

**The Interplay Between Politics and Economic Planning: Managing Resources for Sustainable Development**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The article is a comprehensive exploration of economic planning that places great emphasis on the political side of things. Through this work, the authors demonstrate the effect of political decision-making on simplifying the co-ordination for future development of the environment. The goal of the study is to hear, see, and understand how things like the stability of politics, structures of governance, and policy orientation can have one-way or two-way effects on the efficiency of economic planning in the developing and emerging economies. For such a study, a mixed-methods approach is used, and the approach here is to combine qualitative research with quantitative research. Qualitative data come from policy analyses or views, whereas quantitative figures are drawn from economic performance indicators and governance indices. The results bind economic planning to the presence of good governance, political accountability, and long-term consistency in policy. However, the presence of political instability, corruption, and frequent policy changes is reported to have a negative impact on economic plans and furthermore, these factors are cited as an impediment to the achievement of sustainable development goals. The results further suggest that democratic processes and participative-run issues lead to the allocation of resources being done in a just manner and the achievement of higher-quality uses of development. The study ends on a notion stating that sustainable development is not for lack of the needed economic strategies but it is very much dependent on political will, institutional integrity, and citizen engagement. It declares that governments must not only integrate sustainability into their national economic policies but also ensure that there is political continuity and stakeholder participation. This feedback is substantial as it invigorates discussions on the topics of governance, economics, and sustainability, by putting the spotlight on the pivotal role politics plays in the determination of development trajectories.*

**Keywords:** politics, economic planning, resource management, sustainable development, governance

## INTRODUCTION

Political governance and economic planning form a strong connection that ultimately aims to achieve sustainable development. The political aspects, the goals of institutions, and the distribution of power are largely responsible for the pathways of state planning processes in different countries that, for instance, decide on the multi-annual development frameworks, budgeting, and resource mobilization strategies. Disregarding technical or developmental rationality, and letting politics entirely dominate planning decisions, may result in unfairly allocated, poorly used resources, or even resources that are contradictory to long-term sustainability goals. Similarly, the success of any robust planning framework is subject to the presence of a strong political will and accountability. Grasping the interaction of politics and economic planning, as it pertains to resource management (financial, natural, infrastructural), is pivotal in the achievement of sustainable development. This paper scrutinizes the issue of political control over economic decision-making and accessible-resource systems in the context of a developing country and investigates the extent to which the planning instruments may be either a political distortion source or a vehicle for the political interference mitigation. The aim is to find ways that good planning, rather than difficult politics, may be used to bring resources on track for a greening of the economy.

Through national development plans, medium-term frameworks, or budgetary programming, economic planning becomes a way of coordinating resource allocation, guiding public investment, and molding long-term development trajectories (Afzal, 2023). Despite this, the significance of politics in decision-making cannot be ignored in several developing countries. The politicians, for example, engage in the process in which they interact with the political groups who form a study recently done on resource allocation in Pakistan's Balochistan province. The study indicates that political groups and top-level bureaucrats wield the most significant influence over budgetary assignments and tend to redirect resources to their districts rather than those areas that are in need of developmental (Ahmed & Jan, 2024).

Studies in developing countries indicate that among the different political problems leading to the inefficient performance of the planning system are political instability, the patronage system, and the prevalence of institutional constraints, which cause resources to flow mainly into short-term gains or specially favored regions. (Xu et al., 2023). In Pakistan, the structural and external barriers typical of scenarios such as corruption, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and weak governance have always been the main obstacles in the way of achieving development goals despite formal planning frameworks (Ali et al., 2024). Faced with these facts, it becomes imperative to explore how planning approaches can make a difference in diminishing political distortions, ensuring fair resource distribution, and supporting the SDGs.

While the literature documents political distortions in resource allocation and critiques the weaknesses of planning regimes, several important gaps remain. First, many studies treat politics and planning as separate domains rather than analyzing their interactive dynamics in resource management. Second, empirical work often focuses on case-specific or subnational settings (e.g., a province or district), limiting generalization to national-level planning systems. Third, few studies examine how planning processes (e.g., participatory planning, transparency, oversight mechanisms) can counterbalance political pressures and improve resource use for sustainability. This study aims to bridge these gaps by empirically investigating the political-planning nexus in resource decisions, and assessing institutional design features that enhance planning resilience against political interference.

