

Pakistan: Challenges to Democracy, Governance and National Unity

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In the Post – Cold war era the global patterns of statecraft, foreign policy, diplomacy, terrorism, geo-politics, conflict and violence have not only grown more destructive but out of hand. This study aims to question the categories that shaped our modernity and its relation to power and existence. Capitalists as a viable economic system and emergence of America as a unipole accelerated promotion of ‘democracy’ as an essential ingredient of American foreign policy. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and perception of Bush administration about authoritative structures in the Muslim world, particularly Middle East as underlying causes of terrorism resulted in the changed trajectory of American policy. Obama administration’s insistence on democratization accelerated this shift towards political pluralism in the region.

Key words: Post cold war foreign policy, geo-policies, democracy, terrorist attacks.

This study focuses on the impact of this world – wide challenges on the fledgling democratic regime in Pakistan, in the context of governance & national unity. Theoretical and empirical literature in international relations, philosophy and political & cultural theory is basic to this study. Thus concepts of democracy, governance and national unity are put to scrutiny. It interrogates these key concepts at two levels, both their theoretical conceptualization as well as practice in their influence and implementation in the specific context of Pakistan. The underlying assumption of this study is that the powerful political concepts: governance and national unity cannot be easily universalized. These all have histories, complex and conflictual, refined and deployed in concrete struggles over political power, obtainment of wealth and varying dimensions of social forms. The study’s methodology is both trans – disciplinary at the theoretical level and is intertwined with empirical case study of Pakistan. The discourse of policy – makers, institutions and media are all important tools of analysis.

The study is divided into three parts. Theoretical and methodological assumptions are followed by a summary of the critical threats to Pakistani state in the post-2008 elections and finally recommendation and conclusion. An understanding of the process of democracy is essential so as to reveal the sequence by which regimes have developed over the past century. The knowledge that is generated will assist governments, development agencies to design effective programmes to help build fair and egalitarian societies that promise emancipation and change

Theoretical and Conceptual Explanations

In the era of American unipolarity the emerging conception of ‘modernity’ means ‘plurality’ and a rejection of top-down socio-political engineering. (Dagi, 2008) Given the complexity of the measurements of democracy, the phenomena can be understood on the basis of varieties of democracy. The distinct measures include, electoral, liberal, participatory, majoritarian, consensual, deliberative, egalitarian. Other components are free and fair elections, inclusion of women and minorities, judicial independence, convocational and power-sharing. (Freedom House, 2012) The strategy of expanding the system by integrating countries into western democratic world was explained by US National Security Adviser Anthony Lake in 1993. “The United States would help “democracy and market economies take root”, which would in turn expand and strengthen the wider Western democratic order. (Berry, 2010) The challenges to global governance was no longer great power war, instead the threat emerged from violence, and non – state actors, and instability among weak and failed states on the periphery of the system.

To analyze challenges to democracy, governance and national unity this study is based on the bio – political paradigm of the modern that tends increasingly to appear as the dominant paradigm of government in contemporary politics”. (Aganben, 2005) Ontologically neo Gramscian theory situates social classes and social forces as the major currents in any international system. Social forces thus configure the forms of state and the inter-state velocity of relations. The relations of production constitute the basis of social power. In this theoretical formulation state consists of an official apparatus of military, government, political parties and civil society, including media and religious organizations & educational institutions. The civil society is also dominated by certain ideology of a specific group.

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The ideology conditions the goal orientations of the state. Simultaneously new social forces are unleashed and can create new ideology and permeate the civil society in order to achieve objectives. This is elaborated by the concept of global civil society, where counter hegemonic forces are mobilized to counter intergovernmental organizations. (Cox, 1981)

Neo Gramscian hegemony is a broader concept which is based on consensualism and manifested by material resources that promote institutionalization through acceptance of ideas. These ideas are initially structured by social classes within the state and then projected at world scale. Thus the civil society is basically the focal point of the process of hegemony. Strategy of promoting democracy is created with the help of academic intellectuals in the US and West as well. For example, William Douglas, Michael Samuels being the contributors in formulation of strategy in early 1980's and then its implementation. (Dodge, 2006)

