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The Historical Analysis of National Integration in Pakistan: A Case Study of General Pervez Musharraf Era

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Abstract: *National cohesion encapsulates political, social, cultural, and economic Integration. Ever since its creation, Pakistan has been tormented by the problem of national Integration and competing regional demands within the context of nation or State. The relations between the center and the provinces have never been exemplary. During the last 75 years, constitutional and political upheavals have increased misunderstanding amongst the provinces, and an atmosphere of mistrust exists within the center. Various national political parties and leaders have been highlighting widespread dissatisfaction with the affairs of the state institutions, regional disparities, economic exploitation, centralization of authority, and finances in the country. Successive regimes, because of vested agendas, have never succeeded in achieving complete national cohesion. Consequently, the threat to national Integration from within remains alive and has increased manifolds. This case study concludes shortcomings in national cohesion by the historical analysis of National Integration in Pakistan up to General Pervez Musharraf, and it suggests dynamic and viable measures to strengthen the federation and enhance national cohesion, but it further needs to be enhanced by resolving the above-mentioned issue of National Integration on a priority basis. This study also suggests certain recommendations in the light of research findings.*

Key Words: National Integration, Federation, State

Introduction

The concept of national Integration prevails in all pluralistic societies where people from different socio-cultural, ethno-racial, and religious backgrounds live together. National Integration is the bond of oneness, solidarity, and unity among people regardless of their caste, creed, ethnicity, sect, religion, gender, and any other consideration in a country. Simply put, national Integration is the process of bringing together multicultural, multi-ethnic, multilingual, multi-religious, multi-sectarian, and multi-racial people under an umbrella of the sense of one nation. In Pakistan³, since its inception, its people have categorically not been politically integrated due to feudal tribal and caste social order. The need for national Integration is the most significant and key element for future challenges. National Integration is a subject that needs some solemn study and deliberations. Good governance and the concept of national Integration are intimately connected. Good governance promotes the sense of a welfare state wherein social, economic, and political justice are protected, which ultimately generates a peaceful and socially cohesive society in which every member of the society owns and respects other fellow beings. The notion of ascendancy is a wider gamut of commandments, rubrics and protocols, trials, progressions, and establishments that aim to deliver services to all the citizens of a community. Additionally, for the formation of Nationwide Amalgamation, the protagonists of civic govt foundations – legislature, executive, and judiciary – as

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facilitators issue necessary policy guidelines and take required actions to improve NIP, keeping in view the changing circumstances and needs of the nation.

During the last seven decades, constitutional and political upheavals have created misunderstanding amongst the provinces and an atmosphere of mistrust at the center level. Various national political parties and leaders have been highlighting widespread dissatisfaction with the affairs of the state institutions, regional disparities, economic exploitation, centralization of authority, and finances in the country. Successive regimes, because of vested agendas, have never succeeded in achieving complete national cohesion. Consequently, the threat to national Integration from within remains alive and has increased manifolds. In a society of civilizations of cultures and humanity, we can measure, degree, quantify portions, and rationalize good governance through its indicators which are Rheostat's strict control on Dishonesty, Exploitation, Sleaze, Bribery, Fraud, Corruption, Voice and Culpability, Management Efficacy, Regulatory Quality, Political Permanency/Absence of Violence, Ferocity, Strength, Fierceness, Viciousness, /Terrorism, Intimidation, Radicalism, Extremism, and Rule of Commandment. It has covered more than two hundred countries since 1996. All these indicators, indicators, pointers, gauges, and dials are slightly different; they have been discussed and deliberated in numerous intelligence reports and brochures that are putative all over the Globe.

Literature Review

Tabassum, Mustafa & Bhatti (2020) have tried to define the concept of national Integration in the light of the definitions of various scholars. They also discussed the concept of national Integration with special reference to Baluchistan. They adopted a qualitative approach to their study, and they mainly relied on secondary sources of data. However, they did not focus their research study on Musharaf's era. The main focus, emphasis, attention of effort, concentration, and motivation behind this paper was to explore the impact of issues that cause glitches in the National Integration of Pakistan with a special perception of Balochistan. Pakistan is a state where people have various social, artistic, educational, edifying, communal, ethnically, culturally, anthropologically, genealogical, racial, lingual, racialism, class, status, and regional grade issues, all of these factors, influences, features, aspects, and reasons are caused by the complications in the NIP. Historical, prehistoric, antique, and ancient research mythological approaches have been applied to comprehend and appreciate the issues of national Integration. National Integration has been a sympathetic technique to armor the basic civil liberties or sovereignty of the community. Moreover, National Integration is a stable, firm, and constant growth, where conflicting disunions of society are obtainable with indistinguishable belvederes, and the same freedoms to enjoy plentiful facilities, bear without any biases. Likewise, for the foundation of National Integration, the character of the federal frame as an architect may boost the development of NIP, especially in the Balochistan Province.

