



RESEARCH PAPER

Dilemma of Democracy: Reasons for the Failure of Democracy in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This article presents critical analysis of the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. The objective of this study was to find out the major reasons behind the failure of democracy in Pakistan as most of the population is confused about what the actual cause is behind it. The design of the study was descriptive and teachers and students of international relation of university of central Punjab were the population of this study. The sample of study was selected through random sampling technique. In order to collect data, a validated questionnaire was used by the researcher. The major findings of the research showed that most of the population presented illiteracy, corruption, unfair justice system, pressure groups, feudal and tribal system as the major reasons for the failure of democracy in Pakistan and suggested technocratic system and presidential system as the major solution for the disoriented situation in the country. On the basis of research, a major recommendation of a technocratic system was provided by the researcher.

Keywords: Democracy, Dilemma, Failure, Pakistan, Reasons

Introduction

Democratic system in Pakistan has always been in a dilemma since its independence in 1947. Here 'dilemma' means a difficult choice between two equally undesirable alternatives. As before the independence some intellectual Muslim from the south Asia came to know the harsh realities of the situation they had been put in so to preserve their identity they had to make a choice either to accept the imposed system of democracy that was not their own but of Britain or to face the subservience of the Hindu community that was in majority at that time. In this situation to minimize the bloodshed they chose the former one. But From the beginning, democracy has been dwindling in Pakistan as we came to know through this study how never really a true democratic system has been established in the country. 'Democracy' was stated by Andrew as a system through which people can protect their rights that in other words present a way for ordinary citizens to protect themselves from the atrocities of elites and to protect their basic right through the state legal system (Heywood, 2017). Joseph Schumpeter stated democracy as an institutional agreement where people acquire power through competitive struggle to make political decisions through vote (Hardy, 1945). But Pakistan democracy meets no requirement of the above defined democracy goals. Due to threats of war from the neighboring rival India, Kashmir issue and internal weak structure Pakistan experienced ups and downs in the democracy. The death of Quaid and his colleague Liaquat Ali Khan in the starting years of Pakistan left no one with influence to handle the internal structure of constitution making and to amend the legislation to suit Pakistan democracy needs. The high influence of elites and the kinship system reduced democracy to only its name. So, crumbling internal structure of democracy and external threats, the power had to be transferred to a more capable hand and that is where the military had to intervene not just one time but multiple times as in 1958, 1977 and 1999 to hold the crumbling structure together. Although the military government sent

a clear message that democracy is a failed system for Pakistan, this was not the only reason for its complete failure as other aspects also gave way to make Pakistan a failed democratic state.

This research paper helps to clarify the answer of the vague query as to why democracy has been a failed system in Pakistan because people are uncertain of the real reasons behind this. As data collected in the research paper give comprehensive reason of Kinship system, imposed and colonial system, no free election, feudal and tribal system, awareness and education, judicial system, media control, foreign intervention, to verify that not just military era but these problems are considered by people that gave way to destruction of democracy in Pakistan. The research paper also provides new insight as to application of a technocratic system to improve the disoriented situation of Pakistan.

This research paper will provide the operational definition of democracy to better approach the research subject. The Research paper by use of data collection through different recognized sources will review the literature to give a comprehensive background on the failure of democracy in Pakistan. Type of method used is descriptive and based on questionnaire surveys to collect data later validate it through reason provided by the research paper by the use of data collection. Later study also provides new insight and a system proposed to rectify the situation in Pakistan through valid arguments. In conclusion, sum up the research that will provide a critical analysis of the reasons for Pakistan as a failed democratic state and how a technocratic system could improve the situation. The point is validated through the survey from intellectuals from IR and political science.

