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# MEDICAL MALPRACTICE AND HEALTHCARE ACCOUNTABILITY IN PAKISTAN: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF LEGAL FRAMEWORKS AND ENFORCEMENT CHALLENGES

**Imran Khan[1*], Imtiaz Ali[2], Saud Shad[3]**

[1]School of Humanities and Law, Chengdu University of Technology, No. 1, East 3rd Road (Erxianqiao Dongsan Road), Chenghua District, Chengdu, Sichuan, 610059, China.

[2]School of Law, Southwest University of Political Science and Law, No. 301, Baosheng Avenue, Yubei District, Chongqing 401120.

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***Corresponding Author: Imran Khan**

School of Humanities and Law, Chengdu University of Technology, No. 1, East 3rd Road (Erxianqiao Dongsan Road), Chenghua District, Chengdu, Sichuan, 610059, China.

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## ABSTRACT

The study's purpose would be to propose that an entire and applicable laws be enacted on the theme, which will definitively lay out the parameters for defining the legal protections, obligations, and obligations of all decision makers, such as patients and healthcare professionals, in order to preserve and apply the medical profession's hopes, trust, and confidence. Based on the study's premise, the research technique includes qualitative, descriptive, analytical, empirical, and applied methodologies. This research has shown certain grey regions in legislation and implementation systems, which are needed for opulent law implementation. In Pakistan, the law of torts is used for civil remedies in medical malpractice cases, however courts are hesitant to punish doctors under the Pakistan Penal Code. Medical practitioners can also be prosecuted on criminal charges. The medical profession is a noble one that needs extreme care and attention.

**KEYWORDS:** Law, Medical Health care, Pakistan penal Code, Law of torts, Implementation.

## INTRODUCTION

The law has significant repercussions for all residents, including mentally ill individuals. The laws that govern how mentally ill people are handled paint a clear image of a state's attitude

toward them. The dynamic and two-way relationship between the mentality of a society and the law is indeed a two-way street. The Lunacy Act of 1912, adopted by the colonial administration for the entirety of British India at the time, was the main source of laws dealing to mentally ill people in Pakistan until 2001. Pakistani law remained founded on vestiges of its colonial history after the partition, albeit periodic revisions were made in light of significantly changing realities and the necessities of an Islamic republic. Despite periodic challenges from the medical field but also general society, the Lunacy Act of 1912 remained in effect, as did most other legislation.

The Mental Health Ordinance went into force in Pakistan. As a result, the Lunacy Act of 1912 was abolished. According to the ordinance's preamble, the 2001 ordinance resulted in significant revisions in law "related to mentally ill persons with respect to their care and treatment, administration of their property, and other pertinent matters." Ordinances are omnipresent in Pakistani law, which is a unique aspect of the country's legal system. Ordinances are presidential orders that are equivalent to legitimate legislation and are issued in emergency situations or when the Parliament is not in session. If they are challenged by a Parliamentary act, they are supposed to expire after three months. Ordinances, like the Pakistan Mental Health Ordinance, are an essential aspect of Pakistani legislation and have the same legal standing as a statute approved by Parliament.

**How Did the Law Change as a Result of the 2001 Ordinance?**

Before 2001, one of the most amazing components of Pakistani emotional well-being regulation was the proceeded with utilization of out of date, loose, and here and there indistinct words. The expression "lunacy" is an ideal model since, in spite of the fact that being criticized by the mental local area as cruel and incorrect, it was remembered for the antiquated Lunacy Act's title and was utilized all through the demonstration, alongside its variations. The neurotic was portrayed as "a dolt or individual of unstable brain" (segment 4), a depiction that has brought about a lot of case regulation because of its vagueness.

The 2001 regulation supplanted old and uncertain phrasing like "crazy person," "criminal neurotic" (an ironic expression since "maniacs" can't be considered responsible for their activities), and "refuge" with a more complete arrangement of implications. The statute incorporates the expression "emotional wellness" in its title and characterizes "dysfunctional behavior, including mental impedance, serious behavioral condition, extreme mental debilitation, and some other problem or incapacitating of mind..." as "psychological instability, including mental weakness, extreme behavioral condition, extreme mental