The term democracy is taken from the Greek word 'demos', meaning people, and 'craits' meaning to rule. Democracy is a form of government in which citizens can participate on basis of adult franchise, running for offices, or through elected representative. According to Freedom House "freedom is possible only in democratic political systems in which governments are accountable to their own people, the rule of law prevails and freedoms of expression, association, belief and respect for the rights of minorities and women are guaranteed". (Apter, 1999) On the other hand democratization is best understood as a "complex long-term, dynamic, and open-ended process. It consists of progress towards more rule-based, more consensual and more participatory type of politics. Like democracy it necessarily involves a combination of fact and value, and so contains internal tensions." (Haas, 2002)

On the basis of four basic principles of Lijphart's Consociational democracy Wolf Linder and Andres Bachtiger in 2005 developed a *Power Sharing Index*. It has been applied in a multivariate statistical analysis of 62 African and Asian countries between 1965 and 1995. "Our systematic analysis confirms the favourable influence of power sharing that Lijphart has illustrated in case studies of third world countries such as Malaysia, Lebanon, and India", is the conclusion of this study for the relative success of democratization based on comparative study. (Lijphart, 2008) On the other hand, due to continuous impact of overwhelmingly authoritarian rule "it is not uncommon for the social underclass in these politics to remain submissive to authority long after their introduction of free elections and other democratic institutions". (Tang, Tang & Chiu, 2011)

From the perspective of Comparative Politics huge differences emerge in governance, civil and political freedom, notions of justice, human rights, separation of institutions in well-established democracies and transitional politics in developing countries. In a comparative study by

Richard Rose and Doh C. Shin in the third wave of democratization, many transitional politics experienced "democratization backwards". This refers to introduction of free elections before strengthening civil society, consolidation of tradition of rule of law and establishment of an accountable administrative system. (Rose & Shin 2001)

How well explained by Charles Tilly the democratic institutions may not fundamentally bridge "categorical inequalities". However, in established democracies mechanisms exist for mutual adjustments among socio – ethnic group and protection of fundamental political and social rights. (Tilly, 2007)

Pluralism

From the pluralist perspective by developing inclusive institutions, consensus of power sharing mechanisms, equal rights for the plural and multi-ethnic population is guaranteed. As a polity becomes entrenched in democratic culture, it develops institutional infrastructure for disadvantaged groups and minorities to defend their rights in different policy arenas. Most importantly in the context of following four areas:

- i. Freedom of information: it reduces gaps between governmental authorities and the public.
- ii. Institutional checks on power and accountability mechanism.
- iii. Independent review commissions, including juridical review, citizen law represented by professionals of respective areas.
- iv. Independent central-bank.

Politics of Difference and Identity Politics

It is through democracy that inclusive institutions identify marginalized groups in society and addressing their concerns ensure stability and harmony. The diverse socio, cultural and ethnic minorities, disabled and disadvantaged communities can make efforts for recognition of identity and obtain legitimacy for equal rights. It is communication, discussion and discourse that offers effective mechanism for emancipation and change. Liberal democracy promotes culture of civility, respect for common values, independence of institutions and identity with humanity by negating parochialism. It builds transnational society, if not agreeing on a common morality atleast conscious of avoiding human pain and suffering. This consciousness can eventually change notions of nationals to citizenship with a thriving civil society. All citizens irrespective of their national or ethnic origins are considered as equal citizens. The founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, propounded a vision of state and society while addressing the first constituent assembly of Pakistan.

You are free, you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this state of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the State.....

Challenges to National Unity and Governance

Religious Extremism and ideology of Hatred

Extremism and terrorism pose immediate and the gravest challenge to democracy, stability and harmony in the context of Pakistan. There is a dire need to promote rule of law, promotion of plurality and respect for human rights in our society. Democracy and human rights are no longer ideals, but are the pragmatic tools and powerful weapons against instability and terrorism. Growing trends of abduction for ransom, accumulation of arms and ammunition in mega cities adds to the complexity of the issue. Suicide bombings, the use of explosive jackets, Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIED), by the terrorists has added to human insecurity and biological threat. According to one estimate 30,000 civilians have lost lives in the last 7 years in Pakistan and only in 2011 more than 1500 people have been killed. (<http://www.satp.org>)

