

Ethnicity Crisis In Pakistan In The Context Of National Identity And Political Legitimacy

Syed Wajahat Afzal

lecturer in political science

department of political science and international relations

university of GUJRAT Pakistan

email-wajahat.afzal@uog.edu.pk

Abstract:

This paper presents the problem of Ethnicity in the context of national identity and political legitimacy in Pakistan. The question of Ethnicity has become a complicated and intimidating problem in developing and underdeveloped states. Ethnicity is a comprehensive term, according to the perspective this term can be defined in different ways in the context of ethnicity can be defined as a shared cultural identity concerning with similar practices, beliefs and linguistic features, which are transferred to one generation to other. Today in Pakistan and indeed elsewhere in the developing world, issues of ethnicity and national identity continue to be of great importance for political legitimacy. The logic of national identity can be established by accepting the legitimacy of the authority in the state. Ethnicity paves the path of regional/ tribal politics in Pakistan. Consequently, performance of the institutions is meager and generating tension that deters the development in the state. Politically and economically state suffers and also creating disunity in the national level.

INTRODUCTION

The clash between national identity and regional loyalty exists today in the variety of forms in all developing states of the world. There is political alienation in many regions of the globe. The lack of national unity and national loyalty, or one may say the simple refusal or inability of an individual or a group

to consider itself a part of a state or a nation is referred to as the problem of national identity. The ethnic/regional/tribal/religious groups demand independence and refuse to submit to the authority of the central government. These groups want complete self-rule and special position in the state. The identity crisis can be interpreted in many ways into the political

process. It generally reflects the sentiments of nationalism and the desire of the people to live together in a common place. It implies that the identity crisis is the feeling of an individual's association with a particular political system. In the process of political change, an identity crisis occurs "when a community finds that it had once unquestionably accepted as physical and psychological definitions of its collective self are no longer acceptable under new territorial conditions" (Samuel, 1971). The disintegration of East Pakistan and present alarming situation in Sindh and Baluchistan are good examples in this regard. The vast dispersal of communication have also generated this problem, as the isolated communities have roused, and eventually helped in rebuilding the sense of unification of the political system must inevitably experience whenever its basic forms are substantially changed" (Samuel, 1968). The absence of national identity and national loyalty refers to the unwillingness or inability of an individual or groups or individuals to feel as a part of the state. This problem has been found in pluralistic societies in the form of ethnic, linguistic, tribal and religious section. Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and now Russia can be referred to this class where the existence of the federal system is challenged the problem of identity and legitimacy are closely related to each other. In political socialization process, people generally get more sense of national

identity in stable system, which also provide the legitimacy of authority. The sense of identity may also be developed by accepting the legitimacy of the authority. The legitimacy, in fact, is associated with 'the performance capacity of the system and the feelings of the people towards the authority' (Macridis, and Brown, 1912). This implies that the congruence between masses demand for participation and a positive elite response to those unlimited expectation of the society are not met, ultimately creating sharp differences and sometimes leading to a state of virtual civil war. The consequences of the undue play on some seats in 1977 elections during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's period and mass agitation against General Ayub Khan's rule can be referred to this problem. It is under those conditions the military often intervenes to control the authority of the federation. This implies that a balance between demands and concessions supports and restraints, expectations and satisfactions may inculcate the sense of consensus among various communities for national unification. Generally; the legitimacy crisis is regarded along with the forms of the governmental institutions and the authority of the leadership. It can also be referred to as "a break down in the constitutional structure and the performance of the government that arises out of the differences over the proper nature of the authority for political system" (Samual, 1971).

In Pakistan, the introduction of one unit in 1956, introduction of 1962 constitution by Ayub Khan, frequent constitutional amendments by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and mal-treatments of the general public during the reign of General Zia-ul-Haq under 1973 constitution is closely related events in this context