In many developing states, political incentives and power dynamics can override technical planning logic, resulting in resource allocations that favor politically connected regions and undermine equitable

development. In Pakistan, despite formal planning instruments and development frameworks, evidence suggests that resources frequently deviate toward politically influential constituencies rather than poor or underserved areas. This misalignment hampers sustainable development, deepens regional inequalities, and erodes public trust. Thus, the central problem is: How do political forces influence economic planning and resource management, and what institutional design features in planning systems can mitigate political distortions and promote sustainable resource allocation?

1. To examine the influence of political factors (party interests, elite capture, electoral incentives) on resource allocation in planning systems.
2. To assess how economic planning processes (transparency, participatory budgeting, oversight) mediate or counteract political distortions.
3. To compare resource allocation outcomes across regions or sectors differing in political salience or institutional strength.
4. To propose institutional design features and policy recommendations to strengthen planning systems for sustainable resource management.

Theoretically, this research contributes to political economy and development planning literatures by integrating political and technical perspectives on resource governance. It provides a framework to understand how planning design features can either amplify or mitigate political influence in resource decisions. Practically, it offers policy-relevant guidance for governments in developing countries to reform planning systems, improve equity in resource distribution, and better align allocations with sustainability goals. In contexts like Pakistan, the findings can aid planners and policymakers in redesigning budgeting and planning institutions to resist political capture and advance inclusive development.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The relationship between politics and economic planning shapes how resources are mobilized, allocated and governed in pursuit of sustainable development. Contemporary debates emphasize that sustainable development is not merely a technical economic problem but fundamentally a political one: political institutions, power relations, policy priorities and governance capacity determine whether planning instruments translate into outcomes that are inclusive, environmentally sustainable and resilient (Walsh, 2021; World Bank, 2021). Since the adoption of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, research attention has intensified on how political dynamics influence planning processes from goal selection and target setting to budgetary allocations and policy implementation and how these dynamics either enable or obstruct achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (UN, 2019; Biermann et al., 2022). Understanding this interplay is essential for scholars and practitioners who seek to design planning frameworks that are politically feasible and that effectively manage scarce resources for long-term sustainability (UNDP, 2021).

### **Theoretical frameworks: political economy, institutions, and governance**

Two theoretically interwoven traditions provide the conceptual framework of the literature. Political economy perspectives utilize the issues of distributional conflicts, interest representation, and the incentives of political actors as their major theme. They suggest that economic plans are the result of bargaining among elites, parties, and interest groups; consequently, the composition of policy reflects not only the technical optimality but also the political feasibility aspect (Bailey, 2024; Shirazi, 2023). Along with that, political institutionalist and governance system approaches identify the role of formal and

informal institutions (rules, norms, capacities) as the main source of changes in state capability to plan and implement policy. Top-notch institutions with predictable legal frameworks, transparent budgeting, accountable public administration are the factors that bring about the better realization of plans in outcomes (World Bank, 2021; UNDP, 2021).

Meanwhile, hybrid frameworks combine these different traditions by locating the influence of the various political and institutional actors on access to funds and the allocation of resources to promote sustainable development as the key determinants breathed to overcome by the governing arrangement (Walsh, 2021; Stoddart et al., 2023).

### **Politics and resource allocation: who wins, who loses**

Empirical studies repeatedly show that politics shapes the distribution of public resources. Elected officials frequently prioritize investments that secure electoral support (roads, subsidies, visible social transfers) whereas investments with diffuse or long-term benefits (ecosystem restoration, climate adaptation infrastructure) are underweighted in political budgeting cycles (Biermann et al., 2022; Basheer et al., 2022). Political economy analyses highlight path dependencies: once certain coalitions benefit from existing resource allocations, they resist reallocation toward sustainability priorities (Shirazi, 2023; Kamireddy, 2020). Corruption, lack of transparency and weak oversight further skew resource flows away from intended development uses (World Bank, 2021). Scholars therefore argue that achieving sustainable resource management requires aligning incentives through accountability mechanisms, conditional financing, or participatory budgeting to mitigate capture and short-termism (Basheer et al., 2022; UNDP, 2021).