With the US Operation Ending Freedom in Afghanistan, Pakistan owing to its strategic location and role in Afghan *Jihad* 1979 became the front line state in Global War on Terror. Pakistan has deployed forces in FATA. Operation *Rah e Haq* and *Rah e Nijat* that has resulted in increase of militancy against Pakistani military and civil targets. The situation has been aggravated by continuous drone attacks by NATO forces inside Pakistani territory. According to the London Based Bureau of Investigative journal over 168 children have been killed since 2001-2008. (Khan, 2011)

Thus, the recent insurgency by the *pro-Taliban* tribes, *Taliban* Militants and *Al-Qaeda* is attributed to army inaction in FATA. The earlier expeditions being launched in 2004 in North Waziristan, has ended in a peace deal. The truce has allowed the militants to regroup and strengthen. North Waziristan has become a haven for the groups such as; Uzbeks, Chechens, the Libyan Islamic fighting group, the militants belonging to East Turkestan Islamic Movement and home of Haqqani network, faction of the Afghan Taliban movement. The army thus launched *Zarb.e.Azab* in North Waziristan in mid-2014. Intense air bombing and fires of heavy artillery eventually reduced Miranshah to rubble.

In its aftermath the killings that took place at the Army Public School on Warsak Road in Peshawar on 16 December 2014 being described as biggest national tragedy and the darkest day in the history of Pakistan. It shocked not only Pakistanis but the whole world. The militants were taking directions from their handler in Afghan's Naziyan district close to Pakistan's tribal region of Khyber. This led to Army Chief Gen. Raheel Sharif's meeting with Afghan President Dr. Ashraf Ghani and commanders of ISAF in Kabul.

A joint declaration at the end of all parties conference in Peshawar following the brutal massacre of school children and staff member vowed to counter terrorism without any discrimination between good *Taliban* and bad *Taliban*. This revealed government's earlier ambivalence towards the issue of countering extremists. So far the Operation *Zarb.e.Azb* had not achieved its objective of eliminating terrorism. For a long term solution, the government required to develop a coherent and overarching counterterrorism strategy. The government required urgent measures to end the backwardness of the tribal regions as well and also to implement strict rule of law.

The (APC) called by PM Nawaz Sharif on 24 December, 2014 came up with a twenty point National Action Plan (NAP) as a response to Peshawar massacre. The highlight of the NAP was the proposal to establish special Military Courts by the adoption of 21st Constitutional Amendment Bill and the Pakistan Army (Amendment) Bill, 2015 by the parliament on 06 January, 2015. (Dawn, January 03, 2015)

Though the parallel system of justice would be only for two years, yet it was hailed as a negative development for Pakistan's transition to democracy. Both Maulana Fazl.ur.Rehman's *Jamiat Ullema.e.Islam – Fazl* (JUI – F) and the *Jammat.e.Islami* (JI) abstained from voting on the proposed 21st Amendment with objections to that bill. Baloch insurgents, land and bhatta mafias operating in Karachi were excluded. However, the bill seemed to smash the objective of terrorism carried out in the name of a religion or a sect. (http://www.na.gov.pk/uploads/documents/14205_142.pdf)

Immediate Challenges to Governance: Corruption and Nepotism

According to Transparency International, Pakistan stands as fourth most corrupt state in the world. Corruption is all ranks of society has become a visible hallmark that has created pessimism in civil society. *The National Reconciliation Ordinance* has lapsed on 28 November 2009, the concerned individuals should get themselves cleared in a court of law in a transparent manner. Democracy has opened up an opportunity to the people to reject leaders and political parties which indulge in corruption and nepotism. (Munoz, 2006)

Due to weak governance revenue generation is weakened. Low revenues mean lesser allocations for health, education and services. Indicators of weak governance are also the ghost schools and corruption in all sections of society. Good governance and human resources development are intertwined. Reforms of institutions to promote good governance is highly significant. According to UNDP estimates about 51% of Pakistan's population is living in multidimensional poverty and 54% are living in intense deprivation.

