility in fostering terrorism and then countering it. He stated, “When operations were launched in FATA and South Waziristan against Nek Muhammad Wazir, it is important to remember that the Pakistani military trained him in the 1990s against the USSR. Who trained him? No one from our community.” Pashteen, in his examples with quantified data, sought to frame Pakistan's military policies as the main causes of Pashtuns' suffering from terrorism.

## **2. Prognostic Framing**

Prognostic framing is used to understand the solutions and strategies suggested in Manzoor Pashtun's speeches. It has discovered the solutions in community mobilisation, respect for human rights, and institutional reforms.

### **2.1. Restoring the Jirga as an Alternative Governance Mechanism**

Revitalisation of the Jirga setup was suggested to address the grievances of the Pashtuns. The Jirga should be inclusive and embody indigenous governance. Manzoor Pashteen, in his speeches, apprised the audience, “Each profession will have to provide proposals for the whole community. Each group must select its leader, and the total number of leaders will be 80.” This collective organ will address dispute resolution, particularly those among different tribes. It will also be responsible for engaging with national and international organisations to present the case of the Pashtun community. According to him, the Jirga has historical value, as

it was stated by Ahmad Shah and Mirwais Baba. Moreover, the members would be given infrastructure for administrative purposes, which reflects addressing concerns from the grassroots level.

## **2.2. Demands for Demilitarisation and Peace**

In the speeches of Manzoor, the recurring demand was the removal of both the military and militants from the territory of the Pashtuns. He has given a specific time limit to leave. “The military corps and the Taliban must leave our land within 60 days.” He also announced that if they didn't leave within this period, a huge civic mobilisation would be requested. “We request the Jirga to nominate at least 3,000 unarmed people from every district to participate in peaceful demonstrations... 240,000 in total.” The same rhetoric was again reiterated in the Jirga verdict: “If within two months, actors who are undermining peace could get out of here, the Jirga will make its arrangements to expel these actors.” This narrative highlights the urgency of mobilising Pashtuns to resist militarization and further violence.

## **2.3. Political Inclusion and Legal Reforms**

In Manzoor Pashteen's speeches, he urged the unblocking of the National Identity Cards and the release of the prisoners, particularly PTM members. Revisit the Missing Persons Bill to transparently resolve the issues. He also institutionalised demands: “The Jirga rejected the military courts for the Pashtun.” “The Jirga demanded to unblock national identity cards, release political prisoners... and form a committee on extrajudicial killings.” According to Manzoor Pashteen, the current legal framework is rooted in a colonial mindset, which is to control the people; it is not about the progress of individuals. He said, “This colonial setup is not for the people; it is for the individual... Until this colonial system is here, PTM will give suggestions that this system cannot resolve this issue.” He also questioned the efficiency of the judiciary of Pakistan: “Is there a single court in Pakistan that can provide justice? I ask the Jirga to raise their hands, and they say there is such a court.” These narratives propose political inclusion and legal reforms rather than only discussing the issues faced by the Pashtun community.

## **2.4. Restoration of Economic Rights**

One of the most important prognostic objectives was to achieve economic sovereignty. Manzoor Pashteen argued that Pashtuns haven't capitalised on trade routes across the Durand Line. “The Jirga demanded that, from now on, in the Durand Line, all gates used for border crossing will be governed under the law... that was implemented from 1893 to 2010.” More importantly, he mentioned that Pashtuns' energy and resources are not giving them any benefits in return. “No one [should] pay more than 5 rupees per unit... if the electricity has stopped or been cut off, then the Jirga will cut off the wires that are giving electricity to other provinces.” He suggested that the Jirga conduct a survey of natural resources in the Pashtun belt. “The Jirga demanded a committee to highlight which natural resources are in the interest of local people.”



### **3. Motivational Framing**

In social movements, it is crucial to understand how the leaders of the movement encourage and motivate people to make collective efforts. In the Pashtun National Jirga of 2024, Manzoor Pashteen's speech contained several examples of motivational framing to mobilise the Pashtun community, which are as follows.