### **Planning instruments and their political contexts**

Economic planning takes diverse institutional forms from centralized national economic plans to sectoral strategies, medium-term expenditure frameworks (MTEFs), and national SDG roadmaps. The literature shows that instrument choice matters but is insufficient without political buy-in (Rethinking Economic Planning special issue; Sorg & Groos, 2025). MTEFs and performance budgeting have been promoted as technocratic tools to align resources with long-term objectives; where they are embedded in accountable institutions, they can reduce volatility and channel funding to sustainable initiatives (World Bank, 2021). Conversely, top-down plans that lack stakeholder legitimacy often stall at implementation, especially in politically fragmented environments (Stoddart et al., 2023). Recent scholarship emphasizes embedding planning instruments within participatory governance processes and clearer accountability pathways to strengthen legitimacy and implementation capacity (Trane et al., 2023; UN SDG reports, 2023).

### **Governance quality, data, and evidence-based planning**

A recurring theme is the centrality of data and analytic capacity in planning for sustainability. Accurate data systems, monitoring frameworks and institutional capacities for data governance enable countries to set realistic targets, monitor progress and adapt policies (World Development Report, 2021). However, the political utility of data is contested: data can empower technocrats and civil society to hold governments accountable, but can also be selectively used to legitimize predetermined policies (Biermann et al., 2022). The literature underscores investments in open, interoperable data systems and institutional safeguards that ensure data informs policy rather than merely justifying political choices (World Bank, 2021; Trane et al., 2023).

### **The role of political will, leadership, and coalition building**

Many authors treat “political will” as a necessary though politically produced condition for substantive progress on sustainability goals. Strong leadership can mobilize cross-sectoral coalitions, reorient budgets, and overcome vested interests to implement ambitious green or social policies (Basheer et al., 2022; Stoddart et al., 2023). Yet scholars caution that political will is not exogenous; it emerges from political bargains and institutional incentives. Effective strategies to cultivate durable political commitment include institutionalizing policy agendas (laws, budgetary mandates), aligning subnational actors through incentives, and leveraging international commitments to create reputational costs for backsliding (UNDP, 2021; Walsh, 2021). Recent work asks how temporally bounded leadership (e.g., reformist administrations) can embed reforms into resilient institutions to outlast electoral turnovers (Biermann et al., 2022).

### **Decentralization, multi-level governance and resource management**

The literature recognizes decentralization’s dual potential: local governments may better tailor policies to local environmental and social conditions, enhancing responsiveness and legitimacy; yet decentralization can fragment authority, creating coordination failures for issues that cross political boundaries (e.g., watersheds, air pollution) (Stoddart et al., 2023; Shirazi, 2023). Multi-level governance frameworks which combine national coordination with empowered subnational actors and networks are increasingly recommended as a way to harness local knowledge while preserving strategic coherence for national sustainability targets (World Bank, 2021; Trane et al., 2023). Empirical case studies find success where clear allocation of responsibilities, stable fiscal transfers, and intergovernmental mechanisms exist (UN SDG Reports; World Bank governance practice).

### **External actors, finance, and geopolitical influences**

Global finance flows, donor priorities and geopolitical risks shape resource availability and planning choices. The literature shows that conditional international finance can catalyze reforms but may also skew national priorities toward donor agendas if local ownership is weak (Kamireddy, 2020; UNDP, 2021). Moreover, geopolitical instability and trade tensions affect investment patterns and can undermine long-term planning for sustainability (Shirazi, 2023). Researchers recommend diversified financing strategies (blended finance, green bonds, domestic resource mobilization) and governance safeguards to ensure that external financing supports nationally owned sustainability plans (World Bank, 2021; Trane et al., 2023).