Foundations of leadership in Pakistan

Pakistan faces leadership crisis as result of the absence of social intermingling among different groups and cultural variation. None Democratic political culture breeds hierarchical leadership in Pakistan while the other section of the society favors democratic values and structures. The foundations of leadership are weak in Pakistan there is a continuous hereditary pattern of leadership in Pakistan. Most of the politicians enter the complex world of Pakistani politics via their ancestral heritage. The charm of family leadership is popular because of lack of education, non-democratic trends and irrational familial associations which the people of Pakistan develop with certain past leaders, such as Z.A. Bhutto. Therefore, unfortunately the regional elitists are successful in dominating the politics of the country. Pakistan is multi-cultural society and the role of leaders in such volatile circumstances becomes more sensitive issues involving ethnicity, linguistics, tribalism, and sectarian matters. The fragmentation of leadership is main source of national identity

and legitimacy crisis and these crises are intensifying with the passage of time. Pakistan as a state and society where different ethnicities and sects are existed therefore foundation of leadership divided into various levels regional national/ethnic/provincial/religion/sectarian that is problem of national identity and legitimacy because of these problems the spirit of national leadership has lost. In the state the regional system that is sub system of national system of state always presents rivalry among the different ethnic groups of the state. Regional/tribe is part of national realm but they possess the sense of distinct identity from the rest of country therefore sense of national leadership might not be attained in Pakistan. Moreover, family-based politics breeds mediocrity and the party eventually suffers from rapid vanished of the public support. This is seen in Pakistan politic the present world, any system where political leaders are not elected through an honest, transparent and competitive process is sure to fail sooner rather than later.

Other hand the political legitimacy also upset when political elite not able to full fill the promises of people for the development of society masses thrown out leaders they do not recognized the authority in the developing countries this type of practices is quite common in Pakistan. People are not willing to accept the political legitimacy and validity of

rules of their entire political system. Leaders in developing countries making promises with people for their bright future for legitimization of their authority when these promises are not full filled eventually leads towards the crises of authority Legitimacy can be. Milt political party system society divided in to many political groups' therefore national characteristics has been eliminated from the country. Purpose of political parties only getting the power and support to family dynasty or particular groups not aimed at revival of democracy their object is just acquire the power. Political legitimacy and national identity is the essential features of the democratic system, that originate through the national of democratic systems (e.g., the recognition of all citizens as political equals and the right of the citizens to self-rule mainly Through the election of their rulers) make this relationship very complex and extremely signify Military ruled in Pakistan more than three decades. Political role of military in which military does not directly undertake the power but play a major role in the in the political environment military always setting conditions for performance of civilian government. The shadow of military always found in Pakistan politics therefore national leadership has been affected in Pakistan. Military serve as backer of civilian government in Pakistan.

Federalism creates political union among the diverse region on the basis of jointly constitutional agreement that determine the federal authority and its units. Federalism accommodates the different ethnic, linguistic and cultural diversities in the state. Pakistan encountered severe problems in evolving a working federal system which could ensure unity in diversity and promote harmony and interdependence among different political units in the state. Customarily Central government neglects the political aspects of the provinces central government gives the impression of they have strong hand over the provinces. As the matter of fact that strong authoritarian political system refutes the sprite of federalism Mutual fear and suspicion always exists between the center and federating units Continual Military intervention and break down of constitution weaken the role of provinces and strengthened the centralized authority non democratic directions set in Pakistan that is fact federalism is the best pattern of pluralism where different ethnic populations co-exist calmly. There are some states having federal systems in appearance not in essence. The former Soviet Union was a federation in form only. Actually it was a unitary state because its different institutions, political party and economic planning activates had strong centralized tendencies. The similar case has been observed in Ethiopia and Nigeria. IN both the states, constitution proclaimed ethnic minority rights

but the central government impose its decisions by force. The inner authorities have strong. Considering the geo-political and socio-economic structure of Pakistan, the diverse cultural, customs and distance of one wing from the other Pakistan could only survive through democratic institutions where power can be shared by the people of the two wings on an unbiased basis. In Pakistan the politicians who supported for centralized administration only served their personal interests and the class interests of the ruling elite. In the process it was only East Pakistan but the other smaller provinces like Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Baluchistan also went through the same process of Negligence and exploitation after the advent of Pakistan, the approach of the ruling elite of Pakistan was that national integration was only developed through centralized system which created ethnic rivalry. The ruling elites were of the belief that a system where provinces have autonomy cannot give rise to national integration but after the application of centralized system in Pakistan there was no national integration rather than different ethnic groups called for provincial autonomy. Provinces or ethnic groups were not satisfied with the policies of ruling elites. In past Bengalis were always in favor of provincial autonomy as they wanted to manage the affairs of their province and wanted to control their resources, but this claim was never talked and worsening the situation to the full. In short centralized policies by the elite as well as army

paved a way for the emergence of ethno nationalism in East Pakistan and currently in Baluchistan, Balochis has no faith on national leaders and more trust on ethnic leadership because national leadership exploited the emotions of people for their selfish interests. Loose federation and self-ruling is the practical and rational choice as every province has distinct culture, norms, civilizations and history.