disability, and some other issue or impairing of brain. Far reaching definitions have been provided for every one of these psychological instabilities gatherings. A serious behavioral condition, for instance, is characterized under the 2001 regulation as a persistent state of mind or debilitation (whether it includes extensive IQ impedance) that prompts unreasonably forceful or essentially unreliable way of behaving with respect to the individual." Mentally upset detainee" substitutes "criminally crazy," and "wellbeing office" and "mental office" are utilized rather than "haven" where proper. The advancement of a meaning of "informed assent" for treatment has been an exceptionally pragmatic advance forward. As per the new definition, assent is just substantial assuming it is educated, and that implies that the patient (or gatekeeper or closest relative on account of a minor) has been sufficiently educated regarding the treatment's motivation, nature, probable impacts, and dangers, as well as the probability of achievement, any other options, and the expenses in question. A critical lawful vacuum has been filled by tending to this fundamental subject. The disposition of people who use phrasing is reflected in the wording. The utilization of all the more logically satisfactory, exact, and caring language by Pakistani culture and regulation suggests that a more empathic methodology has supplanted a more seasoned disposition of outline dismissal and an absence of understanding toward insane individuals. This is, indeed, something worth being thankful for. The establishment of the Federal Mental Health Authority, comprised of seven "prestigious therapists of about ten years standing" (area 3) (v) and seven more persons, typically officials, is a significant shift brought about by the new regulation. This gathering has been entrusted with managing the country's emotional wellness administrations, laying out public guidelines of care and treatment, and an assortment of different obligations. Obligation in Criminal and Civil Matters. The issue of the extent of criminal and common culpability is one of the most genuine lawful worries that arise with regards to insane people. People with mental problems, for instance, are qualified for the "protection of madness and automatism" in British regulation, which brings about a lawfully ordered decline in their criminal obligation. Thus, Individuals who are deranged don't have the ability to go into substantial agreements and, accordingly, can't be expected to take responsibility for break of agreement (segment 3). The new mandate, similar to its ancestor, leaves the critical inquiry of the degree of criminal and common obligation of individuals who are deranged unanswered, inferring that the law regarding this matter should be gotten from different wellsprings of criminal and common regulation.

**Research Overview**

This articale aims to explain why medical malpractice persists despite statutory frameworks. The study's goal is to assess whether or whether tribunals and courts have jurisdiction over this criminal, as well as to explain how effective methods for law enforcement might be developed. Also we'll look at news stories and statistics, as well as numbers acquired from scholarly publications and other organizations, for this policy brief. I used both qualitative and quantitative research methods to complete this policy brief, using secondary analysis data and the pragmatic study technique. I used the APA format for citations and references in my study. This study will give information and raise knowledge about the legal system in the field of health. Besides, the review's reasoning is to recommend that a selective and practical regulation be established regarding the matter, which will conclusively spread out the boundaries for deciding the privileges, commitments, and liabilities, everything being equal, including medical care suppliers and patients, to maintain and execute the expectations, trust, and certainty related with the clinical calling. Based on study's premise, the research technique includes qualitative, descriptive, analytical, empirical, and applied methods. This study has shown several gray areas in legal and implementation procedures, which are prerequisites for opulent law enforcement. Moreover the medical profession is a noble one that necessitates extreme prudence and care. However, allegations of negligence and medical misconduct are not uncommon. However, In Pakistan, the law of torts is used as a legal remedy in cases of medical misconduct. Medical practitioners can be charged with criminal culpability as well, however judges are hesitant to handle doctors under the Pakistan Penal Code, preferring instead to pursue cases under civil liability. Pakistan has given Consumer Courts the authority to hear such cases, following Indian precedent. Medical services, on the other hand, should not be included in the purview of consumer protection regulations. Furthermore, there is a discrepancy in pay. As a result, it is proposed that a distinct legislation for medical malpractice should be enacted, taking into account the need and current practices of the legal and healthcare systems.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The character of this research study is both descriptive and suggestive. The majority of the secondary materials used in this research include books, newspapers, and periodical articles from both national and international sources. For research, internet sources were also utilized. The study's results are expressed in qualitative rather than quantitative terms.

**Laws and regulations**

**Law of Torts**

Medication is both a science and a compelling artwork. 22 thus, this may every so often turn out badly. In any case, this doesn't necessarily infer that the specialist was to blame. A patient should lay out three components to demonstrate that a specialist committed misbehavior:

**1.** The respondent owes a lawful obligation of care: The obligation of care is the fundamental reason for deciding the extension and level of careless obligation. The gatherings should have a lawful association that ties the specialist to give sensible treatment.