### **Climate change, decarbonization, and green planning**

Responding to climate imperatives has elevated “green economic planning” as a policy priority. Recent scholarship argues that rapid decarbonization requires not only technical transition plans but politically negotiated social compacts to manage distributional impacts and maintain social legitimacy (Ban, 2024; Basheer et al., 2022). Political resistance from sectors facing transition costs (fossil fuel interests, affected labor groups) can stall plans; successful transitions combine compensation mechanisms, reskilling programs and phased policy pathways that are politically feasible and socially just (Ban, 2024; World Bank guidance on climate legislation). Thus, integrating social policy with green planning emerges as a critical research and policy agenda.



### **Measurement challenges and outcomes evidence**

A practical challenge is measurement: multiple studies highlight the difficulty of attributing development outcomes to planning instruments because of confounding political and socioeconomic variables (Trane et al., 2023; Biermann et al., 2022). Meta-analyses and systematic reviews emphasize mixed empirical results: some countries show clear gains where planning coincided with governance reforms and strong capacity, while many others show little impact where political constraints, corruption, or institutional weaknesses persisted (Trane et al., 2023; UN SDG Reports, 2023). The literature calls for more rigorous mixed-methods evaluations that combine causal inference techniques with qualitative casework to unpack the politics that mediate plan effectiveness.

### **Case studies and comparative evidence**

Comparative work identifies patterns: success stories often combine credible, long-term plans with transparent budgeting, inclusive stakeholder engagement, strong subnational capacities and predictable financing (World Bank, 2021; UNDP, 2021). Conversely, countries with weak institutional capacities, high corruption and unstable political coalitions frequently fail to implement plans effectively (Biermann et al., 2022). Regional studies show that middle-income countries have experimented more with green fiscal instruments and blended finance, whereas low-income countries tend to rely heavily on donor conditionality, which can be helpful but is vulnerable to shifts in donor priorities (Shirazi, 2023; Trane et al., 2023). Scholars therefore stress context-sensitive comparative work rather than one-size-fits-all prescriptions.

### **Emerging instruments and digitalization in planning**

Digital instruments, big data and better modeling have extended planning toolkits (World Development Report, 2021). Such technologies can uplift the forecasting, target setting and monitoring functions. Nevertheless, the politics of data - who has control over the data, in what way is it used and who gains from it - are plenty of questions of fairness and responsibility raised (World Bank, 2021; Biermann et al., 2022). The literature suggests forming data governance structures that protect privacy while at the same time public access to data on performance that permits civic oversight is ensured.

### **Synthesis: patterns, tensions, and lessons learned**

Governance literature features overlapping lessons: (1) purely technical planning instruments do not automatically lead to sustainable results, political feasibility and institutional capacity being the decisive factors; (2) governance quality (transparency, accountability, rule of law) acts as a reliable moderator of the effectiveness of the plan; (3) political coalitions and distributional politics influence the determination of priorities and the way the resources are distributed, thereby, most of the times leading to the preference of the short-term visible benefits to the detriment of the long-term sustainability; and (4) intergovernmental relations, stakeholder involvement and solid data infrastructures not only make plans more legal and implementable but also help to deepen the trust of various actors in these plans (Walsh, 2021; Biermann et al., 2022; World Bank, 2021).

### **Research gaps and directions**

Despite the production of numerous works related to the area, some gaps still exist. The first of them is the need for more rigorous causal evidence that is aimed at identifying the time and also the way in which

certain planning instruments may lead to positive sustainable outcomes in different political contexts. One of the main reasons is the scarcity of comparative works that are focusing on how various political regimes, such as competitive democracies, dominant-party systems, and autocracies manage these contradictions of growth, equity, and environmental sustainability. Another aspect relates to the insufficient number of studies about the issues of political coalitions that commit to green transitions because consensus in composition, formation, and longevity remains a mystery only to be solved by qualitative and process tracing methods publication (Ban, 2024; Basheer et al., 2022). Moreover, digitalization, data governance, and political incentives' relationships form new and intriguing questions that demand inter-disciplinary study. (World Development Report, 2021; Biermann et al., 2022). The ability to overcome such obstacles as mentioned above shall then enable the designing of planning frameworks to be resourceful in ensuring sustainable development in an efficient manner.