Majeed (2014) sheds light on Pakistan's general national Integration. She defined the words nation and Integration. She also discussed NIP's general problems. There are some solemn encounters like sectarianism and power issues. We need to stretch immediate attention to our education system and madrassa reforms. Balochistan is an added feeble extent, and it seriously requires attention. It also needs dialogue and progress through advancement to bring it back entirely to the conventional regime. Nevertheless, notwithstanding many trials, the total centrifugal forces of governance are weakening the national fiber. We have engaged in numeral steps for provincial autonomy and financial development. We do not hear putrefying mottos and slogans of 'Sindhu Desh' and 'Pashtunistan' anymore. We are hopeful for the right course and confident for a better Pakistan. National Integration is not a one-time exercise that you have done once, and the same vaguer will continue. Rather, it is a continuous, incessant, unceasing, nonstop, unremitting, constantly slow process, and it can be achieved and maintained over a long period of time with eager efforts. Dedicated, devoted, enthusiastic, keen, loyal, and steadfast efforts towards opulence, a sense of pride, harmony, and national Integration are the prerequisites of time, which must be chased energetically as a supreme national cause.

Shah & Ishaque (2017) have also discussed various models – the Assimilation Model, Differentiated Model, Pluralist Model, and Federalism Model – and applied them to NIP; they also discussed various factors affecting national Integration and challenges to it in Pakistan. National Integration is the real governmental civic pursuit for congruence within the State. Irrespective of color, religious conviction,

faith, belief, creed, religious conviction, superiority competition, dogma, doctrine, credo, ethnic, cultural, traditional, folkloric, racial background and language, national Integration binds, quandaries, predicaments, dilemmas, muddles, and fixes are very segment and slices of society for an amalgamated cause of helping and progress of a nation-state integration; consequently, it has prodigious excessive relevance and straight comportment to national security. Amalgamation is also a reliable expansion in which sundry units of civilization are provided with indistinguishable diagnoses and identical human rights to relish numerous conveniences barren of any discrimination and discernment. The progression of national Integration will be strengthened, wired, supported, reinforced, and bounded on the qualification that governance at the state level should be able to deliver robust sagacity of national identity and state pride by equivalent expansion and guaranteeing identical privileges for all societies, regions, and the coalescing units. The noteworthy task challenged by the leaders of maximum post-colonial realms is to engender national identity out of wide-ranging, etymological, regional, and cultural identities. A sum of emerging nations, chiefly in Africa and Asia, are antagonized with snags of National Integration, and Pakistan is no omission. The research methodology in this article draughts out the theoretical characteristics related to national Integration. Integration and attractions are focused on their relevance by categorizing tests and insinuations for Pakistan. In the last part of the article, proposals in the form of references to recommendations have been proffered for ornamental national Integration in hurt regions of the country.

Rajagopalan(1997) highlighted the case studies of India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka in terms of national Integration. The author discussed the role of the Constitution to bring harmony among federating units. The author also defined the words Integration and National Integration and discussed the concept of national Integration in light of the constitutional provisions of the respective selected countries. The author raised many questions that will also be validated in my research. These are the clinches of his research in which two main aspects were of paramount importance as described by him: first, how do states foresee themselves, and what is the vision of leading members of nationalities and races within the State? Secondly, what does the exhibition of hallucinations and singing at play in the political arena tell us about the scheme of national Integration? Mainly, he summarized the available scholarly writing on amalgamation, integrational cooperation, and nation-building with sets of the backdrop for an investigation of self-defining intentions from the Indian, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan constitutions and an abridgment of philosophies on Integration articulated by elite consultation with respondents in Madras, India and Colombo, Sri Lanka in 1996. While taking the combo drive of research methodology of both quantities and qualitative approach, his article concluded by originating a definition of Integration from these foundations.

Jahan(1972) deliberated, discussed, debated, conferred, conversed, and analyzed the disintegration of Pakistan from the historical point of view and the natal of Bangladesh from East Pakistan. It grants a scholarly, erudite, learned, intellectual, well-established clarification of why the policies of the Pakistani sovereign elites, particularly the rules, policies, strategies, guidelines, procedures, and established modernizations of the Ayub regime (1958 - 1968), which often gives the impression so auspicious to bystanders in a foreign world, were in datum the approach to the disintegration of Pakistan. This research demonstrates that by emphasizing state edifice and economic advancement and de-emphasizing nation construction and advanced approach in political establishments, the Ayub regime shaped a disaster, crisis, catastrophe, emergency, calamity, and predicament in political administration. The Pakistani dominant elites' tenacious denial to tolerate democratic political foundations resulted in the exclusion of Bengalis from the national decision-making process. The renunciation of their impartial prerogatives led Bengalis to a bout for autonomy primarily and eventually for liberation. The separation of East Pakistan was the finale of the feebleness of certain foundations of Pakistan's partisan political system. This fiasco of the establishments was, in turn, the consequence of the failure of the management elite group of Pakistan who could not comprehend the implications and consequences of the political establishments and could not ploy the institutions for the forte and unity of Pakistan. Like in all political structures, the political parties were solitary of the major institutions in Pakistan, which could empower the confederation of Pakistan to face the encounters of separatism successfully. This paper will perceive how any national political party could not cultivate and mature in Pakistan, and thus, a warning of separatism could not be recognized. The paper will also disclose that the political parties were not reinforced by the privileged elite, who always