Democracy

Democracy according to this research paper can be defined as a system where people can protect their interest and are sovereign to take part in political decisions by controlling the government and have common political thinking. This definition is taken because it covers all aspects of the democratic system needed for the research in this research paper. As stated by Andrew here democracy is taken as a system where people can protect their interest as in the western meaning where democracy was described as the system to protect the rights and interest for all kinds of people irrespective of their color, creed, race and religion. As Europe adopted this system to stop the wars between catholic and proletarians and in the case of the US they implemented this system to disintegrate the color base system of white and black. And also according to Joseph, in democratic systems the general public can take part in political decision making by controlling the government as study and data collection shows that in western, African and other democratic countries general public representatives take part in political decisions and control the government in taking decisions that affect the people in the state. Also political thinking is an aspect that is important in the prevalence of democracy as for a democratic state to properly administer its policies people must have a common political thinking as in the case of Americans that follow capitalistic political thinking and in case of Chinese that follow communitarian political thinking. Now democratic system is the most prevailing state system in the world and in other words every country claims itself to be democratic.

Literature Review

Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan can be attributed to a number of factors and not just one reason that deteriorated the democratic structure in the state. Pakistan has experienced different kinds of rule that further undermined the situation of democracy in Pakistan.

This democratic system was imposed by the British otherwise if we did not accept it then we had to accept the rule of majority Hindus. So, from the beginning this system was borrowed and not formed by considering the individual needs of this society as was in the

case of Britain's. Non-Western cultures are so different from the western ones that democracy is not possible in most third world countries (Pye & Pye, 2011).

Only eighteen percent of the population during the independence was literate that voted for the independence and others just followed suit in trust, or followed their kinship leaders. And even in contemporary times about 42 percent of the population remain illiterate and are not aware of their rights that make it easy for the elites and leaders of the society to exploit them (O'Neill, 2022).

Frequent intervention of military in the political system did not let democracy develop in the country. After the independence, unstable political situation ensued due to death of the Quaid and later the threat of war on Kashmir caused the only capable institution military to tackle these problems. In 1958, 1977 and 1999, military intervened to improve the situation but then owing to multiple reasons military could not hold the situation together so it took help from the bureaucracy which at that time was controlled and dominated by feudal and tribal elites. This nexus further deteriorated the political scenario in Pakistan. (Robotka, 2006).

Feudal and tribal system is the prevailing problem that did not let democracy in Pakistan to prevail. Due to these systems only elites got what they wanted through their dynastic rules and the middle and lower class became weaker. These systems are the reason why people of Pakistan are divided into sects religiously, cast wise and on the base of their kin.

As the democratic system in Pakistan was borrowed, there is no common political thinking among the masses and people just support a party vaguely without any common thinking (Khan, 2004). This is the reason the elites and tribal leaders control the government to their will due to their influence on people that follow them blindly either due to their kin or they get something from it in return not considering the long-term effect.

Foreign intervention is also a major cause that never let the democratic system prevail in the country by influencing the state economically by funding mafias and pressure group that bring hurdles in the fair process of democracy, Socially by the use of corruption and bribery that undermines the democratic boundaries, or by spreading disinformation that tarnished the country image on global level as by Indian disinformation network of RSS that was found out by EU Anti-disinformation lab in 2019 (Jahangir, 2020).

The judicial system of Pakistan remains outdated, borrowed from the west and ineffective in implementing the law in Pakistan due to which the masses in NWFP and Balochistan tribal people had to rely on the Shariah and native system as it was quick and effective (Anatol Lieven, 2012). This was also the reason why people discarded the democratic system in Pakistan and another stepping stone to failure of the system.

Free and fair elections, another characteristic of democratic system, could not be observed in Pakistan as seen by the rigged polling in the elections by invisible forces that showed the failure of Pakistan as a democratic state (Bibi, 2018). To come in power the elites always had to make deals with the institutions and other leaders to maintain power and by doing this the people's vote was bought as they followed a kinship system that undermined the democratic process. This was another cause of the failure of democracy in Pakistan.

Hypotheses

- H01 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that there is corruption among the political system.
- H02 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that most of the Pakistani population is illiterate.

- H03 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that the military intervened in the state political system.
- H04 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that feudal and tribal systems prevail in the country.
- H05 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that the Pakistani community is divided into sects.
- H06 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that there is no common political thinking among the masses.
- H07 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that foreign forces intervene to weaken the country.
- H08 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that the judicial system in the country is flawed.
- H09 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that there is no free and fair electoral process in Pakistan.
- H010 Dilemma of democracy in Pakistan is due to the fact that unjust pressure groups undermine democratic process through protests.

