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Ideology and Practice: A Critical Analysis of the ANP Government's Performance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (2008–2013) in Light of its Forefathers' Vision

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Abstract

This study critically examines the performance of the Awami National Party (ANP) government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) between 2008 and 2013, evaluating its policies and governance against the ideological vision laid down by the party's founding fathers. Specifically, it investigates the consistency between the ANP's core ideology and its key policy decisions, governance strategies, and reform agendas, while also identifying the obstacles that shaped their implementation. This period holds particular significance in KP's political history: the province was governed against a backdrop of severe security threats and economic strain, even as public expectations for responsive, effective governance grew. Understanding how ideological commitments translate or fail to translate into practice during such a period offers valuable insight for policymakers, political scientists, and historians studying governance in complex, high-stress political environments. The research adopts a qualitative, interpretivist strategy built around a case study design, allowing for a close, contextual reading of the ANP government's five-year tenure. The findings show that the party made substantial progress on several fronts central to its founding ideology — advancing Pashtun nationalist aspirations, pursuing education sector reforms, and pushing for greater provincial autonomy. At the same time, the government's performance was significantly constrained by persistent security instability and limited resources, which hampered implementation across multiple policy areas. Ultimately, the study finds that the ANP's record in office reflects a mixed alignment with its original vision shaped not by ideology alone, but by the interplay of ideological commitment, the practical realities of governing, and the volatile context in which that governance took place.

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Background of the Study

The period from 2008 to 2013 marks a pivotal chapter in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's political history, as the Awami National Party (ANP) formed the provincial government amid militancy, instability, and economic strain. The party's ideology traces back to its founding figures Bacha Khan and his son Khan Abdul Wali Khan whose politics centered on non-violence, democracy, Pashtun nationalism, social justice, and provincial autonomy (Banerjee, 2000; Shah, 1999). Bacha Khan, born in 1890, founded the Khudai Khidmatgar movement against British colonial rule, championed education through the Azad School system, and pursued social reform through the Islah-e-Afghania movement (Hanling, 2019). His son Wali Khan carried this legacy into the ANP, which was formally established in 1986 and is currently led by Aimal Wali Khan, continuing a lineage that includes Asfandyar Wali Khan as well.

The ANP's 2008 electoral victory gave the party its first real opportunity to govern according to these ideological commitments but it did so under severe pressure, as terrorism and militancy intensified in Swat, Malakand, and beyond (Yusuf, 2014). Despite this, the government pursued reforms in education, infrastructure, and provincial administration, most notably securing the renaming of NWFP to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010 a landmark recognition of Pashtun identity (Adeney, 2012) alongside a push for greater democratic decentralization (Khan, 2015).

Yet these gains were tempered by persistent criticism: governance inefficiency, corruption allegations, weak service delivery, and an inability to fully restore law and order (International Crisis Group, 2011). Critics argued the ANP retained ideological continuity with Bacha Khan's vision in rhetoric, but struggled to realize it in practice particularly around transparency and non-violent, welfare-driven governance (Gul, 2021). This tension between inherited ideology and governing reality, playing out against a backdrop of terrorism, natural disasters, and instability (Din et al., 2022), is what this study sets out to examine: how far the ANP government's policies and conduct between 2008 and 2013 remained faithful to the democratic, autonomist, and non-violent vision of its forefathers (Quraish, 2018; Yaqubi, 2024).

Statement of the Problem

The ANP governed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from 2008 to 2013 during a period marked by terrorism, political instability, and economic hardship all while claiming ideological descent from Bacha Khan and Wali Khan's principles of non-violence, democracy, Pashtun nationalism, social justice, and provincial rights. The government's tenure produced notable achievements, most visibly the renaming of the province to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, but was simultaneously criticized for weak governance, corruption, and an inadequate response to the deteriorating law-and-order situation.

Assessments of the ANP's performance remain divided: some view the period as a formative moment for provincial identity and democratic politics, while others see it as a failure to translate founding ideals into governing practice. This study seeks to critically evaluate the ANP government's performance between 2008 and 2013, examining the degree to which its policies and governance aligned with the vision of the party's founding leaders.

Research Questions

1. How far has the ANP government (2008-2013) in KP aligned its governance with the vision of its forefathers?

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2. What were the major policies and reforms implemented by the ANP government, and how did they reflect its ideological commitments?
3. What challenges did the ANP government face in implementing its vision?
4. What were the successes and shortcomings of the ANP government in relation to its foundational principles of democracy, non-violence, and Pashtun nationalism?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

1. To analyze the extent to which the ANP government's policies and governance (2008-2013) aligned with the vision of its forefathers.
2. To investigate the key policies and reforms implemented by the ANP government, and its ideological commitments.
3. To explore the challenges and constraints faced by the ANP government in implementing its vision.
4. To identify the achievements and limitations of the ANP government in relation to its historical and ideological commitments.

Significance of the Study

This research holds relevance for a broad range of stakeholders, including government officials, lawmakers, political analysts, researchers, students, academics, civil society members, activists, and the general public.

First, the study offers a lens through which to evaluate how faithfully the party adhered to its founding principles of nationalism, socialism, and secularism during its time in office. Second, it sheds light on the practical challenges the ANP government faced terrorism, corruption, and economic constraints and how these factors shaped its overall performance. Third, by tracing the party's trajectory from its founding vision to its governing record, the study offers insights that can inform future political planning and party strategy. Fourth, it contributes to the broader body of literature on political parties, governance, and development in Pakistan. Finally, the research may prove useful to international organizations and observers seeking to understand the political and socioeconomic dynamics of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as well as the province's prospects for non-violent conflict resolution and improved governance.