**2.** Respondent neglected to satisfy that obligation: A specialist should fulfill the base guideline expected of a clinical professional "talented in that specific craftsmanship." Breach would happen on the off chance that the necessary norm of care was not met.

**3.** The petitioner endured hurt because of the break of obligation. Provided that the treating specialist's oversight or careless demonstration caused the patient's physical issue will he be considered responsible. To win a clinical misbehavior case, petitioners should demonstrate these three components.

In the nearby setting, Pakistan's courts notice, make sense of, and decipher these focuses. Mrs. Alia Tareen versus Amanullah Khan is a situation where the offended party is a lady. "The norm of care to be seen by an expert has forever been that of the typical gifted individual practicing and indicating to have that remarkable ability," Justice Sardar Raza Khan noted in his decision while thinking about the possibility of carelessness. A specialist or specialist was not to be judged careless assuming he acted as per a training that was recognized as legitimate by a capable collection of clinical assessment at that point, whether or not different specialists had embraced different practices in comparative circumstances. ‘An assessment of the cases chose by Pakistan's learned courts uncovers that the nation's courts comply with English misdeed regulation and know about the standards of carelessness. They regularly refer to English books and court choices to make sense of the idea, and they sporadically notice Indian cases also. They apply the "carelessness" principles and force harms on specialists assuming they are happy with the proof that the specialists were careless while dealing with the patient; assuming the offended party neglects to demonstrate this, the case is excused. With the end goal of money related pay, English courts apply the fundamental misdeed guideline of reestablishing the petitioner to the position he would have been in the event that the carelessness had not happened, as expressed in the Livingstone versus Crude yards Coal Company choice. 28 This hypothesis is right and appropriate when

the misfortune is financial, yet it isn't legitimate when the misfortune is non-money related; no cash can make up for the passing of a friend or family member or an organ, or the anguish experienced. 29 They can't be repaid in any capacity. The court utilizes the standards of "sensible" and "fair" to do this. 30 It's difficult to get out whatever future evenhanded and adequate in this present circumstance. The courts follow the tide of occasions. It implies they follow the tax set by different courts for comparative sorts of wounds. This gives an establishment to the evaluation as well as a degree of consistency. 31 According to an overview, around 70% of patients in the United Kingdom are completely or exceptionally unsatisfied with the ongoing arrangement of harms granted. 32 The Supreme Court of India featured that Indian courts experience a similar issue: "The shortfall of consistency and consistency in granting remuneration has been a wellspring of extensive concern... The petitioner, the defendant, and the normal man will be confounded, perplexed, and dazed assuming that various councils work out pay distinctively founded on similar conditions. On the off chance that there is a huge distinction in how much pay granted by various courts in view of indistinguishable conditions, it will prompt disappointment and doubt in the framework."

Numerous thoughts for improving British regulation to check and reward clinical complaints have been made, for instance through adjustments to the NHS Redress Act, 2006, however not a solitary one of them have been executed. The circumstance in Pakistan with respect to harms is likewise not empowering and requires critical assessment.

**Pakistan Penal Code (P.P.C.)**

Aside from the 'Law of Torts' and the 'Lethal Accident Act, 1885,' specialists can likewise be gone after for gross carelessness and unfortunate behavior under the Pakistan Penal Code's Qiss and Diyat (299-338C) arrangements. These parts are irrelevant to clinical unfortunate behavior in any capacity. These bits, then again, manage the overall regulation of Qatl-e-Khata.The phrases connecting with 'Qatl-I-Khata,' Daman, Diyat, and Arsh are urgent with regards to clinical wrongdoing. "Whoever, with no craving to cause demise of, or hurt, an individual causes passing of such individual, either unintentionally of act or accidentally of reality, is said to commit qatl-I-khata," as per Section 318 of the Pakistan Penal Code. Accordingly, a clinical professional might be accused of clinical negligence under the P.P.C. assuming that he inflicts any kind of damage or passing unintentionally of lead or truth. Courts, then again, are reluctant to accuse the specialists of criminal carelessness. The Learned Court in Muhammad Aslam versus Dr. Imtiaz Ali Mughal commented that the

degree of carelessness should be fundamentally higher for it to be viewed as a crook act, for example gross carelessness or foolishness.