#### **3.1. Youth Mobilisation and Emotional Appeals**

In the speeches of Manzoor Pashteen, youth was one of the main elements in seeking their attention towards Pashtun concerns. In the opening speech at the Jirga, he called out to the youth, "It was your dream to gather all the elders of the Pashtun community, and we did that." Here, Pashteen is emphasising the collective demand of calling the Jirga and giving them credit for the success of organising the Jirga. More importantly, he also appreciated the sacrifices made by the youth. "You have sacrificed your head but didn't bow it down." In this motivational framing, he is seeking the moral resilience and strong commitment of the young generation.

Manzoor Pashteen also urged the youth to participate in the Jirga instead of expressing their frustration with marginalisation through other channels. He advised them to abstain from internal strife and value elders (Mashran). Rhetoric like "I will sell my kidneys to prevent any mismanagement in this Jirga" is a demonstration of his commitment to participate and make the Jirga a legitimate political platform.

#### **3.2. Pashtun Unity Across Political Lines**

Unity is used as another motivational framing, particularly in the presence of political diversity in the Jirga. Pashtun mentioned multiple times that "all Pashtuns are united, sitting under one tent," emphasising a golden opportunity and a rare moment after a very long time to discuss all issues. This motivational frame acts to ignite the sense of collective identity and reinforce that the whole ethnic group is suffering. Moreover, it also reinforces Pan-Pashtun sentiments and fosters antipathy towards factionalism.

#### **3.3. Moral Righteousness and Religious Legitimacy**

Religion played an important role in motivational framing, as Manzoor Pashteen cogently referred to the Quranic verses such as "Allah does not change the circumstances of any nation unless the nation itself desires to change." He encouraged the adherents that political emancipation and human rights are also endorsed in Islam, which is your religion. He also castigated the efforts to erase the Pashtuns' identity by referring to the Quran: "Allah said in the Quran that I created humans in groups for identification, but they have destroyed our identity." He sought to enforce the importance of collective efforts to abate the suffering of Pashtuns through religious duty.

#### **3.4. Sacrifice and Historical Continuity**

Manzoor Pashteen, in his speeches, used anecdotes of a child who died from a snakebite in the IDP camp and his own story, "We were IDPs; there was not enough space to sleep". These served to remind the audience that the cost of silence will

lead to this happening again in the future. He also gave historical examples of struggle and suffering, mainly the Anglo-Afghan Wars, the Durand Line Agreement, and the war against terrorism. According to him, the present situation is a consequence of these events. These narratives are meant to remind the audience that it's time to stand against such imminent events in the future. He told the listeners that the Pashtun territory was in dire need of peace and harmony. He used phrases like "this is your land" and "the land needs security, not me" to ensure that the Pashtun belt has endured a lot, and now it needs to take action to change our fate.

### **Discussion**

The paper has adopted Snow and Benford's (1988) framing theory to understand how the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement, through its leader Manzoor Pashteen's speeches at the October 2024 Pashtun National Jirga, has framed the Pashtun issues. Moreover, how and why specific remedies were made and mobilised collective action. Diagnostic framing was mainly used to identify the issues that have blighted the lives of Pashtuns for several decades and to assign blame. Manzoor Pashteen invoked historical trauma, state negligence, erasure of identity, and militarization in the Pashtun territory. He also used statistics to make the grievances more appealing and to legitimise his claim to justice. This framing is also used to show that Pashtuns are not merely politically ignored but targeted with violence and negligence.

In the prognostic framing, it is used to propose solutions that align with indigenous cultural institutions, addressing existing issues. These include introducing legal reforms, supporting demilitarisation, encouraging economic sovereignty, and the revival of the Jirga. These proposals aim to alleviate the suffering of Pashtuns and are rooted in cultural authenticity and democratic norms. These are also an open rejection of externally imposed efforts to bring peace to the Pashtun region, particularly through military operations and central authority. Lastly, motivational framing is adopted to analyse how collective actions were allured in the speeches of Manzoor Pashteen. He broached religious duty, youth participation, shared identity, and historical struggle in his speeches. He also bridged the political divide by reinforcing collective dignity, recalling past sacrifices, and referring to Quranic verses to change the fortune of Pashtuns from bearing the brunt of terrorism to bringing peace and prosperity.

