CIVIC IMAGINATION OF PAKISTANI YOUTH & CVE MESSAGING

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دیارِ عشق میں اپنا مقام پیدا کر   نیا زمانہ نئے صبح و شام پیدا کر

In the house of love, manifest your own station
A new era,
A new dawn,
A new end!

- Muhammad Iqbal

"We do not need magic to change the world; we carry all the power we
need inside ourselves already: we have the power to imagine better."

- J.K. Rowling

*This work is dedicated to the resilience of people of Pakistan, who despite
losing so much, do not stop dreaming of a better world.*

Civic Imagination of Pakistani Youth and CVE Messaging

Interim Summary

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Overview

This report provides an interim summary of the key insights generated through Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 of the exploratory research on the Civic Imagination in Pakistan. Connected to the Dil Say Pakistan campaign, all research phases sought to gain an initial understanding of the ways in which Pakistani youth currently perceive Pakistan, the persistent narratives that motivate and inspire them, the imagined possibilities that they hold for their country, and the change models they perceive to be desirable and possible within the current context.

Phase 1 of the research included interviews with youth who do not see themselves as civic leaders in their community. The respondents can be broadly categorized as English-speaking urbanized youth of Pakistan. These respondents do not currently lead initiatives and seldom contribute to social causes. They see themselves predominantly as consumers (rather than producers) activist-media content. Phase 2 of the research focused on youth who do see themselves as social and civic leaders. They are involved with various social and political causes, and, in some cases, see this as their primary occupation. The research scope also included a series of focus groups as Phase 3. The insights from these focus group discussions, while included here, did not yield all expected results. This was largely to due to a general reticence towards public expression among focus group participants that resulted in fewer than anticipated original insights from these group discussions.

Specifically, this summary report includes the following sections:

We anticipate that further discussion and coordination with the Dil Say Pakistan team will be necessary as we move forward with this research project.

I. Background on civic imagination concept and rationale for research in Pakistan

Drawing on the work of Henry Jenkins, Sangita Shresthova (Research Advisors to this project) and the Civic Paths Group at the University of Southern California, we define civic imagination as the capacity to imagine alternatives to current social, political, or economic conditions; one cannot change the world unless one can imagine what a better world might look like. Too often, our focus on contemporary problems makes it impossible to see beyond immediate constraints and engender a sense that youth voices and actions are inconsequential. Through their previous in-depth research, Jenkins and Shresthova found that young people are learning to identify and frame political issues in language that speaks to them and their peers. In turning toward icons and narratives borrowed from existing stories and popular media to express their civic identities and political concerns, youth are seeking a way to bridge divisions and differences that are making it hard for traditional approaches to move forward to solve persistent problems. Similar trends towards remixing popular culture towards political ends, towards fusing the creative energies of fans with the political commitments of activists, are being reported in countries around the world.

This movement from private toward public imagination often depends on images already familiar to participants from other contexts, images drawn not from political rhetoric but popular fantasy. The image bank through which we forge the civic imagination shifts from generation to generation and region to region: for the American civil rights movement in the 1950s, it might have been formed around the rhetoric of the black church with its talk of "crossing the River Jordan." In a similar vein, pro-democracy protesters in Czechoslovakia likely tapped Czech fairy tales as they literally jiggled their keys to "ring in" the end of the communist era in 1989. But, the emerging generation of young activists maintains a strong, close relationship to popular culture, and that shared vocabulary helps them to broker relations across different political groups. We have seen this happen when Superman, as a superhero whose legal status remains unclear, was harnessed by the immigration reform movement in the United States. We have also seen this happen when *Rang De Basanti*, a Bollywood film whose plot centrally involves young people's struggle for social justice, inspired a real-world protest that emulated the film in both method (both involved sit-ins at the India Gate in Delhi) and cause (both protested high-level government corruption) in ways that actually helped produce tangible results.

Understanding the civic imagination seems to be a key for mobilizing people towards social justice campaigns, including CVE messaging. We believe that CVE campaigns need to be more representative and aligned with people's real aspirations to be truly effective. The civic imagination framework presents us with a bottom-to-top emancipatory model that can support more community ownership of CVE interventions. We need to understand what aspects of the current situation they want to change, and what they see as a desirable outcome of that change. We want to understand how they perceive themselves as change agents, and thus what kinds of role models they draw upon to think about what constitutes civic action. We need to identify the communications channels they might use to share their stories and thus develop a better understanding of which platforms might be most effective at reaching different populations.

