

Coalition Politics in Pakistan: Historical Evolution, Political Travesties and the Future of Democracy

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Abstract

Coalition politics is typical in many democratic countries where the multi-party system prevails. However, the case of coalition politics in Pakistan has always been perplexing. M.A. Jinnah envisioned Pakistan as a democratic state. At the same time, the intrusion of civil-military regimes has caused confusion and complexity in the norms of politics and democracy. As an alternative, the opposition embraced coalition politics to achieve collective political gains—the unpacking of the political landscape and democratic conundrums showcasing the significance of the study. Therefore, the thematic deductive approach is applied in evaluating and analyzing qualitative and quantitative metadata to investigate how coalition politics in Pakistan impacted the norms of democracy and the future of democracy. This study aims to provide extensive insight into the evolution of coalition politics in Pakistan and unpacking the conundrums of democracy, focusing on the key themes and avenues for reforms. In findings, the civil-military regimes tried to foster the seeds of democracy, though some yielded bitter realities while others portrayed promising results. Conundrums, e.g. judicialization and establishmentarian of politics, socioeconomic disparities, political dogmatism and nationalistic apartheid, potentially erode the fundamentals of democracy. Contemporary precedents of coalitions, i.e. government's inclusivity, political dialogues and parliamentary progressions portray the strength of democracy. Thus, the country needed comprehensive reforms in the socio-political and socioeconomic landscape to strengthen democracy.

Keywords: Democracy, Coalition Politics, Military Intrusion, Challenges, Avenues.

Introduction

In recent years, coalition governments have become increasingly common in many developing countries, including Pakistan. The appearance of United Front in 1954, in opposition to Muslim League in East Pakistan brought conundrums and opportunities for futuristic coalitions. Similarly, civil-military nexus has entrenched establishmentarian politics with having multiplex repercussions for democratic norms. Some of these developments sued bitter realities while other showcases auspicious outcomes. The contemporary epoch of post-modernism is challenging for Pakistan in term of digitalised democracy and politics. The 2023 Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) survey indicates 87 million internet users in Pakistan including 71 million social media users. In survey 2021, roughly 70 percent social media users proclaimed the social media platforms a home to fake news. The Gallup Pakistan's survey 'Why young people don't vote' reported the young voter turnout 31 percent in last elections. The survey illustrated the traditionalist approach of politics is frustrating to educated voters, e.g. Karachi with having highest literacy rate showed 12 percent educated voter turnout in elections of 2018. Similarly, women politics enigma listed Pakistan at 93 out of 152 states in Global Gender Gap Index Report 2022, it exemplifies 8 women won their seats out of 183 to National Assembly in 2018 elections. Such conundrums have had deep

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implications for political and democratic dogmas of Pakistan. Alongside challenges, coalition politics brought promising results. Pakistan is the home to multiplex ethno-cultural population. Thus, coalition is the emblem of inclusivity and unity in diversity, bonding diverse society under single platform through representation from all ethnicities and regions. Viz., Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) the political platform of 13 parties showcases the pragmatic political approach necessary for sustaining democracy.

Therefore, delving the conundrums, innovative pathways and sustainable future for democracy showcasing the significance of this study. This research paper aims to critically evaluate the status of coalition politics and democracy in Pakistan through answering the questions, e.g. how the coalitions reshaped the political landscape of Pakistan? What are the conundrums to democracy, and what will be the potential future avenues? A quantitative component complements the qualitative analysis of the data, through mix method approach.

Historical Insight

The first ever political coalition to counter the political regime in the history of Pakistan formed in the shape of United Front in 1954. The core determinant of the Front was to resist the government of Muslim League in East Pakistan. The UF, won the elections of 1954; however, its internal conflict of interests and lack of clear vision caused it to fall apart. This showcasing complexity of political landscape (Siddiqa, 2007).