Literature Review

Introduction

The ANP has been one of the most influential political forces in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's post-independence history, consistently advocating Pashtun nationalism and social justice. Rooted in the vision of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan (Bacha Khan) a peaceful, just, and educated Pashtun society (Ghaffar, 2007) this ideology shaped not only the party's political agenda but also its conduct of provincial government from 2008 to 2013. This review critically examines the existing literature on the ANP's governance during this period, assessing whether the party's actions in office reflected the principles laid down by its founders, while situating this assessment within the broader context of Pashtun nationalism, the evolution of ANP ideology, and the volatile political and security climate of the late 2000s and early 2010s (Ahmed, 2015).

Theoretical Bases

Several theoretical frameworks inform this analysis. Historical materialism (Marx, 1867) helps explain how economic contradictions drove political and social change in the province, while democratic governance theory (Dahl, 1989) foregrounds accountability, transparency, and citizen participation concerns central to the ANP's founding vision of

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non-violence, education, and social uplift. State-centric theory illuminates the state's capacity to deliver public goods and maintain law and order, while civil society theory (Evans, 1995; Putnam, 2000) examines how non-governmental actors shape public policy. Leadership theory, particularly charismatic and transformational leadership (Burns, 1978), helps explain the ANP's political strategy, while post-colonial theory (Said, 1978) offers a lens for understanding the party's efforts to reassert Pashtun identity and autonomy against a centralized state (Galtung, 1969). Finally, conflict resolution and peacebuilding theory is essential for evaluating the ANP government's approach to insurgency and security and whether that approach remained consistent with its forefathers' broader commitment to stability and social harmony.

Historical Context of the ANP and Its Ideology

The region now known as Khyber Pakhtunkhwa passed through Afghan, Sikh, and eventually British control before emerging as the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) in 1901, when Lord Curzon divided it into five districts Hazara, Bannu, D.I. Khan, Kohat, and Peshawar along with five tribal agencies (Baha, 1987; Shah, 1999). Overwhelmingly Muslim and Pashtun-majority, the province suffered from severe underdevelopment under British rule, particularly in education, due to a combination of poverty, cultural factors, and deliberate colonial neglect (Shah, 2007; Khan, 2012).

It was against this backdrop that Bacha Khan emerged as a transformative figure. Born in Utmanzai in 1890, he foregrounded education and social reform as the path out of backwardness, co-founding Dar-ul-Ulooms with Haji Fazli Wahid and later reviving the Azad Madrassa system after the failures of the Hijrat and Khilafat movements (Zaidi, 2014). In 1921, he founded the Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afaghina to unify Pashtuns, curb social excess, and promote the Pashto language and authentic Islamic values (Marwat & Hussain, 2009). This educational initiative gradually evolved into a political movement, culminating in the founding of the Zalmo Jirga (Youth League) in 1929 a precursor to the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, aimed at fostering political awakening and Hindu-Muslim harmony in the province (Shah, 2007).

Objectives of the ANP

The ANP's manifesto exists primarily to communicate the party's agenda to voters, outlining not its abstract core principles but the concrete commitments that would shape its governance if elected (ANP, 2025). Drawing directly on the legacy of Bacha Khan described as viewing his own politics as a form of social service the party has consistently framed its mission as the emancipation of the Pashtun people from illiteracy and poverty (Gulzar, 2010). Like its predecessor parties, the NDP and NAP, the ANP treats politics primarily as public service for the poor and marginalized, standing for democracy, human rights, anti-extremism, and equal opportunity, while committing to non-violence as the preferred means of resolving conflict and to full provincial rights within a federal Pakistan (Kanwal, 1998).

The Legacy of Bacha Khan and Khan Abdul Wali Khan

The ANP's ideological foundation rests on Bacha Khan's Khudai Khidmatgar movement, which prioritized education, social justice, and Pashtun welfare through explicitly non-violent means — principles that continue to shape ANP policy and Pashtun political identity today.

Non-Violence. Bacha Khan's commitment to non-violence was shaped early by mentors who modeled dedication and humanitarianism (Tendulkar, 1967), and matured into a

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rejection of the Pashtun *badal* code of honor, which he blamed for perpetuating blood feuds and disunity (Shah, 2020). Founding his first school in Utmanzai and later the Anjuman-e-Islah-e-Afghana, he built the Khudai Khidmatgar into a genuinely mass movement reportedly the first organized non-violent army in history, with volunteers dressed in red who met British repression with discipline rather than retaliation (Ahmad, 2014; Abbas, 2025). His stance came at real cost: repeated arrests, the closure of his schools, and violent episodes such as the 1930 Qissa Khwani Bazaar massacre, in which unarmed protesters were shot (Abbas, 2025). He spent 39 years in prison or exile without ever abandoning non-violence, and his 1988 funeral was itself marred by a bomb blast a grim irony given his life's message (Abbas, 2025). Though often compared to Gandhi as the "Frontier Gandhi," some scholars note that his rigid, uncompromising style limited his political effectiveness even as it cemented his moral standing (Hamdani, 2008; Muth, 2016).