Accordingly, we plan to use this core model of the Civic Imagination as a means of promoting campaigns that use *any media necessary* to mobilize public and shift attitudes.

The purpose of our preliminary research in Pakistan was to explore the links between the civic imagination of Pakistani youth and VE/CVE messaging. The findings from this research will greatly expand our understanding of CVE messaging in other regions as well and help CVE campaigners find entry points to carry out more efficient campaigns.

Online youth audiences in Pakistan are actively engaged in debate on ways to build a better society and political system in the country. Our research, in its first phase, investigates the interplay between the citizen-internet-state relationships, and how it establishes cognitive and conceptual maps of civic imaginations and political participation. We are particularly interested in the young people's media habits, the stories they find engaging. A growing online participatory culture has been observed in Pakistan, which fosters collaborative processes, activism and advocacy for causes enabled through horizontal modes of communication. In this line of thinking, horizontal collaboration can foster critical engagement with popular culture as it shifts subjects from passive consumers to active participants who make decisions that influence their communities, and in some cases, the content worlds (fictional and nonfictional narratives) in which they are engaged.

In addition, the research conducted in Pakistan will also serve as prototype for further research on the Civic Imagination and the alternatives it could provide to violent extremist messaging. Jenkins and Shresthova bring with them a deep understanding of Civic Imagination and youth activism. And their work with other youth populations will provide a powerful comparative perspective to the ways in in which civic imagination could be mobilized as an alternative (counter) narrative to violent extremism.

II. Summary of key insights generated through the completed research phases

The preliminary research yielded the following key insights:

1. Media Habits

> *"I am very good at it actually. If I like something everybody knows about it. I will tell the story to my friends. I'll post it on Facebook. I will message my friends and all. And suppose because it's really good so I will tell my friends" (Phase 1 interview respondent)*
> *---*
>
> *"I just check Facebook news feed because everything comes over there." (Phase 1 interview respondent)*
>
> *---*

"When it comes to social media, I feel like because it is like second nature to me it is very easy for me to commit. I find it very easy to write, I find it very easy to communicate my ideas through that medium. So what not usually needs so much time, would not need too much investment into that. Say for example for videos or to need to go on TV and talk about something on the radio. And so on." (Phase 2 interview respondent)

All interviewed respondents are active on social media, though with varying intensity. Some (like the respondent cited above) enjoy sharing content with their friends. Others are much more hesitant to do so.

When asked about what type of media they use, the respondents came up with the following answers:

What media do you use regularly?
93 responses
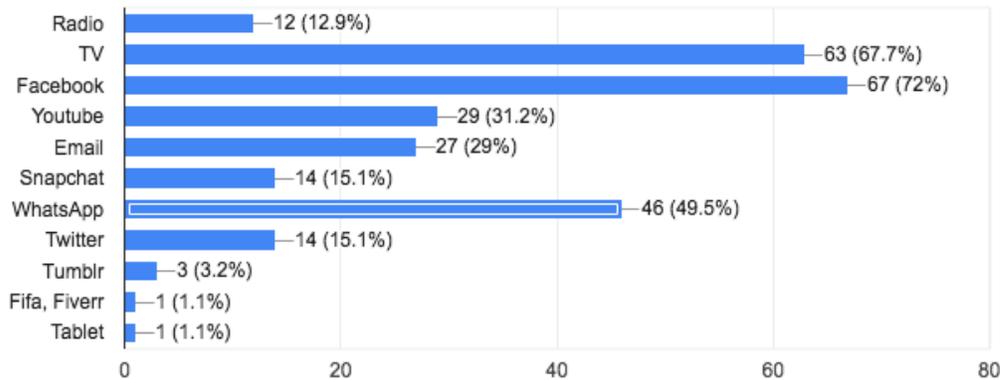
The above data also showed that most Phase 1 respondents use Facebook and Twitter as a primary source of information and news. YouTube is also consumed but it lacks authenticity; it is not trusted. Almost all of the respondents mention Express Tribune, Dawn, Parhlo, and Mangobaaz when they talk about news outlets. No one mentioned any Urdu publication. Platforms like Instagram and Snapchat are used for entertainment only, and do not seem to inspire serious conversations. The use of television is limited to talk shows and serials mostly because it isn't the primary source anymore. Strikingly very few participants use radio, which is likely very much connected to their socio-economic status, urban location and lifestyle. Respondents also value anonymity and see it as a safer way to express themselves in online space.