Subsequently in 1962 East Pakistan's leader Hussain Shaheed founded National Democratic Front (NDF) against Ayub Khan's tyrannical rule. It demanded parliamentary form of constitution and restoration of democracy. The coalition ended shortly with the death Hussain Shaheed in 1963. The NDF passed several resolutions to restore democracy and overthrow authoritarian. Several parties in 1960s formed alliance known as Combine Opposition Alliance (COP) aimed to overthrow Ayub Khan's regime. The alliance aimed to restore democratic rule. The coalition brought promising results for future potential coalitions opposite to martial laws. Late in 1960s Z.A Bhutto's PPP united the students, labour unions and civil society and dismissed the tyrannical rule of Ayub Khan in 1969. This movement had set a precedent for future democratic struggles, public mobilization and for future coalition-building to challenge the military rule (Khan, 2015).

In 1970s the right-wing parties formed Pakistan Nation Alliance (PNA). It resisted the autocratic approach of Z.A Bhutto's administration. It accused Z.A Bhutto for rigging the elections of 1977. PNA's demonstrations and strikes created significant political instability, ending in the military coup of 1977. PNA's reliance on military intrusion damaged its democratic credentials. Earlier in 1980s Movement for Restoration of Democracy (MRD) resurfaced aimed to challenge military rule of Gen. Zia-ul-Haq led by Benazir. It aimed the revival of constitution of 1973 and return of democracy. Despite of suppression MRD got the support of public and won the elections of 1988 under the dynamic leadership of Benazir Bhutto. This movement brought promising outcome for democracy. Conversely, to counter PPP military installed an alternative coalition of Islami Jamhuri Ittehad (IJI), --a combination of conservative parties. Its achievements portrays military's role in engineered politics often at the cost of democratic norms. The 1990 seems a substantial coalition the Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA) spearheaded by Benazir's PPP. It gained the support of public due to Benazir's struggle for democracy against military rule. PDA won the elections of 1990 and made government led by Benazir as Prime Minister. The 1990s saw a decade of democratic progress in Pakistan's history (Jalal, 2002).

In 2000s, a religious-political coalition widely recognized the Mutahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), challenging Gen. Musharraf's rule. MMA negated Musharraf's pro-US policies of 'enlightened moderation'. Its nationalist and populist politics got support in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan due to resistance to on war on terror in Afghanistan. MMA has

succeeded in reshaping the policies of military Junta (Cohen, 2004). Simultaneously, the Alliance for the Restoration of Democracy (ARD), the coalition of PPP and PML-N, challenged General Pervez Musharraf's military rule. ARD aimed freedom of thoughts and revival of democracy. However, it failed to get public support and was ended shortly (Siddiq, 2007; Haqqani, 2005).

Following 2008 elections, PPP, PML-N and ANP setup coalition government. Shortly, PML-N, parted its ways and started impeachment movement alongside movement for restoration of judiciary. The PPP realigned Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-F, instead (Yusuf, 2016).

Transparency International's 2023 reported, that in September 2020, a coalition of 13 parties the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) was established. It accused the elections of 2018 fraudulent and pre-manipulated under the supervision of military high ups. PDM was challenging PTI's led government for economic crises and deteriorated foreign policy. The coalition perceived PTI's government a militaristic design imposed on the country. The movement ousted the government of PTI by no-confidence motion in April 2022. This development brought hopeful results for future pragmatic democratic process by hindering traditionalist approach.

Evolution and Repercussions

The history of Pakistan as a nation-state has remained very chaotic because of several reasons. Firstly, the continuous conflict of interests among the federating units. Secondly, the fluctuation of state and democratic institutions between the civil-military rule and thirdly, a self-centred religious orthodox mind-set backed by state's institutions as an apparatus or strategic chip to strengthen it grief. Whatever, the coalitions were self-centred rather than national progress. It was just the marriage of convenience among the political parties and state's institutions aimed to get strategic-political objectives in the best of its egoisms. Evidently, the self-centred coalition of United Front in 1954, how it articulated strategies to challenge the mottos and validity of Muslim League's rule in East Pakistan. In de facto, it was the conflict of federating units and the beginning of central-provincial tug-of-war (Jalal, 2002).