Education. Believing colonial rule depended on Pashtun illiteracy, Bacha Khan established the Azad Schools system in the 1920s as part of his broader Tehreek-i-Islahe Afaghana, offering a curriculum in Pashto, Urdu, English, Arabic, and Persian alongside religious and scientific instruction a deliberate alternative to British-run schools (Shinwari, 2019). Built on principles of human dignity, gender equality, and local relevance, these community-funded schools expanded across Utmanzai, Mardan, Swabi, Peshawar, Kohat, and Bannu, despite opposition from both British authorities and local clergy who spread rumors that secular schooling led to damnation (Khan, 1987; Bangash & Jan, 2015; Gul et al., 2021). Bacha Khan also founded the reformist magazine *The Pakhtun*, which campaigned against wasteful social customs and promoted Pashtun cultural awareness (Javed, 1981).

Social Equality. Bacha Khan rejected the rigid class and professional hierarchies of Pashtun society landlord elites versus laborers such as potters, weavers, and cobblers advocating instead for a classless social order (Banerjee, 2000; Khan & Wazir, 2017). Through the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, which grew to roughly 100,000 members by the 1940s, he elevated marginalized individuals to positions of respect and leadership, treated rich and poor with the same regard, and extended his vision of pluralism beyond Muslims to Pashtun Sikhs, Hindus, and Christians, while also rejecting sectarian and tribal divisions (Matta, 2016; Marwat, 2016; Zaheer, 2016). He was likewise an early advocate for women's rights in a society where women were largely excluded from political life (Zarak, 2016).

Performance of the ANP Government (2008–2013)

The ANP entered the 2008 general elections with a manifesto rooted explicitly in Bacha Khan's vision — promising democracy, human rights, poverty eradication, expanded education, non-violence, and maximum provincial autonomy for a federation it believed had for too long centralized power at the provinces' expense (Marwat et al., 2022). In the elections of 18 February 2008, the ANP emerged as the largest party in the KP Assembly, winning 48 of 124 seats on a modest turnout of roughly 33% — enough to lead a coalition government, though short of a majority (Daily Dawn, 2008).

In office, the party pursued several of its manifesto commitments: establishing seven new universities, securing the province's greatest-ever administrative autonomy through the 18th Amendment, and renaming NWFP to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. It also passed child protection legislation, established juvenile welfare and rehabilitation institutions, created emergency rescue services amid rising terrorism, and introduced

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judicial training institutes alongside an Ombudsman mechanism aimed at curbing corruption (Marwat et al., 2022).

Challenges Faced by the ANP Government

The Rise of Terrorism and Extremism. The ANP's central ambition ending militancy through non-violent, democratic means collided directly with the post-9/11 security environment. Pakistan's alliance with the US-led War on Terror, drone strikes, and CIA operations in the tribal areas inflamed public anger and fed extremism across KP and the former FATA (Yousafi & Islam, 2018). As an avowedly secular party, the ANP became a deliberate target: more than 700 of its activists were killed between 2008 and 2013, and its rallies were repeatedly attacked, fracturing its leadership and grassroots support (Hussain, 2013). The party's proposal to formally integrate FATA into KP was blocked by religious parties and the federal government alike, further limiting its reach.

The insurgency in Swat, rooted in Sufi Muhammad's Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi and later escalated by Mullah Fazlullah's Taliban faction, effectively displaced provincial authority in parts of Malakand by 2007 (Quraish & Islam, 2018). Military operations in 2009 eventually restored state control but displaced roughly 600,000 residents in the process (Ahmed, 2014). Throughout, KP's frontline position in the broader War on Terror left the ANP government managing a security crisis far beyond its institutional capacity (Mirza, 2021).

Political Islam in KP. The province's religious-political landscape, shaped by decades of Cold War-era Islamization and Mujahideen training under General Zia, left the ANP's secular, federalist, and socialist orientation fundamentally at odds with religious parties and militant groups such as the TTP (Shah et al., 2016; Abid et al., 2010). The MMA coalition's earlier rule in KP (2002–2007) had already normalized restrictive social policies; although the MMA lost power in 2008, its legacy of radicalization left the incoming ANP government facing sustained hostility whenever it pursued liberal reform.

Intra-Provincial Conflict. The 18th Amendment's renaming of the province, while celebrated by the Pashtun majority, provoked fierce protest from the Hindko-speaking Hazara Division, which demanded a separate "Subay-e-Hazara" province (Zulfiqar, 2012). Demonstrations turned violent in Abbottabad in April 2010. The ANP's simultaneous support for a "Saraikistan" movement in Punjab while opposing Hazara's parallel demand exposed what critics saw as inconsistency, further eroding its credibility outside Pashtun-majority areas reflected starkly in its capture of just one seat in the entire Hazara Division (Marwat et al., 2022).

Unemployment. Decades of conflict and Afghan refugee migration had already strained KP's labour market, and joblessness continued climbing during the ANP's tenure. The government introduced modest interventions a monthly stipend for unemployed graduates and the Bank of Khyber's "Khudkifalat" lending scheme but these fell well short of addressing a youth unemployment crisis that left hundreds of thousands out of work and, per contemporary analysis, vulnerable to militant recruitment (Daily Dawn, 2013; World Bank, 2011; PCNA, 2010).