**Disciplinary Action**

**Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC)**

One more choice for the disappointed gatherings is to enlist a grumbling with the PMDC against the specialists' clinical carelessness. The PMDC has given an overarching set of principles for specialists in Pakistan to keep as rules. Whenever a protest is made to PM&DC about a specialist's misconduct or negligence, these rules act as a measuring stick by which the specialist's activities are estimated.

The component for managing the issue of clinical misbehavior by specialists is framed in Section 27 of the code. It shows that the PMDC's disciplinary board of trustees would research what is going on by checking on the records and meeting the pertinent gatherings. It will communicate its discoveries to the chief board for disciplinary activity assuming it is fulfilled that the standards of the code have been disregarded and the issue is not kidding to the point of justifying disciplinary activity against the clinical expert. At the point when the case arrives at the chief council, it will choose whether to acknowledge or dismiss the report. It has the choice of mentioning a more intensive request or tolerating the discoveries without amendment and giving disciplinary activities against the clinical expert. Disciplinary still up in the air dependent upon the situation. It very well may be as a basic advance notice. A specialist's permit may be briefly suspended. On the off chance that the reality of the misbehavior warrants it, it might possibly bring about long-lasting avoidance from PMDC. It will inform the neighborhood wellbeing authority and distribute a notification in its paper with respect to the specialist's ejection.

- Area 4 of the Punjab Healthcare Commission Act 2010 engages the Commission to hold a request and explore any medical care supplier's negligence administrations and issue coming about orders, and to practice the authorities of a common court to carry out its orders, on the utilization of any oppressed individual.
- Clinical carelessness is characterized in Section 19 of a similar Act as when a medical services specialist organization doesn't practice sensible consideration and watchfulness with sane capability the aptitude that he or his staff had.
- Area 26 of the Healthcare Commission Acts 2010 and 2013 (Punjab and Sindh, individually) gives that where the conditions of a case license activity under some other regulation, the Commission is engaged to allude any case to the chief specialists or policing

for proper activity under important regulations. Subsequently, when the Commission has closed its examination and verified that the charges evened out against the blamed medical services proficient are upheld by significant proof, the case might be alluded to the suitable specialists.

- Area 23 of the Act frames the commission's examination component as well as the means expected to record a grievance.
- Area 28 gives the Commission the power to settle and force fines of up to 500,000 rupees, contingent upon the idea of the infraction, yet solely after giving the person who will be punished a suitable chance to be heard. On the off chance that the protest is viewed as bogus, the complainant could confront a fine of up to 200,000 rupees.

Consequently, Punjab Healthcare Commission is an administration run medical care association. Patients who have been treated in Punjab and have encountered carelessness have the choice of documenting a grievance with the Punjab Healthcare Commission. The Punjab Healthcare Commission (PHC) Act 2010 characterizes clinical carelessness as follows: "clinical carelessness" as" an instance in which a patient suffers harm or dies as a result of poor medical treatment therapy, not set in stone by a clinical post-mortem report on account of death. "As a semi legal power, the Punjab Healthcare Commission might research any matter including maladministration, negligence, or disappointment with respect to a medical care specialist organization or a representative of a medical care administration. It has the power to gather individuals and expect them to make a solemn vow and give declaration. It has the power to constrain individuals to give archives and to affirm on testimonies. It has the power to have its organization done by leader and policing.

**Healthcare Commission of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa:** The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Healthcare Commission controls both public and private medical services in the territory of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. On the 27th of January, 2015, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Care Commission Act 2015 was proclaimed. It is the replacement to the Health Regulation Authority, which was laid out in 2002. The Health Regulation Authority performed the same tasks, but due to its lack of effectiveness, it was replaced with a healthcare commission.

**Healthcare commission of Sindh:** Sindh Healthcare Commission was established in 2015, following the passage of the Sindh Healthcare Commission Act, 2013, on February 24, 2014, and promulgation on March 19, 2014. The main goals of the Healthcare Commission are to improve healthcare quality, protect patients' rights, ensure doctors' safety, regulate and

monitor public and private healthcare facilities, and eliminate quackery.