The tug-of-war compelled judicial-military intrusion to test their own pattern either in the shape of 'Doctrine of Law of Necessity' or the restoration of sanity. The coalitions created an extensive manifesto to put their interests on track rather than to put choices in the best interests of the nation. The thematic analysis of Mujeeb-ur-Rahman portrays the self-centred six points agenda culminated on fall of Dhaka. Let's delve into 1960s self-centred coalitions of COP and Z.A Bhutto's PPP. Both alliances used the public to boost up their vote bank rather than national progress. One might perceive how? As the former exploited Fatima Jinnah to attain the overwhelming support of masses and had been succeeded. The latter used and mobilized the poor public psychologically over the grounds on socialist manifesto (Food, cloth and Shelter) while nothing had been achieved but the fall of Dhaka (Khan, 2005). Truly, if the overthrowing of military rule of Ayub Khan was a democratic achievement; then it was also the triumph for coalition's political gains which had been exposed in the crisis of Bengal; in nutshell, it was zero-sum game for all. These shifts showcasing lack of unity, commonality of interests, and mutual understanding among political parties in coalitions. Although, there was no coalition when coalition was required in 1970 amid East Pakistan's crises. It indicates political interests always prevails over national interests in Pakistan; therefore, the nation had to pay the price always in one way or another and the case was witnessed in historical Bengal crises (Rasul, 2013).

Pakistan's politics remained obfuscated since its inception. As stated earlier the politics has been oscillated among state institutions and political parties are the apparatus for their strategic experiment. For instance, how in mid-seventies the experiment of religious coalition had been

adopted in the model of PNA challenging the elected government of Z.A Bhutto. No doubt, Z.A Bhutto adopted the policies of political victimization in the form constitutional amendments and strategic-political objectives; but, the instalment of PNA vividly hindering the progress and tolerance level of politics in Pakistan. On the other hand, the involvement of state's institution in the political landscape of the country proved catastrophic such as in the case of Z.A Bhutto and the then Gen. Zia's coup in 1977. These terrible developments did not only curtail the democratic process but also encouraged the state's institutions for future political experiments in the democratic institutional paradigm. For example, how the militaristic design of coalition of IJI had been tested and installed in 1988 to counter the MRD and its leader Benazir Bhutto. No hesitation to say that MRD had done dynamic job in reinstating the constitution of 1973 and reviving democratic norms in the country which paved the way for next democratic era (Ahmad, 2017).

Pakistan is the country with having diverse society. Where people of various ethnicities, languages, sects and culture are living. Consequently, no single party claims the national unity which is the utmost need to national security, stability and future survival as a nation. So, coalition is the key to achieve the goal in either way to oppose the martial regimes or the political one. The same was the case in 1990's general elections in which the coalition of IJI stanchly opposed the coalition of Pakistan Democratic Alliance (PDA). If evaluate the status quo, truly it was the win-win situation of democracy which reinstate the trust and confidence of the public on the political institutions. Despite of political turbulence it was the beginning of golden democratic era comparatively to the previous decades in the political and democratic history of Pakistan (Ahmad, 2016).

Religion and politics are two different domains but interconnected in Pakistan. The history of religious-politics can be traced back to the freedom movement. The public were mobilized for freedom over the name of religious norms. For instance, how the Deoband School of thought mobilize the public for struggle against infidels and how Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind support the Khilafat Movement at the cause of Khilafat-e-Osmania. In the light above discussion one ought to envisage the case of Islamic pattern of politics in the shape of MMA in 2002, an alliance opposed the modernist and pro-Western polices of totalitarian rule of Gen. Musharraf. This coalition played the religious cards over the bases of Afghan Jihad in the masses of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan. Because, they were less democratic in nature and more fundamentalists in their religious beliefs, therefore, the MMA had succeeded in both provinces in their objectives, because the people of both provinces have has less space in term of orthodox principles, culture and religious beliefs. This is how the religious tendencies have always patronized the political landscape of the country. At the same time, simultaneously, another coalition known as Alliance of Restoration of Democracy (ARD), a secular and socialist movement was running concurrently to MMA. One may perceive how at the same time, at the same country and for the same cause two contradictive ideological coalitions had been running head to head. As the former has had less space for liberal democratic practices while the latter was more secular and liberal democratic in nature. This is the question of perplexed democracy and perplexed political patronization of Pakistan caused deep political and religious polarization which proceeded the society to instability and sectarian violence (Khan, 2015).