WhatsApp groups and information/news sharing seem to be a growing trend amongst all participants. Facebook, however, remains the mostly used and the most diversely used medium for both Phase 1 and Phase 2 respondents.

Phase 2 respondents also see Facebook's benefits as a medium they most prefer due to its increasingly diversified audience, level of connectivity and cost-free benefits.

Implications for project

CVE campaigners, if targeting youth audiences that speak English, must utilize social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter (and possibly WhatsApp) as a priority. Mainstream broadcast media platforms like TV and Radio are not preferred by the youth included in this study. WhatsApp Groups function can also be an important tool for meaningful dialogue on social and political matters.

Music is an important part of a youth's life and can be used for delivering messages of peace, and coexistence. It is clearly a medium that bridges across divisions in very unique ways. CVE campaigners can utilize the power and conversational ability of music to spread values of peace in youth audiences. There may even be participatory opportunities for inviting audiences to interpret music to give it their own local twist.

Urdu print media is not followed by English speaking, middle class youth audiences at large. Buzzfeed type blogging/news platforms is an important source of information and entertainment in targeted youth audiences. Such platforms should be created to insert CVE messages alongside other content.

Tired of race for better rating that the respondents feel dominate TV channel programming choices, youth are seeking media programming that is more educational and balanced.

2. Inspiring Stories

> *"... even Ayesha was entertained by Mohammad PBUH, so why can't she go and play with us, when I used to go for swim, he used to say the same thing..." (Phase 1 interview respondent)*

> *---*

> *"I kind of write about it. People don't like me. I write a lot of things about mullahs and all this stuff. Yes, I share. But then I was threatened twice. My family was threatened. I don't do it anymore. But yes this was one of the things I used to do." (Phase 2 interview respondent)*

Phase 1 respondents tend to remember positive stories more than the negative ones. Many participants shared stories of Pakistan's everyday success and improvement; story of Muniba Mazari, Sarmad Tariq, Pakistan's neutral stance on Saudi-Yemen war, a female Pakistani lawyer achieving something big, Ek Thi Marium, and cinema growing big. Summarized by this respondent quote, some respondents express a desire for more such positive stories about their

country, "It's funny how I can say a negative story from the tip of my tongue but it is making me think really hard for a positive one about Pakistan."

Common values shared by the Phase 1 respondents are of '*loyalty*' (Hachiko, Adnan Sami Khan, and Ottoman Empire), *hard work and success* (Qandeel Baloch, Muniba Mazari, Sarmad Tariq, Ek thi Marium), and *forgiveness/kindness* (Prophet Muhammad's story of struggling with cruel people). Most of the religious stories participants mentioned have more to do with the core values of life such as empathy, generosity and forgiveness than stories that are rooted in controversial sectarian history. When asked about the difference of opinion between different sects on the same event, almost all participants give a neutral opinion and say that they'd rather identify themselves as Muslims rather than as a Sunni or a Shia. In other parts of the interview, however, participants agreed that sectarian tensions are an important fault-line in Pakistan. Overall, stories of religious figures are remembered by participants very well and all agree that such stories have political implications.

Notably antagonists identified by the participants are real characters within the country: Qandeel Baloch's brother, victims of Shia killings, Momina Mustehsan's stance against Qandeel Baloch, Salman Taseer's murder, Afghans against officials in Quetta, and Dolay Shah.

Phase 1 female participants feel more of an inclination towards issues of gender discrimination and women empowerment than the male participants. For instance, the issue of Qandeel Baloch although recent was only mentioned by the female participants. The male respondents, however, are more inspired by stories of power struggle, heroism and at times nationalism.