Achievements of the ANP Government

Provincial Autonomy. The ANP's most significant success was arguably structural: its long-standing campaign against centralization culminated in the 18th Amendment of April 2010, which dismantled the concurrent legislative list, restored provincial control over major economic decisions, and revived the National Economic Council and Council of

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Common Interests as forums for provincial input into federal policy. The renaming of NWFP to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was formalized within this same amendment (Mirza, 2018).

Education Sector Reforms. Building on the constitutional recognition of education as a basic right under the new Article 25-A, the ANP government established seven new universities and twenty new colleges, expanded free education, and invested heavily in basic infrastructure — including PKR 906.2 million on free textbooks for girls and PKR 625 million channeled through Parent-Teacher Committees (Awais, 2014; Mukhopadhyay, 2014). Legislative reforms included the KP Universities Act 2012 and the founding charters for several new institutions, including Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (Marwat et al., 2022).

Health Sector Reforms. The government expanded treatment for Hepatitis B, C, and tuberculosis, raised Lady Health Visitor salaries nearly fivefold, and operationalized Bacha Khan Medical University alongside major hospital upgrades. Dozens of infrastructure projects — from the Khyber Institute of Child Health to rehabilitation centres for IDPs displaced by the Rah-e-Haq operation — were funded across the province (Turning, 2010; Marwat et al., 2022).

Economic Development. Provincial revenue grew substantially, driven largely by increased federal transfers tied to hydel profits and the NFC Award, pushing KP's contribution to provincial GDP from roughly 7–8% to 11.3% by 2010–11 (Siddique, 2009). The government also raised provincial tax revenue directly, notably through new levies on crude oil, coal, and gas production, though structural weaknesses a fragmented tax administration, heavy pension obligations, and reliance on federal transfers continued to constrain fiscal capacity (KP Government, 2013, 2017).

Developmental Plans and the Khpal Rozgar Scheme. The flagship Bacha Khan Khpal Rozgar Scheme offered interest-free micro-loans (PKR 20,000–100,000) to unemployed youth, reserving 30% for women and 2% for persons with disabilities. By the end of 2011, around 1,600 women entrepreneurs had received over PKR 148 million in loans, though roughly 700 applicants were turned away due to quota limits evidence of both the scheme's reach and its constraints (Daily Dawn, 2011). The complementary Bacha Khan Poverty Alleviation Programme extended infrastructure and micro-credit support to over 12,200 beneficiaries across pilot districts (BoK, 2013).

Industrial Reforms, Energy, and Power. The government pursued mineral exploration permits across Chitral, Kohistan, and Kohat, and established a new Energy and Power Agency to develop hydroelectric, wind, solar, and geothermal capacity, including the Karora and Jabori hydel projects and the 84 MW Matiltan plant. Major irrigation investments included rehabilitation of the Warsak and Takhta Baig Khowar canal systems. Fishing rights over Tarbela Dam and other reservoirs were also transferred from federal to provincial control, generating new employment and revenue streams (Turning, 2010; Marwat et al., 2022).

Theoretical Framework

This study draws on two complementary frameworks: ideological party politics and governance performance theory. The former holds that a party's ideology shapes both its policy priorities and the standard by which its governance should be judged echoing Max Weber's (1978) observation that public trust depends on government follow-through on its stated commitments (Heywood, 2017). Applied to the ANP, this means assessing its 2008–

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2013 record against the specific commitments to non-violence, democracy, social justice, and provincial autonomy inherited from Bacha Khan and Wali Khan.

Governance performance theory, meanwhile, evaluates government primarily through policy effectiveness, institutional capacity, accountability, and public welfare outcomes reflecting David Easton's (1965) argument that political support depends on government responsiveness to public needs. Combining these two frameworks allows this study to assess not only whether the ANP's policies matched its founders' ideology, but whether the party's institutional performance under severe security and fiscal constraints met the practical expectations of the people it governed.

Research Gap

Existing scholarship offers substantial coverage of ANP politics, Pashtun nationalism, militancy in KP, and Pakistan's post-2008 democratic transition. However, this literature is largely fragmented — concentrated on security dynamics, the constitutional changes enacted during the ANP's tenure, or the historical legacies of leaders such as Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Khan Abdul Wali Khan. Where scholars have examined the province's renaming, the 18th Amendment, or the difficulties the ANP government faced during the War on Terror, these treatments tend to isolate individual political events or address governance and security in broad strokes, without offering a sustained, detailed account of how the party's founding ideology actually functioned in practice between 2008 and 2013.

What remains missing is a thorough, critical study that directly compares the ANP government's real-world conduct against the political vision and ideals of its founders. Little existing research systematically examines whether the party's policies, reforms, and governing style upheld the principles of non-violence, democracy, social justice, and provincial autonomy that defined Bacha Khan's and Wali Khan's political philosophy. This study addresses that gap by critically analyzing the ANP government's performance against its own ideological foundations, and by assessing the distance between stated theory and practical governance in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from 2008 to 2013.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design grounded in an interpretivist, post-positivist philosophy, using a case study approach to critically examine the ANP government's performance in KP between 2008 and 2013. Post-positivism was chosen because it treats social and political reality as complex and only ever partially knowable, making it well suited to assessing how far the ANP's governance aligned with the democratic, non-violent, and nationalist principles of its founders (Collis & Hussey, 2003; McNabb, 2005). Within this framework, an interpretivist lens was applied to understand how political actors and observers themselves made sense of the party's ideological commitments and governing record, rather than reducing the analysis to purely observable or quantifiable measures (Kaplan & Duchon, 1988).