Material and Methods

Research Design

The research paper makes use of descriptive research methods. The research paper will make use of the process of data collection. Then data will be categorized and hypotheses will be deduced from it that will later be validated through questionnaire surveys. The research paper does not make use of experimental methods because no study groups were involved. The study also does not make use of theoretical or exploratory methods because no new theory or concept is invented and study only broadens the current issue on which the work has already been done but there is vagueness in it. So this research paper will pinpoint the real reason and data will later be organized and compiled for presentation to the readers.

Population

The population that was involved in the survey was the students and teachers of international relations of university of central Punjab as they have the proper knowledge and are suitable to eliminate any element of vagueness that is the main purpose of this research paper. This population selection was because it was cost efficient and easily accessible to me.

Survey Technique

The survey technique makes use of a random selection method to eliminate any element of subjectivity from the research paper.

Instrument

Researchers developed a questionnaire based on the pre survey that was done based on demographics and unstructured questions and according to the objectives of study contained in the 10 statements. After preparing the first draft, it was consulted with three research experts for the purpose of validity. Amendments were made in the questionnaire as guided by the experts. To maintain the reliability and objectivity of the questionnaire, it was distributed to a random population by using WhatsApp class groups of different

sections of international relation through a link of the Microsoft forums on which the survey was made.

Data Collection

Two methods were used for the collection of data from the students and teachers of the IR department. One was through online forum technique and other was by personal visits to the teacher and students.

Table 1
Reasons behind the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan

| Sr. No. | Statements | Agree in percentage | Disagree in percentage |
|---------|--|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Illiteracy may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 90 | 10 |
| 2 | Military intervention in political system may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 60 | 40 |
| 3 | Feudal and tribal system may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 70 | 30 |
| 4 | Community division in different sects may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 60 | 40 |
| 5 | Absence of common political thinking among people may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 60 | 40 |
| 6 | Foreign country influence over the country may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 50 | 50 |
| 7 | Unfair justice system may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 80 | 20 |
| 8 | Unfair election system may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 65 | 35 |
| 9 | Corruption may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 90 | 10 |
| 10 | Influence of pressure groups may be the reason for dilemma of democracy in Pakistan | 80 | 20 |

Table 1 row 1 revealed illiteracy as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 90 percent of the population agreed to the statement and only 10 percent opposed it.

Table 1 row 2 disclosed military intervention in the political system of the country as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 60 percent of the population agreed with the statement and 40 percent disagreed with it.

Table 1 row 3 displayed the feudal and tribal system as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 70 percent of the population agreed with the statement and 30 percent disagreed with it.

Table 1 row 4 indicated community division on the basis of different sects as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 60 percent of the population agreed to the statement and 40 percent disagreed with it.

Table 1 row 5 exposed absence of common political thinking among the people as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 60 percent of the population agreed with the statement and 40 percent disagreed with it.

Table 1 row 6 presented foreign country influence over the country as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 50 percent of the population agreed with the statement and the other 50 percent disagreed with it.

Table 1 row 7 revealed an unfair justice system in the country as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 80 percent of the population agreed with the statement and 20 percent disagreed with it.

Table 1 row 8 indicated an unfair election system in the country as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 65 percent of the population agreed with the statement and 35 percent disagreed with it.

Table 1 row 9 exposed corruption as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 90 percent of the population agreed with the statement and 10 percent disagreed with it.

Table 1 row 10 presented pressure groups influence over the country as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan. 80 percent of the population agreed with the statement and 20 percent disagreed with it.

Table 2
Recommendations for the betterment of disoriented situation of Pakistan

| Sr. No. | Recommended System | Selection in percentage |
|---------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Presidential system | 50 |
| 2 | Islamic System | 33 |
| 3 | Parliamentary system | 11 |
| 4 | Military dictatorship system | 6 |

Table 2 row 1 indicated that 50 percent out of the total population recommended the presidential system for the betterment of the disoriented situation of Pakistan.

Table 2 row 2 presented that 33 percent out of the total population recommended Islamic system for the betterment of the disoriented situation in Pakistan.