Conclusion

National identity is undoubtedly a pre-requisite for national unity of any country that integrates the society in single unit which is necessary for the state building and giving help to improve the political organizations in the state. Role of political parties is misery able in Pakistan political parties are organized in Pakistan for their own interest such as economic, ethnic, regional, tribal interests that is why the process of moderation has badly affected. Political parties are agent of social change in the society and the source of alteration in the social set up give new trend to the society. In the time of social crises when customary institution and values are threatened the society losing effectiveness and no longer fascinate People searching charismatic leader serve as the model of change and evolving new pattern of life for rapid transformation of existing attitudes towards nationalism in this regard Pakistan is greatly handicapped after the independence therefore country inability to achieved national identity. Another factor of legitimacy and

national identity crisis is the role of military serve as backer of civilian government military ruled in over three decades. Pakistan is pluralistic society. Political parties supporting particular group, therefore element of nationalism has lost in the character of political parties. Only political parties are the source of relationship between leaders and the masse. But the Political parties are developing the regional/tribal culture in the state; therefore the role of national leadership has been fading in the National politics. Different ethnic groups have no loyalty or attachment with state they just want to preserve their own identity with region, tribe, and ethnic groups are not socialized therefore they have not accepted the loyalty patterns in the state. Political Legitimacy binds the different ethnic regional groups into an organized common political action the fundamental causes of failure of government in Pakistan lack of wide acceptance of political legitimacy in the state obscure general agreement about political action. Tension between different national ethnic/regional groups may cause of this situation in Pakistan. The socio, cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversities are also made the choice of federation in Pakistan. Sharp inequalities in size, population and resources are creating tensions between the federation and provincial politics. That is the core issue of Pakistan. The wave of isolation is bowling among the provinces especially in

Baluchistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh. These provinces demanded self-rule from central government. The nature of federal crisis mainly depends on regionalism. The Regional ethnic groups are always possible source of threat, which can ultimately weaken the federal system. Rise of ethno nationalism in Baluchistan as Balochis feels central government not concerned with them only they have the concerned with their natural resources this perception rise the ethno nationalism. in this regard breakdown of regional/ethnic/tribe power domination structure in the society and redistribute the power to new elite for peace, prosperity for entire society can be assured in this fashion.

References

- Samuel, Huntington. (1968). Political order in changing societies. New Haven: Yale University Press, p.47.
- Samuel, Huntington. (1971). Political Development and Political Decay. In Claud Welch. Ed. Political Modernization, California: Words Worth Publishing Co., pp.5, 34, 238.
- Adeel Khan, Politics of Identity, Ethnic Nationalism and the State in Pakistan (London: Sage Publications, 2005), p.2
- Michael, Stein. (1971). Federal Political System in Federal societies. In Peter Meckison Canadian Federation (Toronto) pp.119-120.

Lucian, Pye. (1971). the identity and Political Culture. In Leonard Binder (Eds). Crisis and sequences in Political Development. New Jersey: Princeton University Press, p.111, 135

Whelock,Nasser s New Egypt (New york:Frederick A. praeger, Inc.,1960),pp.19-36

Local Ethnic and National Loyalties in Village Indonesia (New Haven,conn Yale University Cultural Report series,No8,1958),p.7

Birch, A.H. (1989). Nationalism and National Integration. London: Unwin Hyman

Jaffrelot, C. (2004). Nationalism without a nation: Pakistan: Searching for its identity. In. Christopher Jaffrelot. (Eds.). Pakistan Nationalism without a nation (pp.7-48). (2nd edition). Dhaka University Press Ltd

Connor, W. (1994). Ethno nationalism the quest for understanding. Princeton: Princeton University Press

Jahan, R. (1972). Pakistan: failure in national integration. New York: Columbia University Press

Local, Ethnic and National Loyalties, p.9

Connor, W. (1972). Nation-Building or Nation-Destroying? World Politics (24) 3, 1972. (pp. 319-355).