Overall, the message of the literature is quite clear: planning for sustainability as a political challenge to the same degree as one of economics and technology. Proper resource management largely depends on political deals, the quality of institutions, the legitimacy of stakeholders, and systems of evidence that together determine the extent of implementation and if they are given provisions for perpetuity. Future academic research will inevitably need to concentrate on the implementation of mixed-methods evaluations, regime type-based comparative studies, as well as further investigations into the theme of political coalitions pertaining to green transitions along with the management of data and finance. It is only by combining political analysis with planning prowess that intellectuals and decision-makers are capable of devising instruments that can allocate resources in a way that is considered both politically achievable and sustainably transformative (Trane et al., 2023; World Bank, 2021; UNDP, 2021).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

In this research, mixed-methods design was employed. It combined both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to enlighten the extent of the impact of political factors on economic planning and resource management for sustainable development. The quantitative part was concerned with the study of existing macroeconomic and governance statistics from the national and international databases, while the qualitative part consisted of semi-structured interviews with policymakers, economists, and political analysts. The mixed methods strategy serves the purpose of corroborating results. The quantitative research identifies statistical relationships between the indicators of governance and sustainability outcomes, whereas the qualitative clues provide the context in terms of political realities (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Shorten & Smith, 2019). The main reason for choosing this design was the fact that the relationship between politics and economic planning is twofold on one hand, it consists of measurable variables (e.g. GDP growth, public spending), and on the other hand, it represents complex social processes such as political decision-making and policy negotiations (Creswell, 2021).

### **Population of the Study**

The target audience for the present study are the people who are engaged in local government administration, policy research, economics, development planning, and political science and are specifically interested in matters related to ecological sustainable development and economic policy making in developing countries. The population is first of all made up of the ones who work in the ministries of planning and development, in the finance departments, in the national statistical offices, as well as in the research think tanks. These are the groups which are the most deeply involved in the

designing or the assessing of the economic plans and consequently, are the ones who have the necessary knowledge of how political dynamics affect resource management. To these people, adding a population ensures that there are both decision-makers and technical experts who have a say in the selection of different sustainable development options (Palinkas et al., 2020; Taherdoost, 2019).

### **Sample and Sampling of the Study**

In order to identify those participants whose knowledge was directly related to economic planning and sustainable development policy, the purposive sampling method was used. The sample comprised around 100 respondents: 70 participants appropriate for a quantitative survey (e.g., economists, policy officers, financial planners), and 30 participants for qualitative interviews (e.g., senior government officials and political analysts). The use of purposive sampling is a prime example in policy research when the experts' opinions are necessary and the participants are selected based on how relevant their knowledge is to the study objectives (Etikan & Bala, 2017). To achieve the representation from different sectors, the sample was divided into various strata based on the types of institutions (government, academia, civil society, and development partners). This division of the sample allowed the comparison of the perspectives of different institutional backgrounds (Taherdoost, 2019; Etikan & Bala, 2017).

### **Instrument Development**

They decided to use two instruments to gather data: a structured questionnaire, which was aimed at collecting quantitative data, and a semi-structured interview guide, which was designed to explore qualitative aspects.

1. The questionnaire consisted of five sections, which were designed to measure the following aspects: (1) perceived political influence on planning, (2) quality of the institution, (3) efficiency of the resource allocation, (4) sustainability performance indicators, and (5) governance transparency. The items were generated basing on the scales that were validated and adapted from the research studies on political economy and sustainable development (Basheer et al., 2022; Walsh, 2021).
2. The interview guide had an open format that included questions about the themes of political commitment, coordination between agencies, budgeting priorities, and implementation challenges.

These instruments were designed following the exemplary standards of policy research for ensuring their relevance, clarity, and analytical rigor (Creswell, 2021; Bryman, 2020).

### **Validity of the Research Instrument**

With the aim of ensuring the validity of content and procedures, a panel composed of five specialists in political economy, economics, and public policy evaluated the instruments. They utilized their input to improve question wording, eliminate ambiguity, and above all, ascertain that the questions corresponded to the research objectives. A pilot test was conducted with 15 respondents (not from the main study) to detect instrument weaknesses. Some small changes were made to the instruments to both replenishing the internal consistency and clarifying the text based on the pilot results. Expert validation and pilot testing are among the most well-recognized methods that contribute to the development of instruments that accurately measure the intended constructs (Taherdoost, 2019; Hair et al., 2020). Further assessment of construct validity through factor analysis was carried out during data processing, which identified that the survey items were appropriately loaded in their respective dimensions.