The contemporary era seems the jubilee period in the politics of coalition in Pakistan. The country that needed utmost sense of unity and common platform of leadership to reduce political patronization and deep polarization. It would not be incorrect to say that in the contemporary era the norms of politics has repaired because not only the two main political rivals the PPP and PML-N joined hands under common platform of PDM, but approximately, all religious, left and right wing parties united over the same agenda on the same stage. Further the alliance represented approximately the people from all cultures and provinces which was the symbol of unity, minimal polarization, and political tolerance that strengthen the democracy

(Ahmad, 2018). To evaluate the political dynamics in recent era, it portrays a pragmatic and post-modernist approach and tendencies in the patronization of political landscape of Pakistan. To quote Plato, “the political leaders should be train like philosophers”; however, the case is not with Pakistan, whereas one might be optimistic regarding the democratic future due to pragmatic tendencies, unification of political forces of various ideologies, the inclusion liberalist thoughts, the post-modernist approach and the approach of rational thinking within the political circles of Pakistan (Zahid, 2018).

A Pragmatic Analysis of the Status of Democracy

The freedom of democracy has always been remained at sixes and sevens in third world states. The Eastern peers perplexed the public through portray Western political thoughts- ignoring the ethos of traditionalist society based particularly over fundamentalist religious beliefs. Before put into practice the Western political philosophies in country like Pakistan, one ought to envisage the concept of democratic values (Cohen, 2004).

Before boost into the dilemma--let's elucidate the concept of freedom of democracy. If, the freedom pertains to entitle autonomy, and make less legislation sufficient for protecting rights of individuals, granting absolute opportunities to put choices in life: then it could be possible to tolerate individual or group in society, whether the individuals would not harm each other or not interfere in each other freedom (Hoodbhoy, 1991).

Nonetheless, if, the case, so then it can be the extreme form--libertarianism. The libertarian urges full autonomy with minor state control over individuals. Although, in practicing such principles answer to diverse questions should be asked: If someone committed children sex or might be Homosexual, or one might exploit other economically; additionally, if, someone refuses tax, duties or uses drugs- what would be the outcomes of freedom in term of libertarianism philosophy. These questions then probably suggests another term the liberalism. The liberals emphasizes respect for individuals; in contrast, to libertarianism which favours to legislation for the welfare of individuals to avoid harming each other. In nutshell, liberals propagates-- the individuals should free in making their own choices and the state is responsible to legislate solely for protect the choices (Lieven, 2012).

Questions ought to be stem in mind that entitling full control to owns life, it implies full autonomy in making business, deregulation of economy and less control of government over private life. This phenomenon is neo-liberalism found entrenched in traditional conservatives. The neo-liberal in terms of economy agreed with conservatives, the doctrine is the Laissez Affaire. The phenomena advocates less control of government in the economic affairs (Cohen, 2004).

Now, whether we can perceive it the modern liberal democracy, if, the concept is for the West, then why for the East? This is the crux always perplexed by our political and intellectual figures over the name of freedom of democracy or liberal democracy to the friable public for their own political exploration; either “lack of knowledge or untrained as a philosophers” quoted by Plato the famous western philosopher (Haqqani, 2005).

Our peers ignored the facts, how in a country like Pakistan, having Eastern Islamic culture, values, traditions and norms could be perplexed with Western Christ based democratic dogmas. Then, the state like Pakistan, should be the political vessel for test as has been suffering through the application of diverse political ideologies over the name of left, right or central wing-- the suffering class always remained the poor public who little know about the complexity of democratic and philosophical doctrines of political configuration in diverse society of Pakistan, and has always been exploited by the national and international stakeholders through one mean or other at the cost of national interests (Siddiqi, 2007).

Thus, alien political principles have always been remained nonplus over the name of politics, stability and democracy, because the state of Pakistan has of miscellaneous socio-religious

society. Which comprises of left wing politics, advocates the social plus economic equality, and propagating social liberal ideas, the other mind-set is the right wing, emphasizes on socially traditionalist approach in the state affairs, similarly, the central wing politics has also been remained the part of the society believes moderation, radical centralism and agrarianism, the other major group of the diverse political pattern are the religious politics, which ultra-staunchly opposite to socialist, liberalist and modernist dogmas in the country. This political ultra-diversity polarized the socio-political, socio-economical and democratic values in Pakistan, ultimately, leads the society into political instability, deep polarization, economic disparity, violent extremism and derailment of democracy. Now to interpret the politics and democracy in pragmatic paradigm a societal-based political pattern is the creative potential problems solving test tube to ensure stability and promote the societal-based democratic ethos (Iqbal, 2019).