Phase 2 respondents are more specific in highlighting stories that include social themes like gender based violence, environment, minority rights, freedom of speech, and hate speech. Most of the stories this group mentions relate to the national level and tend to portray the struggle between the liberal school of thought and the religious conservatives in Pakistan with almost all of the respondents taking the side of the liberal school of thought on these issues. Unlike Phase 1 respondents, Phase 2 respondents do not connect to their stories at a personal level. Rather they clearly articulate their larger social implications.

It is also important to note that most of the respondents concurred that these inspiring stories can be used for a positive role as an element of civic imagination:

Do you agree that positive examples and inspiring stories in our society is an important element of civic awareness?

96 responses

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Not sure
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

51%

38.5%
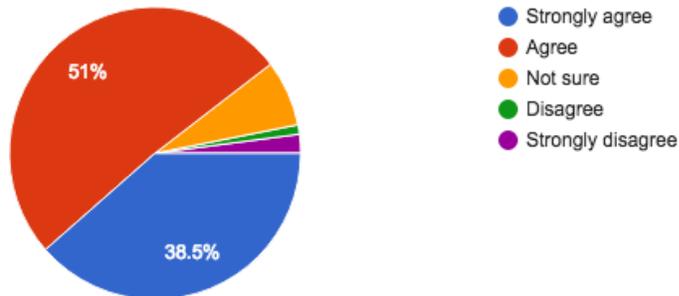
Implications for project

CVE campaigners must use inspiring and positive stories of real people to spread their messages as such stories leave an imprint on the minds of youth. This paradigm can be used to promote alternate narratives instead of countering- extremist narratives, which creates instant polarization in different groups.

Youth audiences are greatly inspired by stories based on the themes of loyalty, hard work, success and forgiveness which can be effectively utilized for CVE programming.

Overall, storytelling seems to be a very effective tool for influencing narratives. Religious stories that revolve around the themes of sacrifice, brotherhood and forgiveness inspire youth audiences. Religious figures, and their stories are important entry point for CVE messaging.

Pakistani social activists are inclined to engage with national level causes that are sparking public debate. CVE campaigners should carefully take stances on critical issues that are usually ignored by forums because of their 'controversial' nature in the fear of backlash. This would help campaigners create a community of practice around values they wish to propagate. The liberal vs conservative divide on the internet is quite evident and efforts should be made to find bridges between the two to prevent further polarization.

3. Meaning of Pakistan

Interviewer: "What does Pakistan mean to you?
Hell
Interviewer: Why?
Because every day I get to encounter with such stories, I face such experiences, I hardly get any good news from someone, even from my neighbors, or TV and social media."
(Phase 1 interview respondent)

"It means liking cricket, it means liking chai, it means joking with one friend in Punjabi and one friend in Pushto. I don't believe it supreme or high values. It's the everyday experiences that's what makes it Pakistan." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"Pakistan is obviously home, there is nothing better than Pakistan, but for me, I also think that Pakistan is a shit-hole as well, as much as I love Pakistan, and it has a lot of potential to get better." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"Obviously I am obliged to define myself as a Pakistani, like if I am filing an official form, I have to tell them my Nationality, if I'm applying for a job, I have to tell them my Nationality, even I have to tell them my religion, even when someone is asking me about my religion, I can't say I'm a human." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"So we in a way have created another bubble within us in which there is just Islam and Muslims. I have a friend called Kapil Dev they ask him where is your passport and he tells them I have a passport and I am a Pakistani. Even a Pakistani can be Kapil Dev. So all these narratives need to be challenged." (Phase 2 interview respondent)

Both Phase 1 and 2 respondents have some very love-hate opinions about their homeland.

Most of the Phase 1 respondents identify themselves as Pakistani not because of a sense of patriotism but more because of the fact that they were born, and live, here. Only one respondent who's from a tribal area said his connections with Pakistan are only 60 years old so the nation doesn't resonate with him when compared to his tribal identity. Even the respondents who prioritize their Pakistani identity over their Muslim identity believe that Pakistan is all about Islam, suggesting that a real tension exists in this space. Responses to perception of Pakistan within the country are mixed, some respondents mention positive things such as a family system, traditional food and music, freedom, etc. to say but others talk about corruption, extremism, terrorism and a regressive economy. When asked about the perception of Pakistan outside of the country, nearly all respondents talk about how they are viewed as a backward and terrorist country. Respondents do not agree when asked about what can be done to shift these perceptions. Answers include a need to change governmental policies, media portrayals and an increased inclusion of youth in all processes.