This has expanded the scope of social movements and ethnic mobilisation in Pakistan. Scholars like Shah (2018) and Ali (2021) have described PTM as a movement seeking fundamental rights through non-violent means. There is a lack of scholarship on how the PTM has maintained its legitimacy and is seeking support from the grassroots level. This research work has attempted to fill the gap by discussing how PTM has framed its grievances, especially where formal channels are not available to them to contest the state narrative. The findings of the study have contributed to how ethnic movements like PTM use farming to disseminate their narrative and seek attention, particularly in a state where security policies are mostly shaped by the military. How Manzoor Pashteen's use of trauma that he has faced himself and other people, destruction of the homes and markets, and casualties are translated into severe criticism of the state for not providing fundamental facilities and rights. This study also shows how Jirga has played a role in making modern and inclusive institutions to address local issues.

The study mainly focuses on Manzoor Pashteen's speeches on a specific event of the October 2024 Jirga, which limits the narrative of PTM discourse and other leaders. Using qualitative analysis allows deep interpretation; however, this study does not consult the interpretation of others due to the lack of attention given to this domain. The future studies should focus on how various Pashtun leaders, youth, elders, and women view these grievances. Moreover, a comparative study with Baloch or Sindhi nationalist movements could also broaden the understanding of the frames employed by the PTM. Lastly, a gendered lens might have brought new dimensions to the scholarship of Pashtun issues, such as how women's sufferings are multiplied in the war-torn region of Pashtuns.

### **Conclusion**

The Pashtun National Jirga of October 2024 played an incredible role in organising the Pashtun community to discuss the issues they have been facing for decades. Drawing upon Snow and Benford's framing theory, the research has comprehensively analysed how the PTM leadership has constructed the community's grievances, proposed remedies, and sought collective actions. The research has contributed to the discourse on ethnic movements, such as PTM, in the postcolonial and securitised state by identifying their political discourse, which challenges the state's narrative. Future research should cover a wide range of voices from inside the Pashtun community; particularly, women's perspectives are necessary to highlight their vulnerabilities in a war-torn region. Finally, this paper highlights the significance of non-violent movements and indigenous institutions in fostering a discourse to challenge state oppression and its narrative.

### **Conflict of Interest**

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: List of Speeches Analyzed

No.	Speech Title	Duration	Date	Source
1	Adress to youth and elders at Pashtun National Jirga	22 minutes	11 October 2024	<a href="#">Facebook Link</a>
2	Historical grievances and displacement	1 hour and 7 minutes	12 October 2024	<a href="#">Facebook Link</a>
3	PTM proposals to the Pashtun National Jirga	32 minutes	13 October 2024	<a href="#">Facebook Link</a>
4	Verdict and resolutions of the Pashtun National Jirga	26 minutes	14 October 2024	<a href="#">Facebook Link</a>

### Appendix B: Translation from Pashto into English

#### Speech 1 (11 October 2024)

**Pashto (Original):** نن ټول مشران د یوې خیمې لاندې دي؛ دا یو وطن دی

**English Translation:** All elders are under one tent today; this is one homeland.

#### Speech 2 (12 October 2024)

**Pashro (Original):** بمباران په افغانستان کې وشو، خو اوسامه په پاکستان کې وو

**English translation:** Bombing was carried out in Afghanistan, yet Osama was in Pakistan

#### Speech 3 (13 October 2024)

**Pashto (Original):** پوځ او طالبان باید په ۶۰ ورځو کې ووځي

**English translation:** The military corps and the Taliban must leave within 60 days.

#### Speech 4 (14 October 2024)

**Pashto (Original):** جرگه غوښتنه کوي چې ښځو ته دې په خپلو ګاونډیو کې د زده کړې حق ورکړل شي

**English translation:** The Jirga demands that women be given the right to education in their neighborhoods.

### Appendix C - Research Questions Guiding the Analysis

- How do PTM leaders, particularly Manzoor Pashteen, frame and articulate the grievances of the Pashtun community?
- What socio-political, economic, and cultural grievances are identified or presented as the primary causes of Pashtuns' sufferings?
- What remedies did the PTM leaders propose to address the grievances faced by the Pashtuns?

#### **Appendix D - Ethical Considerations**

All Speeches were collected from the official Facebook accounts of Manzoor Pashteen. Pashto quotations were translated by the researcher, being Pashtun, with attention to bring accuracy and contextual meaning. The addition of both Pashto and English excerpts was aimed at ensuring transparency in qualitative content analysis.