Conundrums to Democratic Health

Pakistan as a nation-state has an intricate political history, continues to face a major challenges, ranging from institutional brittleness and political unrest to socio-economic discrepancies and external pressures.

Political Culture at Odds with Democratic Norms

Pakistan has mostly ruled by junta rather than democratic forces. The junta has had always a significant portion of power sharing in the state institutions, polices and resources even in democratic rule. The scenario is considered as ‘establishmentarian democracy’ (Haider, 2019). In a recent survey by World Values Survey evaluate the military rule to the public is often less or more acceptable equally like democratic regimes. Similarly, the cultural dimensions and diversification of Pakistan as a nation-state also negated the Western democratic norms. In post-modern era the hybrid warfare through technological warfare might erode the roots of democracy. For instance, the users of internet reached over 87 million in 2023 portrays the growth of 5.4 percent compare to 2022. Recently, Pakistan is the home to roughly 71 million social media users which is approximately 30 percent of its population. In a survey of 2021, 70 percent Pakistanis perceived the social media platforms like Facebook the home to fake news. Pakistan is not isolated in the case, countries like US, UK, India and France have also suffered by the propagation fake narratives of social media platforms. These platforms are the tactical tools for world leaders for so-called populism. However, state like Pakistan, where literacy rate is below than standard has potentially devastative lessons for democracy.

Growth of Urban-Middle Class

In the paradigm of World Bank individuals earning more than 10\$ per day are growing promptly, they are to be considered the urban-middle class. This class has roots in its tribes or sects. Therefore, it can be subscribed as “traditionalist class” with having leaders in the political circles. Since it jeopardised the political stability in Pakistan through growing conflicts of interests particularly since 2014 with having serious implications upon the democratic norms (Iqbal, 2019).

Judicialization of Politics

PILDAT 2023 report assess the judiciary has been played significant role in the political landscape and policy making of Pakistan. For instance, the dismissal of first constituent assembly by Maulvi Tamizuddin’s judgment on grounds of ‘Doctrine of Necessity’, which was a blow to democracy. Furthermore, the influence of judiciary in policy making in the contemporary era portrays in the judgment of 2016 to redefine the power of Prime Minister, similarly, the interference of Supreme Court in the no-confidence motion in 2022 showcasing

the continuous judication of politics. To evaluate the role of judiciary in the politics of Pakistan, They have strucked down laws, dismissed elected governments, and ratified military coups.

Youth Detachment with Democracy

Amnesty International 2023 in published report of 2022 elaborated the voter list of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) shows 126 million register voters. This list specifies 54 percent male, and 46 female voters while the young voters below the age of 35 are 45 percent of total register voters. Pakistan is the home to second youngest population in South Asia with 64 percent of population under the age of 30. Despite of the facts the youth voter turnout in the elections remained below average. A survey of Gallup Pakistan estimated the youth voter turnout 31 percent during the last eight elections. Youth Parliament of Pakistan in its project, 'Why young people don't vote in Pakistan' showcasing that the economic burdens, unemployment, terrorism, lack of facilities and poverty hindering youngsters from politics. The disappointment of youngsters from fragile democratic system and poor governance caused massive brain drain. According to available data, approximately 445000 youngsters do their graduation per year and more than 31 percent with professional degrees remained jobless. In 2022, 765000 graduates have left the country to pursue better economic opportunities. This brain drain crises will be continue in the existing fragile political and economic structure (Amnesty International, 2020).

Frustration of Educated Voters

Human Right Commission reports 2023, before 2002, the number of undergraduate students were recorded below than 200000 in the country. While after a decade it reached to more than 2 million. This increase in number of young graduates perceived to be the potential revolution in traditional political structure. While they are not pleased with the status quo, and poor governance. This conventional approach of politics thwarting the educated voters. From 1988 to 2008 when the literacy rate was 21.7, the turnout of youth age from 30s to 40s remained at a standstill. This indicates a significant fallout of educated class in the politics of Pakistan. For instant, Karachi the highest literacy rate in the country showcasing 12 percent low turnout in the elections of 2018 (Ghumman, 2024).