Poor governance threatens homeland security and leads to physical vulnerability of its citizens. According to Kofi Anan good governance and sustainable development are indivisible. Lack of meritocracy, poor performance of law enforcing personnel are hurdles to human development. The insensitivity of law enforcement agencies, weak enforcement of property rights, resulting in violence and *bhatta* and land *mafia* compound the miseries of common man.

PTI chief Imran Khan challenged the results of last general elections on the basis of rigging that resulted in three-month-long *dharna* in Islamabad. What triggered the appeal in the masses for Imran Khan rhetoric of justice and change was government's mishandling of PAT chief. The brutal killing by Punjab Police outside the *Minhajul Quran* Complex on June 17, 2014 intensified anti-government protests that almost paralysed the government. The result was political alienation and apathy in the masses.

Pakistan's Internal Security Mosaic

Situation in Karachi and Balochistan threaten the stability and viability of the state. Militant elements in Balochistan are not only targeting security forces but also ethnic and sectarian sects, and groups. In October 2009, Jandollah activists-led suicide bombing in Iranian Balochistan added to the complexity of Pakistan's relations with Iran. (Ali, 2009) Hazara Shias are prime target of *Talibans* and *Jandollah* in Balochistan.

Since Nawab Akbar Gugti's killing under the Musharraf regime in 2006, his grandson Baramadagh Bugti is leading Baloch insurgency. "According to both Pakistani and Western intelligence sources, this is with the covert support of Indian intelligence. The resulting fighting in Balochistan has caused almost 1,000 deaths among militants. Pakistani soldiers and police, and local Punjabi and other 'settlers'. Prospects for enduring violence in Balochistan will greatly improve once India is stopped from aiding the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) insurgents through Afghanistan. Certainly all that affects the economic activities across the country with 67% of the national exchequer and 35% of the GDP coming from Karachi. As suggested by the leadership of MQM, dewatering of Karachi can contribute towards stability and peace. Karachi operation launched in 2013, in which Rangers and Police conducted a series of operations against the banned *Tehrik e Taliban* Pakistan (TTP) and banned outfits. Many polio vaccination teams have been attacked and female members also assassinated. The operation must continue as the menace of terror, targeted killing and heinous crimes had not subsided.

The MQM also disapprove ANP-sponsored peace deals with the *Taliban*, and have warned against the alleged growth of *Taliban* influence among the Pashtuns of Karachi. At the same time as quoted by Anatol Lieven "Pathans are barely educated, and none of their women can read or write at all. So their birth-rate is very high compared to our educated women'. He concludes that; the danger is that the

effort to maintain the MQM's vision and rule in Karachi in the face of the Pathans and Sindhis will feed the ruthless and chauvinist sides of the organization until its positive sides are drowned in the resulting bloodshed. (Lieven, 2013)

To make Karachi thriving, and economically dynamic, stable 'Muslim Singapore of the Arabian Sea', requires strong determination and perhaps as stated by Lieven a benevolent totalitarianism. Billed as the epicenter of global terror Pakistan has been in the grip of an unrelenting terrorist campaign by elements once supported by state's own intelligence agencies to conduct '*jihad*' in Afghanistan and Indian-controlled Kashmir. While Pakistan's innocent civilians and armed forces are suffering casualties its commitment in the war against *Al Qaeda* and *Taliban* has been frequently questioned by Afghans. "An informed open-ended and sustained internal debate that can shed light on the root causes of their present predicament is impossible without some semblance of a shared historical consciousness", (Lodhi, 2011) thus concludes Ayesha Jalal professor of History at Tufts University, USA.

Provincial Autonomy

On 1st July 2011, the passing of 18th Constitutional Amendment represents the politics of reconciliation of the political forces and important step in the evolution of devolution of powers to the provinces. It is imperative that the provinces establish optimum and judicious use of resources and implement the mechanism of transparency and merit. If people's rights are denied at the grass roots level by centralization this leads to deprivation and alienation of smaller units. The PPP government has backed the status of a separate *Siraiki* province. *Hazara*, similarly claims a distinct identity in KPK. For better administration and to ease ethnic diversity, 15 more provinces have been added to Indian Union in 1999, in addition to 7 in 1947. General Masood Burki in his Blueprint for Viable and Stable Pakistan recommends 17 provinces and the number of administrative units could be increased. If the disparities are eliminated and administrative efficiency is achieved through creation of more provinces the change can make federation more effective and viable. (News, August 10, 2011)