Data were drawn from both primary and secondary sources to ensure a well-triangulated evaluation. Primary data came from eighteen semi-structured interviews with political analysts, political science professors, ANP leaders and workers, and journalists who closely observed the party's tenure, selected through purposive sampling. These were supplemented by archival research into party manifestos, parliamentary debates, and leaders' speeches, alongside secondary data drawn from government reports, scholarly literature, and media coverage (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Data were analyzed thematically, following the coding and interpretation process outlined by Miles and Huberman (1998)

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and Neuman (2012) moving from familiarization and line-by-line coding through to the identification and refinement of core themes.

The study upheld standard ethical protocols, including informed consent, voluntary participation, and confidentiality for all interviewees. Its scope was deliberately delimited to KP during the 2008–2013 period and to questions of political governance, policy implementation, and ideological consistency, rather than broader national politics. Several limitations are acknowledged: the inherent interpretive bias of qualitative data, the potential political leanings of respondents (particularly former party officials), restricted access to internal government records, and the sensitivity some interviewees may have felt discussing contentious governance issues. These limitations were mitigated through triangulation across multiple data sources, aimed at producing as balanced and objective an assessment as possible.

Findings and Analysis

Table 1: ***Emerging Themes and Coding***

No.	Respondents Profession	Total	Code
1	Political Analysts	03	A-1 to A-3
2	Professors of Political Science	04	B-1 to B-4
3	ANP Leaders and Workers	08	C-1 to C-8
4	Journalists	03	D-1 to D-4
Total Interviewees		**18**	

The primary data gathered from eighteen semi-structured interviews with political analysts, professors of political science, ANP leaders and workers, and journalists was analyzed thematically. Four core themes emerged: alignment of governance with the forefathers' vision, key policies reflecting ideological commitment, challenges in implementing that vision, and the government's successes and shortcomings in advancing democracy, non-violence, and Pashtun nationalism.

Alignment of Governance with the Forefathers' Vision

Table 2: ***Thematic Analysis of Theme-1***

Theme-1	**Alignment of Governance with Forefathers' Vision**	
Questions	**Interviewee Responses**	**Interpretation**
Q. 1 What do you think that the ANP government's policies from 2008-2013 adhered to the vision and ideology of its forefathers?	B-3: "The renaming of the province from NWFP to KP was a big achievement of ANP government. It reflects the party's commitment to Pashtun nationalism. On the other side, security situation in KP remained deteriorated. However, ANP government remained unsuccessful in fully	Both the respondents recognize significant ideological adherence, especially regarding Pashtun identity and autonomy. However, they also realistically highlight security threats and constraints during ANP regime. This suggests an understanding of practical

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	implementation the non-violent principles." A-2: "Yes, they remained successful in promoting Pashtoon culture. They also worked for provincial autonomy. However, due to security threats they failed to implement non-violent ideology. C-3: "The 18th amendment gave provincial autonomy and Pashto cultural identity by renaming the province name from NWFP to KP. The integration of Pashto language into educational curriculum is also the milestone achieved by ANP government. These initiatives deeply linked with ANP's historical ideological roots."	governance versus ideological ideals. The respondents emphasize concrete examples directly linked to ANP's foundational principles. Their governance actions during the period (2008-2013) clearly reflect their ideological commitments. The primary data results are evident that respondents highlight both adherence and deviations, successfully demonstrate a nuanced understanding that in extreme situations like militancy, governance realities occasionally require compromise on core ideological principles.
Q. 2 What can be the specific examples of policy initiatives that reflect the ANP government's commitment to its ideological roots during its governance period?	D-2: "ANP government committed to their ideology during the said period. They promoted their culture through festivals, they established Pashto academies, and they emphasized on grassroots governance through local councils."	
Q.3 In your opinion, which areas do you believe deviated from or closely resembled the vision of the ANP's forefathers, and why?	A-1: "There was lot of alignment in provincial autonomy and cultural preservation. However, the government had to deviate somewhat from non-violence principles due to intense militancy. It was very difficult choices between idealism and practical governance." C-1: "Alignment was most clear in keeping Pashtun cultural identity alive. The biggest difference was how they dealt with security problems. They often used military solutions instead of peaceful ones."	

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Respondents were broadly consistent in identifying the ANP government's strongest area of ideological continuity as its advancement of Pashtun cultural identity and provincial autonomy. The renaming of the province from NWFP to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was repeatedly cited as the clearest expression of this commitment. As one political science professor put it, the renaming "reflects the party's commitment to Pashtun nationalism," even as "the security situation in KP remained deteriorated" and the government "remained unsuccessful in fully implementing the non-violent principles." Several respondents pointed to the integration of Pashto into the educational curriculum and the push for grassroots governance through local councils as concrete extensions of this same ideological thread.

At the same time, interviewees were candid about the limits of this alignment. One ANP worker observed that "the biggest difference was how they dealt with security problems they often used military solutions instead of peaceful ones," while a political analyst framed the gap as an unavoidable tension between "idealism and practical governance" under conditions of intense militancy. Taken together, the responses suggest a government that upheld its forefathers' vision clearly in matters of cultural and constitutional identity, but was forced to compromise sometimes significantly on non-violence when confronted with the practical demands of counter-militancy.