Phase 2 respondents are also split in their views on Pakistan. However, a majority of them place their nationality above religious identity, further stressing how crucial this area is for projects that engage with Pakistani's identities in any way.

Implications for project

Most of the participants cited a negative perception of Pakistan as a key concern. This negative projection of Pakistan in international media and to international audiences impacts CVE efforts because the youth interviewed do not feel confident about their national identity being the harbinger of peace and coexistence. CVE campaigners should make efforts to promote the alternate and positive image of Pakistan. Positive, humane and inspiring stories from Pakistan should be promoted internationally which would not only help breaking the stereotypes about Pakistan but the acknowledgement will help Pakistanis being comfortable in their identity.

Patriotism, through variously interpreted, seems to be a key trait in youth audiences. As such non nationalistic patriotic sentiment should be effectively utilized to conduct CVE campaigns. Currently under-utilized, the patriotic frame provides a huge opportunity for CVE practitioners in Pakistan. We need alternative, future oriented and progressive approaches to supporting Pakistani youth's patriotic identity. The existing nation building efforts are often focused on exclusivity (who cannot be Pakistani) and confrontation (fueling by anti-Indian nationalistic rhetoric).

Efforts should be made to embed positive values into the shared (yet porous) identity of being a Pakistani, which is usually associated with negative traits abroad.

4. Role of Religion in Pakistan

> *"We can't share one country, if we can't share one country then how can we share one Jannat?" "Islam, I think Islam is the only thing that is the reason that Pakistan is still standing otherwise Pakistan would have been destroyed right after independence because it took us 9 years to create our first constitution and a country that took 9 years just to make its first constitution and it's still running that's a big thing and I think that is Islam. Because we are Muslims and Pakistan was made on the name of Islam so I guess that's the only reason Pakistan is still running." (Phase 1 interview respondent)*

> *----*

> *"I am a Pakistani first…, because religion comes after my identity" (Phase 1 interview respondent)*

> *---*

"About Pakistan they think that it is their country. Pakistan has been built in the name of Islam. Quaid e Azam built it for the Muslims so obviously there can't be any other ruler except Muslims. And they can do whatever they want in Pakistan." *(Phase 1 interview respondent)*

"I and my friends were sitting near a local hotel and it was Azan time and there was an old man sitting in front of us and he said, "Let us go to prayers". And I was like how did you assume that I am a Muslim, or if I am Muslim I belong to the same sect as yours. He said, "So you are not". And I asked him, "If I am not is another thing but you should have this probability in your mind that maybe I am not and your assumption is wrong about me". So some Pakistani can also be Hindus, they can be Christians, or they can be Shi'ites or they can be Ahmadis." (Phase 2 interview respondent)

Reflecting a fraught tension, Phase 1 respondents are quite split in how they see religion in Pakistan. Most of the respondents in Phase 1 see religion as an important tool for understanding of their identity as Pakistanis. It seemed to them that Pakistan is made in the name of Islam and for Muslims. In this context, being a Pakistani also implied being a Muslim or at least adhering to Muslim norms. Only two of the respondents don't see Islam as a necessity to their Pakistani identity. It's interesting to note that both of these respondents are women. Most participants agree that religious stories should be used to spread messages of peace, and to counter the extremist narratives.

In contrast, most Phase 2 respondents see religion as being the part of the problem and not the solution. The overall consensus seems to be that state has allowed religion's misuse which has resulted in marginalization of minorities, sects and ethnicities. This has, in turn, reduced cultural and religious diversity in the country which needs to be addressed as majority being Muslims impose their will on others. This might also be due to the fact that all participants of Phase 2 are see their socially oriented work as "secular" and articulate this in their responses. Only one Phase 2 respondent, a Hindu, believed that religion could be used for positive nation building.

Implications for project

Educated, English speaking Pakistanis have a complicated relationship with religion (Islam.) They stress the need to disassociate religion with politics. They are aware of on-the-ground realities, but they do not have a clear idea on how to reach these sectors of society. The process of making Pakistan secular is a subject to confusion and this is where CVE campaigners could present holistic vision, which can serve as a road map for a secular Pakistan. At the same time, CVE campaigners need to understand what secularism would mean in the local context.