With the elimination of Frontier Crimes Regulation and introduction of political parties order 2002 in FATA has, led to the end of region's colonial history. However, weak administration widespread under development and the onslaught of militancy pose a huge challenge. Allowing political parties to function will lead to countering militancy. Two pertinent questions emerge. First, whether FATA be integrated with KPK or given a Gilgit-Baltistan like status? Secondly, is the rule through political agents seems undemocratic with the introduction of right of franchise in FATA since 1997? Perhaps, with additional provinces created on ethnic or linguistic division no leader would be allowed to exploit people on parochial ground. (Nation, August 20, 2011)

Energy Security

Eradication of poverty and economic development is directly connected with secure energy supply. 'Energy consumption is an attribute thus of modernity and modern politics'. (Qureshi, 2009) The growing demand and supply gap in terms of energy in general and electricity in particular affects Pakistan. According to World Energy Outlook – 2011, sixty-four million people in Pakistan do not have access to electricity, 112 million use biomass for cooking. (International Energy Agency, 2011)

Electricity production depends on oil and impact bill for oil reached about 12 billion dollar a year. (Kumrar, 2010) Thus, long hours of load-shedding and un scheduled electricity outages have resulted in public protests and mass demonstrations on daily basis in hot months of May to September. Moreover economic losses due to closure of small industries is incalculable. (Hussain, 2012) 'The concept and principles of IEP... are those advocated in 'Integrated National Energy Planning in Developing Countries, amended to reflect conditions in Pakistan'. (Alahdad, 2011) IEF is actually a technique that is based on diversification of sources of energy, conservation, revenue generation and connects energy sector with national economic objectives. However, due to corruption and misdirection the strategic assets of Pakistan are in doldrums.

Economy and Middle Class

Country's economic management is nose diving particularly according to World Bank Report entitled, 'Pakistan Electronic Newsletter, August 2011.' With the foreign loan repayment bill has soared to alarming proportions of 116 billion rupees in 2011-2012. (<http://www.brecorder.com/eidtorials/single/600/0:1219677:our-economic-woes/?date=2011-08-05>) Furthermore, budget deficit and government borrowings from the State Bank has fueled inflationary pressures. The worst scenario is created by the mega scams, involving billions of rupees accumulated and remain unaccounted. Unless institutions are allowed to function independently and top management selected in a transparent manner, good governance would not come automatically.

In the midst of challenges to Pakistan's security and democracy, its robust middle class emerges as bedrock. Pakistan has been identified in the group of N-11 states. It has been formulated by Goldman Sachs as Next – 11 based for the criteria of demographic density. Owing to 'Pakistan's middle class, and its industrial base it has ability to produce consumer goods and have a substantial domestic market with the capacity to consume them. Moreover, over 300 foreign multinationals have well established business operations in Pakistan. Other key indicators suggest a positive growth trend ... foreign exchange reserves have been around \$16 billion in June 2010 up from \$1.7 billion in 2000, and exports being \$20 billion in 2010 up from \$8 billion in 2000. According to one estimate urbanization has gone up to 35 percent by 2007.

"The urban population's contribution to GDP accounted for almost all of government revenue.... the increase in numbers of the middle class. By 2008 economists were calculating that the size of the middle class had risen to around thirty million earning an estimated \$10,000 - \$15,000 (in PPP terms) – bigger than the population of 185 countries. (Malik, 2011)

By the same token internet subscriber's numbers is higher than in neighbouring India. (Lodhi, 2011) These developments point towards the rising tide of a civil society that is aware of its rights and politically conscious. How well such a class can bring about change in Pakistan's political scene and transform its identity from exclusivist to capable of absorbing diversity. The per capita income in 2008-09 has been US \$ 1046.00 which doubled in the last decade. The current phase of slow growth is supported by the remittances of Pakistanis. A growing middle class is visible which is the most significant stake holder in strengthening democracy and cosmopolitanism in Pakistan. (Economic Survey of Pakistan 2008-2009, 2009) The collective resolve of political parties to fight social taboos against women is seen in the unanimously approved 'The Prevention of Anti-Women practices Act, 2011.' This is in addition to the earlier approved bill related with domestic violence. It also prohibits forced marriage, marriage with Quran, share of women in inheritance and severe punishment to criminals hurting women caused by corrosive substance.