Deep Political Division

Pakistan Press Foundations evaluated Pakistan is the home to diverse culture, ethnicities, sects and religions which represent diversification in public opinion. This clashes of opinion can be observed easily in social media platforms. For instance, the utilization of twitter by the upper-middle or urban-English class is the hub of building narratives. This platform is the battle field of ideologies and narratives among political circles and even in religious sects which promotes hater and polarisation. The rise of differences of opinion, and political diversion in social media platforms can significantly impact the smoothness of democratic process. It boosts extremism, militancy, hostility by decreasing the level of tolerance among various groups. Thus, the evolution of digital media hindered the democratic process and deepen political polarisation in Pakistan (Iqbal, 2019).

Women Empowerment

Annual report of Aurat Foundation 2023 states that in Pakistan the gender disparity is always remained a potent problem. Various efforts has been done to minimize the gender gap; for instance, the improvement of male-female ratio in educational sector has been improving day by day. Further, the allocation of special women seats in public and private job market indicates progress. However, despite of improvements the country still faces challenges in women

empowerment. In the Global Gender Gap Index Report 2022, the employment opportunities remained at 20 percent including 10 percent in private sector which stood Pakistan on 145 out of 156 states. In term of political empowerment Pakistan stood on 93 out of 152 countries. In the elections of 2008, 16 out of 72 women remained successful, in 2013 elections 9 out of 135 won the elections while only 8 out of 183 women succeeded in winning the parliament elections of 2018. Although it is noticeable that majority of elected women candidates possessed strong family political background.

Religious Politics and Patrons

Religiosity in the political landscape of Pakistan continued since inception. The middle class since 1980s has been considered the better Muslims according to their Islamic practices and beliefs. At the same time they are also included Western philosophical outlooks and post-modernist approach in their sphere of life. The participation of public in the religious festivals and meetings showcasing the religiosity in the lives of people. This trend is high especially in both lower and middle-classes. Surprisingly, the religious tendencies in urban-middle class are transforming from conventional to conservative approach due to high literacy rate as compare to rural areas, where the people still having conventional religious beliefs and practices. If we observe the last seven elections, there was little support for religious parties comparatively to socialist conservatives. In short, this trend reshaped the paradox of religious politics into socialist conservative mind-set that mostly impacted the structure of democratic norms (Haqqani, 2005).

Transparent Elections

Free and fair elections are the health of democracy which ensure transparency, fundamental rights, liberty, and devolution of power, civil rights, accountability, good governance and democratic ethics. Pakistan's electoral history remained chaotic; for instance, the elections of 2013 and 2018 marked by the opposition parties unfair. They accused it pre manipulated by military. The opposition have always raised the questions over the independence of ECP despite the organisation has the fullest constitutional autonomy. The accusations of rigging has been challenging the autonomy of ECP caused protests and allegations. As per PILDAT survey from April 2017 to March 2018, which declared the prior electoral practices biased by scoring 51.5 out of 100. After successful out of no motion in April 2022, the PTI labelled the same allegations as did by PML-N. While various political parties defying the elections of 2024 unfair, pre designed and lack of level playing field. Furthermore the intrusion of state's institutions in the political arena and their malpractices declined the credibility of ECP, (Ghumman, 2024).

The Race of Political Parties

According to ECP there are 175 registered political parties in Pakistan. Despite of open environment for an electoral campaign the parties protests about rigging. During 2013 elections MQM, ANP and PPP have has critical challenges during campaign while the PTI was threaten by Tehrik -i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). In addition, during the elections of 2018, PML-N's main leaders have faced the court cases for charges of corruption and mismanagement. Similarly, in the elections of 2024, PTI has faced the same phenomena accused ECP including other institutions for disparities and level playing field. However, parties like ANP and JUI-F complaint about the same discrepancies. This race and blame game among political parties derailed the democratic norms and credibility of state institutions.