Influence of religion in national narratives and identity construction must be considered and carefully utilized to relay CVE messages. Overly secular messaging may not produce the effects

that a campaign based on local religious sensitivities may produce as the connection between Islam and Pakistan seems to be inseparable.

Sectarian religious identities are a sensitive topic for Pakistani youth and must be carefully thought-of, whilst designing and disseminating messages that utilize religious stories and texts for CVE values propagation.

5. What is Working Well in Pakistan

"Culture is the only thing that is good in Pakistan, in my perspective. And second thing is corruption. The people who are at the stage where they can do corruption, so it's good for them, although it is not good for us but it's good for them so let's be happy for them at least." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"I guess arts, music. Things like these which you do not get anywhere else." (Phase 2 interview respondent)

When considering what works well in contemporary Pakistan, Phase 1 respondents often cite: family life, community systems, education, civic life, culture, youth, cricket, and the resilience and hospitality of people. Phase 2 respondents value the arts even more prominently.

Notably, Phase 1 respondents mention some 'well-functioning' categories in Pakistan without assigning positive or negative valences to their statements. This includes a mention that hatred and Islam unites Pakistanis. Sectarianism - though clearly controversial - is also working well. Though ultimately potentially destructive, respondents also saw corruption as also working well in Pakistan.

All respondents express a discomfort with the onslaught and broad generalizations of Pakistanis in international media. They actively seek out alternatives to such narratives. Positive infrastructural changes make the respondents more confident about the future of their country.

Implications for project

Local cultural symbols are effective entry points for CVE campaigns alongside cricket, strong community life etc. They do, however, have limited appeal, which needs to be a key consideration. Highlighting positive changes in the structural system of Pakistan brings confidence to being a Pakistani. This more positively inflected orientation is needed as the current Pakistani context is so negative (and pessimistic).

Hatred against India, and unity under Islam are very important unifying factor in the narratives of youth. This is a very volatile unifying element to Pakistani identity as it is defined in opposition to

something - as in Pakistani's are NOT Indians. We need to recognize it, and handle it carefully. Notably, other research of South Asian diasporic communities suggests that this us-versus-them identity between Pakistanis and Indians persists in some spaces and fades in others once removed from its geo-political context.

5. Visions of Pakistan 2060

"The part from which Pakistan belongs, its culture is so rich, deep and diverse that even in 2060, Pakistan has not forgotten its culture. Pakistan has not progressed like the Western countries because Pakistan has not been inspired by the Western lifestyle or Western culture that you're talking about because its deep-rooted culture has always been affected on the growth that people are still respecting their families, people are still caring for each other and due to this mighty power of caring for each other; we've developed at very rapid scale. Today's community of 2060 is quite better compared to the past because are not concerned about judging others or judging other people's beliefs on religious inclination. Violence has been ruled out. That is the only reason we are here in 2060. There hasn't been the same violence as before. Social evils are still here because that's the ups and downs of community life in every time." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"The politicians have realized that they need to put the country's interest first. They have let democracy flow. They have taken a strong stance on thing where they would otherwise cave in. Institutions have grown stronger (education etc.). I forgot the judiciary system but it would be competent, just, fair and doing their work on time. That is the biggest problem in Pakistan. It won't be a case of justice delayed justice denied. I would go for reform rather than a revolution. I'm not a fan of taking down everything and then suddenly you wake up one day and everything is better.

The Pakistan of 2060 is an ideal Pakistan for me. So, in terms of governance I would like to see a fluid democracy. This also means abolishment of the feudal system which is literally ruling over people through bonded labour. I do realize a 100% pure democracy is not possible. I would like to see it flowing. I always tell my friends that Zardari's government is the only one that lasted 5 years in the 65 years history of Pakistani democracy. I still think we are in the evolution phase. We look at countries like England and the West and want a democracy like that, but they evolved over a period of 600 to 700 years. I see a lot democratic evolution happening. With society, I don't want to use the word secular because it just brings up another argument about "Islamic Republic of Pakistan" and how did it become secular. I see a more religious neutral society. It can still be state controlled and integral, but it's very fair. Minorities are respected. I don't want to say that since someone's a Christian he should be called a "Choora". It's disturbing because I have had Christian teachers. In terms of art culture and music I would like to see it grow further than it already is. I would like to see tourism in Pakistan. Not just an influx of foreigners coming

in but something we as a nation are doing to own our heritage to attract them. Just compare our fort to the Delhi fort and the difference is colossal. I want an easy going soft welcoming culture to be bred here. An old book "Pakistan A Hard Country" recently became popular and he very aptly used the word hard." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"I would like Pakistanis to be I don't want to say liberal - but tolerant, more progressive, more mutually respectful of all beliefs" (Phase 2 interview respondent)