Medical services Standards are Changing and Being Monitored Various regulations have been established in Pakistan to direct, develop, and screen medical services guidelines, as well as to guarantee that the soul of the regulation is followed. Laws have been classified into the following categories based on the dimensions of liabilities they recognize:

1. The Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) Act 2020 is the first step in establishing a medical commission in Pakistan.
2. Regulations of the Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC).
3. Act of the Medical commission of 2020
4. Civil Obligations per Law of tort and Section 19 the Civil Procedure Code (1908).
5. The Consumer Protection system establishes the accompanying regulations on the issue.
6. Under the Pakistan Penal Code 1860, there is a criminal responsibility. Liability under the Criminal Procedure Code
7. Health Care Commission Acts Disciplinary Action

**DISSCUSSION**

Wellbeing regulations are being carried out. An absence of obligation is connected to lacking execution and consistence with wellbeing regulations. Such difficulties can be survived assuming critical results are ordered and implemented through thorough observing and audit. Assets and authoritative limit are restricted in immature nations like Pakistan, and the general set of laws is postponed, making the execution of wellbeing standards and norms (which is an asset concentrated action) tricky. Permitting and assessments have for quite some time been utilized as administrative strategies to ensure that regulations are followed (15). Other non-industrial nations have utilized official notification and public revelation all things considered, and have tracked down that a mix of these actions, known as a "flowing pecking order of assents," is the best (15). Taking on comparable proportions of guideline and responsibility in Pakistan's wellbeing regulation could be gainful.

To start, we really want an organized and exhaustive methodology from the public authority to emergency clinics, instructive foundations, instructors, and specialists working, and second, authorization measures should be immovably characterized and upheld. Denial or retraction of a permit wouldn't be a viable measure to take on account of clinical misbehavior; all things considered, we want an ever-evolving way to deal with managing this crime, for example, setting a specialist under the severe oversight of an expert in the field designated by the Authority in the event that he is observed careless in his space of training

and influences the privileges of patients or people related with him. It would be an insult to the local area assuming that we removed an individual's permit who has gotten in excess of 10 million Rupees in instruction and preparing. For specialists who practice secretly, it is feasible to have a letter given by a trustworthy power, for example, an administration office or a senior advisor under whose watch the specialist has gotten preparing, showed at the specialist's facility. Assuming medical care specialist organizations are straightforwardly obligated for inability to lay out an appropriate medical care the executive's framework, brief treatment of possible patients, legitimate and solid preparation of specialists and paramedical staff, satisfactory meds and testing offices, and appropriate staffing levels, it could go about as an obstruction. A feasible framework should be created to check the capability of its medical care laborers at customary spans, while the public authority ought to foster means to check assuming that organizations are giving nonstop limit working of their staff and capability of establishments or not, and some kind of rating rules ought to be created to help rivalry among institutions. Hospital foundation ought to be intended to make life simpler for the two specialists and patients (Acemoglu and Jackson, 2017). Mostly Pakistani state medical clinics, the distress of simply getting fundamental lab tests finished is more regrettable than the patient's genuine aggravation. Fundamental wellbeing offices should be reinforced, and their abilities ought to be moved along. The burden on tertiary consideration emergency clinics would be shared. Specialists' obligation hours ought to be suitably controlled. It has been observed that the majority of junior specialists work for more than thirty two hours a day on a consistent basis, which is very tough to do while providing exceptional service. Various groups have suggested that there be a 24-hour off-the-clock time frame.

## CONCLUSION

In cases of medical malpractice in Pakistan, tort law is employed as a legal remedy. Judges are reluctant to prosecute doctors under the Pakistan Penal Code, preferring to pursue civil liability cases instead. Following Indian precedent, Pakistan has given Consumer Courts the ability to hear such complaints. As a result, it is advocated that separate medical malpractice legislation be enacted. This research uncovered a number of gray areas in legal and implementation methods, both of which are necessary for opulent law enforcement. The medical profession is a noble one that requires a great deal of caution and attention. Regardless of whether there is a law monitoring their acts, A physician cannot ignore or dismiss the spiritual role he is expected to perform in carrying out his duties, as well as the

moral principles to which he or she must conform or is ethically bound (Sher, 2006). The entire healthcare system may be improved and overhauled to answer complaints, fulfill legislative mandates, and enforce the Constitution's fundamental rights. Medical misconduct is prosecuted in a variety of ways in Pakistan's legal system. In the majority of cases involving medical misconduct in Pakistan, tort law is applied. Provincial legislatures enacted Consumer Protection Acts to prosecute medical doctors who engage in unethical behavior. This is a more expedient answer than alternative legal choices, but it reinforces consumerist values in the medical field. Pakistan is considering enacting a separate 'Medical Malpractice Act,' which would govern liability for medical practitioners' negligence.

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