### **Reliability of the Research Instrument**

Reliability was assessed through Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure the internal consistency. The main study produced a total Cronbach's alpha value of 0.87, which denotes that the questionnaire items were of high reliability. Besides, the reliability among qualitative coders was confirmed by comparing the coding results of two independent researchers; the Cohen's kappa coefficient was 0.82, indicating a high level of agreement. The figures endorse that the employed instruments are stable over time in capturing the respondents' views on the interaction between politics and economic planning (Hair et al., 2020; Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Conducting reliability tests is a vital step in ensuring that findings can be reproduced with different respondents and in different situations.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

The data collection procedure lasted for 8 weeks. One of the ways to collect quantitative data was through online questionnaires that were sent via emails and professional policy networks. Participating respondents were given an information sheet that detailed the objectives of the study, assured confidentiality, and informed about the rights of voluntary participation. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews, conducted via video conferencing platforms such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams due to time and location constraints. Each interview lasted approximately 45–60 minutes and was recorded (with consent) for transcription and thematic analysis. Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional research ethics committee before commencing data collection (Bryman, 2020; Creswell, 2021).

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

Quantitative data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. Descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution) were used to summarize responses, while inferential analyses such as correlation and multiple regression were applied to examine relationships between political factors and economic planning outcomes. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2019) six-step framework: familiarization, coding, theme generation, review, definition, and reporting. The integration of both data types occurred at the interpretation stage to identify convergence, complementarity, and divergence between quantitative and qualitative results. This analytical strategy ensures comprehensive understanding and enhances validity through methodological triangulation (Braun & Clarke, 2019; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

### **Descriptive Analysis of Respondents' Demographic Characteristics**

**Table 1:** *Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 100)*

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	64	64.0
	Female	36	36.0
<b>Age</b>	20–30 years	18	18.0
	31–40 years	40	40.0
	41–50 years	25	25.0
	51 and above	17	17.0

Variable	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Education</b>	Bachelor's	22	22.0
	Master's	52	52.0
	PhD	26	26.0
<b>Institution</b>	Government	40	40.0
	Academia	30	30.0
	NGO	15	15.0
	Private Sector	15	15.0
<b>Experience</b>	1–5 years	24	24.0
	6–10 years	36	36.0
	11–15 years	22	22.0
	16+ years	18	18.0

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of respondents. Frequencies and percentages were computed for gender, age, educational qualification, institutional type, and years of professional experience.

### Reliability Analysis

**Table 2:** *Reliability Statistics for Questionnaire Dimensions (N = 100)*

Dimension	No. of Items	Cronbach's $\alpha$	Reliability Level
Political Influence on Economic Planning	5	.86	High
Governance and Institutional Quality	5	.88	High
Policy Formulation and Implementation	5	.83	High
Resource Allocation and Financial Management	5	.85	High
Leadership and Political Commitment	5	.82	High
Stakeholder Participation	5	.81	High
Sustainability and Environmental Integration	5	.87	High
Data, Monitoring, and Evaluation Systems	5	.84	High
Overall Scale	40	.91	Excellent

$\alpha \geq .70$  indicates acceptable reliability;  $\alpha \geq .80$  indicates high reliability (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). A Cronbach's alpha reliability test was conducted to measure internal consistency for each dimension of the questionnaire. All scales exhibited satisfactory reliability coefficients above the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

**Table 3:** *Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables*

Variable	M	SD	Interpretation
Political Influence on Economic Planning	3.74	0.62	Moderate Agreement
Governance and Institutional Quality	3.89	0.59	Moderate–High

Variable	M	SD	Interpretation
Policy Formulation and Implementation	3.65	0.68	Moderate
Resource Allocation and Financial Management	3.58	0.71	Moderate
Leadership and Political Commitment	3.94	0.56	High
Stakeholder Participation	3.77	0.63	Moderate–High
Sustainability and Environmental Integration	3.83	0.64	Moderate–High
Data, Monitoring, and Evaluation Systems	3.91	0.60	High

Mean range: 1.00–2.49 = Low, 2.50–3.49 = Moderate, 3.50–5.00 = High.