"The numbers of minorities have increased from 2.1% to 4.3%. and people have started coming back because they were born here. This is the Pakistan I am living in. and what happened back then was there was no "…………………………………". People of my time, the generation they have worked a lot, they did not run away from their country. They did not run away from their nation. They worked hard. Thousands of people have sacrificed their lives to make us reach this day."

The common aspirations of Phase 1 and Phase 2 respondents about 2060 are: a transparent media, a free and improved education system, increased social mobility, no corruption and strong cultural identity. However, they fear there will be more violence in the future.

Every respondent aspires to a better standard of living, more employment opportunities and healthy citizen-state relationship. They also highlighted that women would be more empowered than now.

The respondents also want a fluid (uniquely constructed) democracy in Pakistan. Influence of religion in politics and feudalism will be minimized.

Implications for project

Youth are overwhelmingly hopeful about the future of Pakistan but progress is contingent upon structural and societal changes that need to take place urgently. CVE campaigners should tap into this 'hope' of a better future to create interventions that appeal to the imaginations of Pakistani youth. They should also help young people with the process of imagining possible hopeful futures for Pakistan. Vision of a better tomorrow, a holistic solution that encompasses civic life, political matters, cultural evolution and social issues, must be embedded with CVE messages.

6. Models of Change

"By getting your voice and story to as many people as possible and creating a pool of positive and empowered people that break the hold of the negative thought leaders. And this is a bottom to top effort." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"Again, it's up to us youth you know. Nobody can bring the change except us." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"People need to be educated and get awareness that we need to break this inheritance based power structures. We need to seriously deconstruct them" (Phase 2 interview respondent)

Phase 1 respondents identify the following mobilization possibilities: a collective effort for women empowerment, better community engagement, more social media messaging and awareness campaigns. They also look for influencers who can mobilize people to feel like they can take action. Some respondents believe that the youth can bring change, others, however, see government officials and politicians as change makers who can really alter the country's future trajectory as nothing can shift until policies are rectified. Technological solutions to persistent problems were not mentioned by Phase 1 respondents at all.

Phase 2 respondents are much split and did not agree on a model of change. Notably one respondent identified big media corporations (like Google and Facebook) as key change actors in the Pakistani space.

Implications for project:

CVE campaigns need to consider the models of change that people of Pakistan see as possible, even desirable. For example, the question of who can lead Pakistan is crucial. The respondents clearly articulate a desire for new leadership. They suggest that such leadership may be found outside of the current political structures. At the same time, the role of the government remains crucial. CVE campaigners should seek partnerships with local government(s) to bring credibility to their messages.

7. Personal Role in Affecting Change

"I can start by creating a Facebook page and you know creating awareness at the very small level, that's something I can do. I can create a society at my university. That would be a kind of something that people would go for. And these are the kind of things that happen in our university. And I could create a society that would include other universities, society that would include people from the universities of Islamabad. That is something the society would do." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"My personal very small level role. As I've said that I'm on the path of taking control of our history. After that I will term it irrelevant without the aid of education. By emphasizing on education, I will empower the people to become learned and well versed in leading successful lives. That I what I can do from my own end." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

"...it would be something like finding people who have similar motivation like me, then obviously I would have to see the cause, how I approach it, it's not that easy as it sounds you know or maybe it doesn't sound easy as well, but I haven't given a thought to it up till now. But I believe that it can be done." (Phase 1 interview respondent)

Both Phase 1 and Phase 2 responses point to a lack of clarity on how respondents personally can affect change. Responses range from outright negativity to boundless optimism in the goodwill of others and their own's capabilities.

However, the common thread among the responses is the critical role that respondents give to community engagement and media as the instrument of change, particularly the social media.