Along with the rise of civil society the independent media has emerged as a vibrant force giving rise to awareness. Information and awareness have led towards the transformation of the youth bulge. In a major way media has brought to focus those aspects of state and society that remained neglected previously. However the freedom of speech needs maturity and there does not exist any right without corresponding responsibilities. Though media has been also criticized for promoting sensationalism it has also brought to the fore issues of corruption and inept governance. (Pirzada & Hussain, 2012)

Conclusion

The Election Commission of Pakistan with the assistance of NADRA has almost completed the vital process of updating electoral rolls. There are almost 83 million voters in Pakistan that are processed via digital means. To counter bogus voting and foul play the computerized record is a major step by Election Commission and NADRA.

Pakistan's population is doubling quickly. From 1297 million in 1998, it reached 173.53 million in 2010 and is projected at 210.12 million in 2020. (Compendium on Environment Statistics of Pakistan, 2010) To develop human resource and economic development, the crucial issue facing nascent democracy is how to bridge the gap between rising demands and diminishing resources. In this context Pakistan needs to though fundamental human rights are guaranteed

in chapter one of the Constitution of Pakistan, yet injustice continues against minorities and women. It is indeed a challenge for the democratic government to ensure implementation of rules and ensure transparency at all levels. Governance in Pakistan has been following gliding phenomena. It seems that the educated middle class, the civil society, the intelligentsia and media do believe that if Pakistan has to survive in the globalized world, then there ought to be supremacy of constitution, independence of judiciary, strengthening of state institutions and the merit rather than ascription be the rule.

However, there is absence of democracy within the dominant political parties in Pakistan. Thus Muslim League (N) and as well as Muslim League (Q), the PPP, Awami National Party have all family dominate leaderships. Offices at different levels within the party hierarchy are also acclaimed on the basis of 'connections' and loyalty at the highest level: party leader's resistance to internal democracy was amply demonstrated in April 2010 when their law makers deleted the constitutional obligation to hold party elections from the Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment that parliament adopted to do away with the changes Musharraf had made to rebalance powers between one President and the prime Minister and the centre and the provinces. (Lodhi, 2011)

In addition to this, the feudal dominated patriarchal structures that have remained resilient despite rapid urbanization have resulted in tribal and *biradari* connections reinforces the system of subservience, patronage and syphoning of finance to obtain political loyalties. In this connection 'one writer has estimated that a few hundred families have dominate virtually all of Pakistan's legislatures, including the present ones'.

According to Mohsin Hamid, "call it pragmatism or cosmopolitanism or whatever you want" but I think most Pakistanis have it. This is making itself heard through the media and spearheads the movement towards emancipation and change. The change to introduce reforms in governance for human development and public service. (Hamid, 2011) However development requires stability. The pertinent question is: whether Pakistan is able to achieve security via the sign post of democracy? Or else democracy in Pakistan remains a gliding phenomena with a huge imbalance of power between civilian and military leadership amid threats of terrorism. The focus of this study had been the current wave of democracy 2008-2013. Pakistan was taken as a case study to examine Post-Cold War global changes that impacted the state and polity in Pakistan.

The US support for democracy promotion policy intended to achieve the hegemony in Gramscian sense. Though promoted ideology of liberal democratic values was accepted by societies in MENAP (Middle East North Africa and Pakistan) as a natural order. Yet, democratization and achievement of hegemony remain multi-layered and long-term processes. Thus contemporary developments in

Pakistan particularly indicated that democracy would have fluctuating degrees of success. Concerns of security and countering corruption, provisions of justice remain the major challenges. The response of US policy had been also correspondingly miscellaneous, combining support for democratization as well as close ties with stable albeit autocratic government in Middle East and elsewhere. Measured on the scale of democracy, freedom of expression, rights of minorities, Pakistan by far seems not to be a stable democracy but a transitional democracy.

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Received: Dec, 9th, 2014

Revisions Received: May, 25, 2015