Table 2 row 3 indicated that 11 percent out of the total population recommended a parliamentary system for the betterment of the disoriented situation in Pakistan.

Table 2 row 4 disclosed that 6 percent out of the total population recommended a military dictatorship system for the betterment of the disoriented situation in Pakistan.

Table 3
Recommendation of technocratic system for the betterment of disoriented situation in Pakistan

| Sr. No. | System | Agree in percentage | Disagree in percentage |
|---------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | Technocratic system | 75 | 25 |

Table 3 row 1 revealed that 75 percent of the population agreed to the recommendation of a technocratic system that is based on merit and scientific knowledge for the betterment of the disoriented situation in Pakistan and 25 percent disagreed with it.

Discussion

The study was designed to explore the major reasons behind the failure of democratic system in Pakistan. The findings of the first objective of the study regarding major reasons behind the failure of democratic system in Pakistan were in line with the studies of Pye (1985), Sattar (2020), Robotka (2006), Khan (2004), Jahangir (2020), Leiven

(2011), Bibi, Jalal, Jameel (2018) and was validated by quantitative method rather than qualitative. As Pye (1985) revealed in his studies that western culture system can not be applied to non western culture especially third world countries where democracy is not according to their structure as corruption can not be suppressed here by western means that is the core reason for failure of democracy. Sattar (2020) indicated how illiteracy is the main reason behind the failure of democracy in Pakistan. Robotka (2006) exposed military intervention in political systems; feudal and tribal system domination never let democratic norms to develop in the country. Khan (2004) presented that a common political thinking and a strong party system is needed among the population for democracy to prevail but lack of it in Pakistani society was the reason for the downfall of democracy. Jahangir (2020) exposed foreign country intervention in the country to destabilize the democracy as the reason for its failure. Leiven (2011) studies revealed the lack of a fair and quick judicial system as the reason for the failure of democracy in Pakistan. Bibi, Jalal, Jameel (2018) studies indicated the absence of a free and fair election system as the main reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan.

Conclusion

On the basis of study findings, the conclusion was drawn that most of the population favored the statement regarding illiteracy and corruption as the main reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan as 90 percent of the population supported it. Then after those statements indicating the justice system and influence of pressure groups were regarded as the reason for the dilemma of democracy in Pakistan as 80 percent of the population supported this stance. Statement about prevalence of feudal and tribal system was regarded one of the main reasons as 70 percent of the population supported it. Later, a statement presenting an unfair election system was regarded as the reason as 65 percent of the population agreed to it. Then, statements exposing military intervention in the political system, community division in sects, and absence of common political thinking were considered as the reasons as 60 percent of the population supported it. At the end, a statement mentioning foreign countries' influence over the country was rejected as the reason as 50 percent agreed to it and 50 percent rejected it. Most of the population agreed to the statement about application of the technocratic system (based on merit and scientific knowledge) for the betterment of the disoriented situation in Pakistan as 75 percent of the population agreed to it. Majority of the population about 50 percent selected the presidential system for the reformation of Pakistan, 33 percent approved Islamic caliphate system, 11 percent retained the idea of parliamentary system and the remaining 6 percent indicated military rule for improving the situation in the country.

Recommendations

On the basis of findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

1. Education is most important to bring awareness among the people for their rights and also to elect honest people in the elections. Through education the population will be able to learn about democratic norms and values.
2. For the betterment of the situation in Pakistan, eradication of corruption is important especially among politicians. The prevalence of feudal and tribal systems and the influence of pressure groups should be controlled through strict enforcement of law.
3. Fair role of the judiciary, legislature and executive is significant to build public trust in their institution. A fair, quick and efficient judicial system should be implemented to improve the situation of Pakistan.
4. Cooperation between civil-military is important for the eradication of problems that are making the situation worse and it will also be helpful for foreign policy.

5. Free and fair electoral process should be implemented to improve the situation. Also the community needs to be integrated with common political thinking so that division in different sects could be controlled and the population could work as one.
6. A Presidential system in which bureaucratic officials are appointed on the basis of merit and scientific knowledge should be implemented that will provide efficient results than parliamentary systems and will improve the disoriented situation in the country.

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