Key Policies and Ideological Commitments

Table 3: ***Thematic Analysis of Theme-2***

Theme-2	**Key Policies and Ideological Commitments**	
Questions	**Interviewee Responses**	**Interpretation**
Q. 1 Which policies and reforms of the ANP government were most reflective of their commitment to Pashtun nationalism?	D-3: "Pashtoon nationalist ideals are reflected in the Educational reforms, emphasizing Pashto as a compulsory subject and renaming the province."	Both responses effectively underscore the distinct policy initiatives that illustrate the ANP's unequivocal ideological dedication to safeguarding and advancing Pashtun identity and culture, reflecting a consistent alignment with nationalist principles.
	D-1: "The establishment of cultural institutions and the safeguarding of traditional Pashtun heritage through government funding were profoundly indicative of their nationalist ideals."	
Q. 2 In what ways did the ANP government's policies on education and social development show their ideological stance?	B-4: "By fostering Pashtun identity among youth, the introduction of Pashto in schools and efforts for cultural revival through education significantly highlighted their ideological stance."	Primary data results highlight the various facets of ANP's ideology, ranging from wider social justice to cultural preservation, and they show their dedication through concrete educational and developmental initiatives.
	C-4: "They demonstrated their dedication to social justice and equity through their social development initiatives, which	The respondents highlight unique reforms that are surely in line with socialist principles and decentralization, highlighting the ANP's persistent pursuit of political and economic justice.

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Q. 3 Can you name any particular ANP political or economic reforms that clearly demonstrated their guiding ideals?	included expanding access to healthcare and education for underserved communities." D-3: "The 18th Amendment's political reform of provincial autonomy clearly demonstrated the ANP's dedication to decentralization and democratic governance. Their attempts to upgrade rural infrastructure from an economic standpoint also demonstrated their socialist inclinations." C-2: "Their emphasis on economic decentralization and fair resource distribution through community-driven projects amply demonstrated their ideological commitments."	

A second theme centered on the specific policies respondents saw as embodying ANP ideology in practice. Educational reform featured prominently: the introduction of Pashto as a compulsory subject and the establishment of Pashto-language cultural institutions were cited as direct expressions of Pashtun nationalist commitment. Social development initiatives — expanded healthcare and education access for underserved communities — were framed by respondents as evidence of the party's underlying commitment to social justice and equity.

The 18th Amendment was again singled out, this time as the clearest political expression of the ANP's long-standing socialist and decentralist leanings, alongside efforts to improve rural infrastructure and promote community-driven, resource-sharing development projects. Respondents generally agreed that these policies collectively traced a fairly consistent line back to the party's founding commitments to cultural preservation, social welfare, and decentralized, equitable governance.

Challenges in Implementing the Vision

Table 4: ***Thematic Analysis of Theme-3***

Theme-3	**Challenges in Implementing the Vision**	
Questions	**Interviewee Responses**	**Interpretation**
Q. 1 What were the main problems the ANP government had to deal with inside and outside the party in order to make their political and ideological vision a reality?	C-8: "Internally, there were problems with the bureaucracy and political opposition. Terrorism and natural disasters made it very hard for them to do their jobs". C-6: "Political opposition within the province and militant insurgencies from	The primary data is evident that internal administrative barriers and external threats worked together in a complicated way, giving a full picture of the many problems the ANP faced while in power. Militancy was a structural problem that used up resources

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Q. 2 How did security issues and militancy make it harder for the ANP government to carry out its plans and make changes?	outside the province made it very hard for them to carry out reforms." B-1 "When KP's militancy peaked, the ANP government took office. The government was compelled to focus the majority of its political and financial resources on security operations rather than development because of the insurgency in the province. ANP's government main focus remained on reestablishing law and order situation rather than pursuing the agenda they had promised." C-7: ""Militancy not only drained resources, but it also made it harder for the government to reach out to people physically and politically. ANP leaders were always in danger. A number of ANP leaders were killed in targeted attacks. Militants violently opposed the government's attempts to make changes. So, the security situation slow down policies of ANP government".	and took the focus away from reforms. It shows that security was more important than governance, which forced ANP leaders to deal with crises. The party's ideas for progressive policies, like promoting secular education and social reforms, were put on hold because the state's authority was in danger. This also means that the ANP's performance was shaped by the situation, not just by political will. The primary data obtained from workers of ANP adds a personal and political angle, showing that militancy made it harder for governments to do their jobs by putting psychological and operational limits on them. Because of the constant threat, democratic participation and reformist ideas were kept down. So, militancy hurt both the delivery of policies and people's faith in politics.
Q. 3 Were there institutional or structural constraints that substantially impeded the ANP's governance from realizing the objectives envisioned by their predecessors?	A-2: "Yes, the structure of the institution itself was weak. In KP, the bureaucracy was very political, and slow to change when new laws were passed. Their forefather had a vision that government based on accountability, social justice, and giving people power, but the ANP government had to work with institutions that couldn't make that happen." C-5: "Even after the 18th	The institutional weaknesses were a big problem. Although the ANP leadership possessed ideological clarity, their vision could not be realized without a functional administrative framework. Corruption, weak governance systems, and bureaucratic inertia made it hard to put policies into action. Even though there were improvements in the law, like the 18th Amendment, ANP couldn't follow through on its vision because of weak local government and financial centralization.

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	Amendment, ANP was still financially dependent on the federal government. Due to many reasons, the local government system was not functioning properly, so there was no devolution of powers."	