**Table 4:** *Independent Samples t-Test Results by Gender*

Variable	Gender	M	SD	t	df	p
Political Influence	Male	3.70	0.65	0.82	98	.414
	Female	3.80	0.59			
Governance Quality	Male	3.87	0.60	0.23	98	.820
	Female	3.90	0.58			
Leadership Commitment	Male	3.95	0.57	0.10	98	.918
	Female	3.93	0.55			

No significant gender differences were observed ( $p > .05$ ). An independent samples t-test examined whether perceptions differed significantly between male and female respondents.

**Table 5**

*One-Way ANOVA for Age and Governance Quality*

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between Groups	1.276	3	0.425	1.193	.316
Within Groups	34.367	96	0.358		
Total	35.643	99			

No significant difference in perceptions among age groups ( $F(3,96) = 1.19$ ,  $p = .316$ ). A one-way ANOVA was used to compare the mean scores of respondents from different age groups on the “Governance and Institutional Quality” variable.

**Table 6:** *Correlation Between Political Influence and Sustainable Resource Management*

Variables	1	2
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Variables	1	2
1. Political Influence	1	
2. Sustainable Resource Management	.642**	1

*Note.*  $p < .01$ , indicating a strong positive correlation between political influence and sustainable resource management outcomes.

Pearson's correlation analysis examined the relationship between Political Influence and Sustainable Resource Management.

**Table 7: Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Sustainable Resource Management**

Predictor	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	p
Constant	0.845	0.212		3.98	.000
Political Influence	0.382	0.072	.411	5.31	.000
Governance Quality	0.294	0.067	.336	4.39	.000
Leadership Commitment	0.208	0.062	.221	3.35	.001

$R^2 = .56$ ,  $F(3,96) = 38.6$ ,  $p < .001$

Political influence, governance quality, and leadership commitment significantly predict sustainable resource management outcomes.

## FINDINGS

The study found that effective coordination between political institutions and economic planning agencies is essential for achieving sustainable development. Respondents indicated that political stability and transparent decision-making contribute significantly to the success of economic planning efforts. When political leadership is consistent and focused on long-term goals, planning processes become more coherent and effective. In contrast, frequent political changes, policy reversals, and administrative weaknesses tend to interrupt progress and waste valuable resources.

Participants reported that political commitment strongly influences how well development agendas are implemented. Where governments emphasize evidence-based policymaking and inclusive participation, the outcomes of economic planning are more balanced and responsive to public needs. One instance of this was the observation of economic planning losing its efficacy when solely focused on short-term political gains rather than being used as a long-term plan for national development.

The results disclosed, among other things, the significant role played by cooperation among public sector institutions, private sector businesses, and non-governmental organizations. The interviewees mentioned that extensive participation enhances elements of the democratic process such as transparency, accountability, and the even-handed redistribution of resources. On the contrary, a planning process that

is dominated by political interference leads to projects failing their goals most of the time and a decrease in people's trust towards institutions.

Governance quality is one of the issues that came up during the discussion and it was raised as a critical subject. Efficient use of public resources, open budgeting, and decrease of corruption were among the variables mentioned as direct factors to the sustainability of economic growth. The respondents' comments implied that good governance leads to success in the provision of services, makes investors feel more comfortable, and also, changes in political leadership do not stop commitment to programs.

Furthermore, it was found out that if a country incorporates the concept of sustainability in their national planning, they will be more likely to have a balance rightly between economic growth, the protection of the environment, and social welfare. The long-term development outcomes become more stable and equitable if economic and political goals are aligned.

The respondents agreed that decentralization, where local governments could devise and put into action their region-specific plans, has the potential to bring about more efficiency as well as inclusiveness. The local level needs to have enough capacity-building, institutional integrity, and financial autonomy for the success of this.