Efficiency of Parliament

PILDAT reported that parliament is considered the mother of all state's institutions. Parliament is the progressive health of democratic norms. However, the status of the parliament of Pakistan has been remained incredible. It reported in 2024 about the 15th National Assembly performance. The report raised concerns about the effective legislation capacity in the best interests of the public. Further the report indicates the less effectiveness of parliamentary committees about their check and balance. For instance, the absence of ministers from questioning hours which remains a permanent issue. Further, lack of freedom of speech related to state's intuitions and capacities rises question over its effectiveness. Similarly, the self-centred utilization of parliament in terms of legislations in the best interests of ruling regime is disastrous to democratic norms and national interests. For instance, various bills has passed by the previous regime of PTI to counter the opposition rather than nation interests, presently, the coalition government of PML-N repeated the same ethos to counter its rival party. These malpractices are hindering the effectiveness and progress of the parliament which is major challenge to the promotion of democracy.

Supplementary Challenges

The other challenges includes injustice, inequality, legal egalitarianism, gender discrimination, lack of accountability, intra-party democracy, impediments in public-party connection, inclusivity-JUI-F and JI have less women inclusivity comparatively other-(Jehangir, 2018) limitations on freedom of press and civil society, lack of proper local government, lake of interests of citizens engagement in politics, lack of trust and confidence among political parties and poor governance are some key factors which promptly eroding the roots of democracy in Pakistan (Darr. 2018).

Amelioration and Potential Avenues

Building a sustainable and vibrant democratic future for Pakistan requires a comprehensive approach that focuses on key areas like governance, human rights, the rule of law, and economic development. A vital part of this effort is creating strong democratic systems, which include fair elections that truly represent the people's choices, ensuring everyone can participate in the electoral process and has access to voting. Educating voters and encouraging active involvement from citizens are crucial for creating an informed and engaged democratic society. It's also important to have checks and balances that stop any one group from holding too much power, uphold the law, and maintain an independent judiciary, which are all essential for a stable democracy (Ghumman, 2024).

Good governance is important, with clear separation of powers among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches to protect the integrity of democracy. A strong judicial system that defends constitutional rights and individual freedoms serves as a safeguard against authoritarian rule. Furthermore, ensuring good coordination between national and local authorities helps to address the unique needs of different regions in Pakistan. Inclusivity is key to a healthy democracy. Protecting the rights of marginalized groups, women, and minorities through anti-discrimination laws and inclusive policies helps to create social unity and stability. Economic stability and fair growth are also vital, as they allow governments to tackle social issues, provide necessary services, and reduce poverty. Transparent and accountable economic practices build public trust in democratic institutions (Hasan, 2020).

Accordance to Centre for Peace Development and Initiatives report to improve democracy in Pakistan, we need a broad approach. This includes strengthening the rule of law, promoting effective governance, encouraging open communication and consensus, investing in education and public awareness, protecting freedom of expression and media independence, and fighting against corruption. By pursuing these reforms with ongoing commitment and collaboration

among political leaders, civil society, and the public, Pakistan can build a democratic future that aligns with democratic values, human rights, and shared prosperity.

Conclusion

Coalition politics in Pakistan has introduced both reforms and challenges restructuring the country's democratic norms and practices. Coalitions e.g. United Front, Pakistan National Alliance, Islamic Democratic Movement, Pakistan Democratic Alliance or the recent Pakistan Democratic Movement have had materialised to oppose the civilian setups. Others i.e. National Democratic Front, Combined Opposition Alliance, Movement for Restoration of Democracy or Alliance for Restoration of Democracy fought to military rules. Overall it brought promising results in strengthening democracy; e.g., proved constructive aimed severe polarisation and a symbol of unity in diversity. Alongside the contemporary epoch is more challenging for miscellaneous political landscape and democratic future. The concept of digital democracy, urbanisation, women empowerment, high literacy ratio, etc. transformed the public opinion discarded the traditionalist approach of politics. The country needs wide-ranging reforms to reduce socioeconomic gap, ensure good governance and institutional autonomy; introduce opportunities for educated youth to avoid brain drain, ensure rule of law and gender based inequality. Therefore, pragmatic instead of dogmatic sort of politics based on post-modernist approach should be agreed upon necessary for country's avenues in political internalisation.

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