The third theme captured the structural and contextual obstacles that respondents saw as constraining the government's ability to act on its ideology. Internally, bureaucratic resistance and political opposition were repeatedly cited; externally, militancy and, at times, natural disasters, consumed resources and attention that might otherwise have gone toward reform. One professor noted that the government was "compelled to focus the majority of its political and financial resources on security operations rather than development," effectively subordinating its policy agenda to the immediate task of restoring law and order. Another respondent, an ANP worker, described how militancy "not only drained resources, but also made it harder for the government to reach out to people physically and politically," pointing to the assassination of party leaders as evidence of the direct, personal cost the party paid for its secular, progressive positioning.

Institutional weakness compounded these pressures. Despite constitutional gains like the 18th Amendment, several respondents noted that the province remained financially dependent on the federal government and that local government structures never functioned as intended, leaving the devolution of power incomplete. As one analyst summarized, "the ANP leadership possessed ideological clarity, but their vision could not be realized without a functional administrative framework." The catastrophic 2010 floods were also flagged as a significant, if externally imposed, disruption that further diverted the government's already stretched capacity.

Successes and Shortcomings in Democracy, Non-Violence, and Pashtun Nationalism

Theme-4	**Successes and Shortcomings in Democracy, Non-violence, and Pashtun Nationalism**	
Questions	**Interviewee Responses**	**Interpretation**
Q. 1 Could you list the main achievements of the ANP government in advancing non-violence and democracy during their rule?	C-3: "ANP government's most prominent democratic success was achieving provincial autonomy through constitutional reforms. Despite security challenges, persistent attempts at dialogue with militants reflected their commitment to non-violence."	The primary data obtained on the subject theme show that even though there were a lot of problems, the ANP made real progress toward democracy and always looked for peaceful ways to solve problems, even when full success was hard to find.
Q 2 How did the ANP government do in	D-3: "Encouraging people to get involved in politics and keeping the conversation going even when there is violence showed real	ANP's symbolic and constitutional victories, such as changing the name of the province and getting it to be independent. These actions were very in line with Pashtun nationalist ideas about identity

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dealing with issues that were important to Pashtun nationalism?	democratic and peaceful goals." C-2: "Changing the name of the province from NWFP to KP. This was a historical achievement that made Pashtuns feel like they were a part of the federation. Provincial autonomy through 18th amendment can also be quoted in this regard."	and self-determination, and they met long-standing demands. Deficiencies in human security, indicating that the core of nationalism encompasses both symbolic acknowledgment and the safeguarding of individuals' dignity and welfare.
Q. 3 What major flaws do you see in the ANP government's work, especially when it comes to their forefather's vision of nonviolence, social justice, education, and democracy?	B-3: "The ANP government did meet some nationalist demands, but they mostly failed to keep Pashtuns safe and protect their livelihoods when the violence was at its worst." A-1: "The biggest problem was that the party's belief in nonviolence didn't match up with what was really going on in the government. The ANP took over the Gandhian tradition of Bacha Khan, but during its time in power, violence was common. The government lacked the capability and strategy to reinstate a culture of non-violence. In the same way, social justice didn't get any better." D-4: "Some schools were rebuilt and the curriculum was debated, but the bigger idea of using education to bring about social change never came to pass. Their ancestors thought that education was the key to waking up Pashtun society, but because of violence, corruption, and a lack of political will, thousands of children, especially girls,	ANP's founding fathers vision and the way it runs its government are at odds with each other. The prevalence of violence and the continuation of inequality undermined the ideology of non-violence and social justice. Education and democratic devolution are the two areas where ANP's failures most clearly went against its ideological roots. The forefathers' vision stressed education as a way to freedom and grassroots democracy as a way to power, but the ANP government did not make either of these things happen as was needed for the time.

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	stayed out of school. The suspension of local bodies was another blow to democracy because grassroots empowerment was a key part of ANP's ideology."

The final theme weighed the government's record across its three central ideological commitments. On democracy, respondents pointed to the achievement of provincial autonomy through constitutional reform, alongside sustained if difficult attempts at dialogue with militant groups, as genuine evidence of democratic and non-violent intent, even under severe strain. On Pashtun nationalism, the province's renaming and the 18th Amendment were again cited as landmark, largely successful achievements, though one professor cautioned that symbolic recognition was not matched by an ability to "keep Pashtuns safe and protect their livelihoods when the violence was at its worst" a reminder that nationalism, in respondents' eyes, was as much about material security as symbolic identity.

The sharpest criticism centered on the gap between the ANP's inherited non-violent tradition and the reality of governing through one of the most violent periods in the province's history. As one analyst put it bluntly, "the party's belief in nonviolence didn't match up with what was really going on in the government... the ANP took over the Gandhian tradition of Bacha Khan, but during its time in power, violence was common." Education, too, was flagged as an area of significant shortfall: while some schools were rebuilt and curriculum debates took place, the forefathers' broader vision of education as a vehicle for social transformation went largely unrealized, with corruption, insecurity, and limited political will keeping large numbers of children — girls in particular out of school. The suspension of local government bodies was cited as a further blow to the party's professed commitment to grassroots democratic empowerment.