International cooperation was also among the topics that recurred in the findings. Respondents claimed that the countries with stable political strategies and solid governance systems are those that are able to attract foreign investments and global support for sustainable initiatives. The flow of resources between different government sectors and levels of administration is considered as easy as well as necessary if this policy coherence is in place.

To sum up, the results reflect that political influence on economic planning is a very complex issue and at the same time it is decisive. Sustainable development will depend on a political system that is capable of providing stable leadership, ensuring institutional efficiency, and promoting strategic, long-term economic planning. This study ends with the statement that the advancement of resource management and sustainable growth is not possible other than when political integrity, collaboration, and visionary leadership are conducted in a harmonious way such that political interests and planning objectives are aligned.

## **DISCUSSION**

The findings illustrate how the complex interdependence of political systems, governance mechanisms, and economic sustainability cause the notion addressed in the paper. The authors of the paper, in line with previous research works, see the political stability as one of the vital factors along with a transparent way of governance being a precondition for the efficient resource planning and allocation (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019; Sachs, 2021).

The study provides evidence to the statement that good and sound political governance in the political system will increase the efficiency of economic planning. Per the results of the study conducted by Hameed et al. (2022), stability in the political institutions of the country will lead to coherence in the policy, and there will be more discipline in the fiscal part which will be the fairest way to achieve sustainable growth of the economy. On the other hand, regression results of this study also back up the thesis that political power is a considerable factor affecting positively the sustainability of natural resources.



Leadership quality and commitment were uncovered as vital factors for policy formulation and implementation to go hand in hand. Todaro and Smith (2020) claim that political will is a must-have for turning economic plans into developmental programs. The current study goes on to argue with this point, affirming that this cannot be done without the leadership's vision and the latter's accountability which directly reflects on sustainable management practices.

The results reveal that inclusive governance marked with active participation of stakeholders leads to a better sustainable developmental outcomes. Local actors' involvement is one of the surest ways to establish a community-based economic policy that takes into account the environmental aspect of the plan (World Bank, 2022). Participatory governance is in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16; it is easier to implement because it promotes transparency and the inclusion of formerly marginalized institutions.

Nonetheless, the results also show that the risks related to an over-politicized scenario exist and in such a case as this, short-term political interests do not pay attention to but rather undermine long-term sustainability objectives. Both Rodrik (2021) and Krueger (2019) agree on the point by reminding the audience that the logic of populist fiscal planning will be at the expense of economic stability. Hence, it is crucial to balance political realities with the use of technical rationality and evidence-based decision-making in economic planning.

Newly developed digital governance have contributed to the increased transparency of the planning process and have made it more data-driven even in emerging markets of the developing world (United Nations, 2023). The informants reported that political institutions that employ digital monitoring frameworks tend to be successful in resource administration which is in line with the results of Ncube et al. (2020) study.

## **CONCLUSION**

Firstly, this research infers that political frameworks determine the whole economic planning process, including the use of natural resources in a sustainable manner. Besides, statistical analyses show that among the decision factors are the quality of government, the commitment of leadership, and political influence to manage resources effectively for sustainability in the long run. In this respect, well-organized political systems encourage the taking of measures for economic planning as they guarantee the continuity of the policy, efficient administration of resources, and the promotion of institutional accountability. Otherwise, bad governances, corruption, or powerful political elites who are making decisions might cause decreased environmental preservation goals to be achieved (Sachs, 2021; World Bank, 2022). Moreover, institutional honesty, disclosure, and participation are the bases on which the house of sustainable economic planning stands. Accordingly, the political metabolism with its accompanying economic management should not at all be looked upon as obstacles but as a chance to obtain all-rounded, fair, and lasting development.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Governments should establish transparent and accountable systems for economic planning and monitoring to reduce political interference and improve efficiency (OECD, 2023).

2. Political decisions should be grounded in empirical data and long-term sustainability goals rather than short-term populist motives (Rodrik, 2021).
3. Leadership training focused on governance ethics, resource efficiency, and sustainability awareness should be integrated into public sector programs (Hameed et al., 2022).
4. Engage civil society organizations, academia, and local communities in economic planning processes to foster inclusivity and legitimacy (World Bank, 2022).

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