Several respondents talk about taking more initiative to actually complete actions, rather than just excite and mobilize people. They take about making incubators, writing for social causes, and making institutions to bring awareness.

Many of the respondents also believe that social awareness that they gain should translate into civic actions in any possible way:

Do you think this workshop has enabled you to take civic action in any way?
96 responses

Pie chart legend:
- Yes
- No
- Maybe

80.2% Yes, 12.5% Maybe
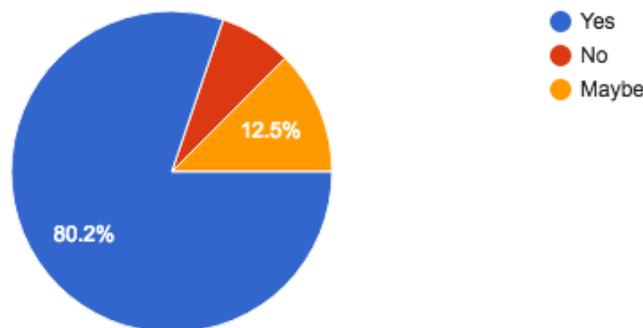
Implications for project

The respondents generally articulate an energy for taking action and affecting change through their personal networks. This desire needs to be carefully considered as CVE campaigns are designed. How do they harness grassroots energy? It is crucial that the campaigns create space for people to really engage and feel connected to the cause of the campaign. It is crucial that message recipients are seen more as 'participants' rather than just 'audiences'. To summarize, CVE campaigns should be more participatory and less 'preachy'.

III. Suggested further research and next steps

1. ***Quantitative (and further qualitative) research validation of civic imagination related findings through Dil Say Pakistan campaign.***

   We recommend including several civic imagination specific questions in the impact assessment phase of the Dil Say Pakistan campaign. The broad research questions could include:

   1. Did the campaign narratives and engagement opportunities resonate with audiences? And how?
   2. Did the campaign inspire people to think more positively about their collective identity as Pakistanis? And how?
   3. The extent to which the campaign is able to create a meaningful 'imagined' sense of community among participants and audiences, and
   4. Did their capacity to be civically engaged increase as a result of the campaign (workshop and consequent network affiliation/social action competition?

   We propose to design several questions that intentionally shift away from a focus on how the campaign discourages or disrupts violent extremism. Rather, our questions will assess whether (and how) the campaign encourages alternative visions of Pakistan. Specifically, we recommend including the following question types:

   - Assessment of campaign impact on perceptions of Pakistan and being Pakistani (pre and post exposure).
   - Assessment of how audiences understand the positive action steps advocated by the campaign. How likely are they to take these steps?
   - Reported interest in sharing and otherwise participating in the campaign (sharing through social media, telling friend)
   - Assessment of increased sense of civic efficacy

   The Dil Say Pakistan campaign significantly offers alternatives and inspiration to Pakistanis - we have a unique opportunity to assess whether and how these alternatives resonate with viewers and participants.

2. ***Careful documentation of all future (future oriented) civic imagination community activities.*** We recommend that all future Dil Say Pakistan civic imagination themed community actions (workshops, future projects, competitions) be tracked and documented though the forms and questionnaires we have created. Exit interviews should be conducted where possible. Such data collection will greatly expand our understanding of how the civic imagination functions in Pakistan.

3. ***More in-depth research into specific areas surfaced through the exploratory research phases.*** We recommend that the research team use the remainder of the project to delve deeper into some of the specific themes surfaced through the completed research. Specific themes to focus on could include a subset of the following:

- National identity in Pakistan
- Role of Islam and its interaction with how people imagine themselves and Pakistan
- Persistent narratives that resonate and mobilize
- Models of Change
- Barriers to change
- Shared visions of future Pakistan

We have much to learn about each of these themes. Our findings suggest that a deeper understanding could potentially shift CVE messaging and framing in crucial and productive ways.

"If the extremism of the imagination is the chief cause of political harm, a moderated employment is, of course, equally productive of civic good." [1]

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[1] Eva T. H. Brann, The World of Imagination: Sum and Substance, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1991, p. 712

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HIVE is a first-of-its kind space in Pakistan – dedicated to training, research, resource development and social innovation to counter extremism and work towards an inclusive, peaceful society. Website: http://www.hive.org.pk