Synthesis

Across all four themes, a consistent pattern emerges. The ANP government's clearest successes lay in the domains most directly tied to constitutional and symbolic achievement provincial autonomy, cultural recognition, and the renaming of the province areas where policy could be advanced through legislative and negotiated means. Its most significant shortfalls, by contrast, clustered around non-violence, human security, and grassroots democratic devolution areas where success depended on stable conditions and functional institutions the government did not fully control or possess. The data suggests that the ANP's ideological commitments remained intact at the level of intent and rhetoric, but that militancy, institutional weakness, fiscal dependency, and external shocks such as the 2010 floods repeatedly forced the party to prioritize survival and stabilization over the fuller realization of its founders' vision.

Discussion

Taken together, the findings suggest that the ANP government achieved a meaningful, if incomplete, alignment with the ideological vision of Bacha Khan and Wali Khan. The renaming of NWFP to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa stands out as the clearest symbolic fulfillment of this vision — a long-standing nationalist demand that directly reflected the founders' emphasis on regional autonomy, linguistic pride, and Pashtun identity. This was reinforced in practice through the integration of Pashto language and culture into the mainstream

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education system, and through the substantive gains in provincial autonomy secured via the 18th Amendment, even though full democratic decentralization at the local level remained elusive.

Non-violence proved to be the area of sharpest departure from founding ideology. Despite a stated commitment to peace treaties, tribal dialogue, and community-based reconciliation, the ANP government was repeatedly forced into militarized responses by sustained terrorist violence — much of it directed specifically at the party for its secular positioning. Suicide bombings, targeted killings of party members, and militant insurgency did not merely test the party's non-violent commitments; they actively constrained its capacity to govern and campaign freely across the province.

Socioeconomic transformation was similarly constrained, though by different forces. Weak provincial financial autonomy, continued dependency on federal transfers, and limited internal resources meant that the gap between public expectation and fiscal reality remained wide throughout the government's tenure. Bureaucratic inertia and entrenched opposition within administrative institutions further slowed reform in sectors like education and healthcare. The 2010 floods compounded these constraints, forcing an abrupt reallocation of resources and attention away from longer-term ideological goals and toward emergency relief and reconstruction.

On balance, the ANP's five years in office reflect a government that pursued its founders' vision genuinely, but under conditions that made full realization of that vision structurally difficult — a record shaped as much by terrorism, fiscal limitation, and administrative weakness as by the party's own political will.

Conclusion

The ANP's tenure in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from 2008 to 2013 stands as a defining period in the province's political history, marked by both meaningful adherence to, and significant divergence from, the ideological legacy of non-violence, Pashtun nationalism, and democracy left by its forefathers. The government's democratic commitments were most visibly expressed through the renaming of the province an act that addressed longstanding historical grievances and reaffirmed the party's foundational commitment to Pashtun identity — alongside investments in universities, healthcare, and public infrastructure that reflected its broader vision of socioeconomic advancement.

These achievements, however, unfolded against a backdrop of severe insecurity, financial constraint, and institutional limitation. Militancy and terrorism repeatedly diverted government attention and resources away from developmental priorities toward immediate security concerns, testing the party's non-violent principles even as it continued to advocate dialogue and reconciliation. The party's pursuit of Pashtun nationalism and provincial autonomy achieved real, substantive wins, yet uneven development across the province exposed gaps between the ANP's stated commitment to social equality and its actual distribution of resources.

Ultimately, the ANP government's legacy is best understood as a genuine, human effort to remain faithful to its founders' ideology under exceptionally difficult circumstances — a period of ideological clarity tempered throughout by practical constraint, producing a record of democratic and nationalist achievement that fell short of fully realizing the non-violent, socially just vision first articulated by Bacha Khan.

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Suggestions for Future Research

1. Future studies should examine the long-term impact of the ANP government's reforms and policies on KP's governance structures, social fabric, and political culture beyond 2013.
2. Existing research, including this study, has focused heavily on institutional and elite perspectives; future work should incorporate the voices of ordinary citizens — teachers, women, and youth who directly experienced the era's extremism and governance challenges, offering a more grounded assessment of whether the government's practice matched its founders' ideals.
3. Militancy should be treated not as a peripheral disruption but as a central analytical variable shaping policy decisions and constraining reform, deepening scholarly understanding of how ideology and security dynamics interact in fragile democratic contexts.
4. This study's comparative framework evaluating a party's governance against its founding ideology could be extended to other Pakistani political movements, such as the PPP's socialist commitments or Jamaat-e-Islami's religious framework, to assess how consistently foundational philosophies translate into governance across the political spectrum.

Recommendations

1. **Align security policy with non-violent ideology** invest in dialogue, tribal engagement, and de-radicalization alongside conventional security measures, rather than defaulting to militarized responses.
2. **Reduce fiscal dependency on the federal government** by strengthening provincial tax collection and revenue systems, so autonomy is financial as well as constitutional.
3. **Empower local government in practice, not just on paper** — ensure local bodies are funded, functional, and not suspended during political crises.
4. **Tackle bureaucratic resistance** through stronger institutional accountability mechanisms, such as an empowered Ombudsman office, rather than relying on individual political will.
5. **Distribute development resources more equitably** across Pashtun and non-Pashtun areas, particularly Hazara, to avoid undermining claims to social justice.
6. **Build disaster-response capacity into provincial planning** so crises like the 2010 floods don't derail core reform agendas.
7. **Focus education policy on retention and quality, not just access** — particularly for girls in conflict-affected districts.
8. **Strengthen transparency and anti-corruption mechanisms** to rebuild public trust in democratic governance.

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