endured sturdier than the parties and continually lashed the parties for the sake of their private political motivations. The survival of political parties in any confederation offers the connection amongst innumerable miscellaneous and varied units of the State. The parties bring the political rudiments of diverse sections too close to each other that too on the origin of a common philosophy, same ideology, and sequencer. In reappearance, these regions launch their close bonds with the confederation. The national, instead of the district political parties, guaranteed nationwide Integration and converted a representative of unity among the units and provinces. The plots and conspiracies are contrary to the State and often take place by the entities, while the revelry culture often supports issue-based politics.

Khory(2007) discussed the problem of national Integration and highlighted the various hindrances – unequal economic development, uneven distribution of resources, the role of religion in politics among federating units, lack of representative political institutions, identity crisis, and ethnicity along with dismemberment of United Pakistan, Baluch insurgency and Zia's Islamization process briefly. Background, ethnicity, civilization, culture, origin, and nationalism are the leading subjects of war and peace in contemporary biosphere politics of the world. Though it is relevant that ethnic tensions and rigidities stemmed from numerous origins, conflicts over challenging hallucinations of political character are recurrently at the derivation of many contemporary disputes of the world, which are the clear reflection of bitter truth. The research methodology of this article investigates how national character is erected and pronounced in Pakistan. It claims that ill-conceived challenges to outline, explain, and silhouette a homogeneous 'Pakistani identity and National Integration' strengthened rather than deteriorated multiple philological and cultural characters, fortified political utilization on the foundation of ethnicity, and contributed to severe struggle.

Theodore & Wright (1994) have discussed in a very comprehensive manner the relationship among various families of the ruling elites in Pakistan, and also their relationship with elites of other countries. The author pointed out the foreign spouses of various political leaders in Pakistan. The author also pointed out the exogamy among various ethnic groups in Pakistan and their role in National Integration. He explains that region-based radical clusters in Pakistan have mobilized themselves for Political authority principally around cultural and etymological personalities. This article takes a very diverse "federal design" tactic to the inquiry of ethnicity-based politics in the federation of the Islamic State of Pakistan. In numerous imperative ways, this tactic, while augmenting the existing literature on the subject, runs pawn to conventional enlightenments of the association between ethnic distinctiveness and cluster conflict in this enormously diverse and tightly inhabited country. Through the research has an in-depth analysis of the triadic rapport between federal strategy, "ethnicization" of politics, and ethnic conflict, this article challenges to involve multi-disciplinary subsidy and sources to address some ultimate questions about Pakistan's imminence as a federal republic. This article presents this investigation through a case education of the edge between a chief ethnic group known as the "Sindhis" and the marginal collection of Urdu-speaking "Muhajirs" in the second most overcrowded jurisdiction and domain of Sindh in southeast Pakistan. The Muhajirs – factually "migrants" – were fundamentally Muslim immigrants from the Muslim sectional regions of Northern and Central India. They elected or were forced, to swing their residence at the time of partition of the Indian Subcontinent in 1947 to Pakistan and established in urban Sindh. Since the 1980s, the inter-ethnic struggle among Sindhis and Muhajirs has overwhelmed the principal urban manufacturing and commercial metropolis of Pakistan, The Largest City of Pakistan, and the previous capital city "Karachi," in inexorable chaos and violence. Though considerable substantial prose sings in the antiquity and political science on the genetics and evolution of the Muhajir ethnic character, it remains mute on the involvement of the design of civic frameworks in ethnicity-based group struggle. The Sindhi Muhajir circumstantial study delivers unfathomable insights into the very straight associations amongst federal strategy, on the one hand, and, on the other, ethnic distinctiveness foundation and progression of sectional groups like the Muhajirs that discard ethnicity-created politics to commence with but are bound to rejoin with an ethnic repercussion to overriding and other ethnic groups endangered or fortunated by federal edifices. From a punitive perspective, the marvel of the ethnicization of the Muhajirs is of identical concentration to both constitutional philosophers and dogmatic scientists studying the impact of federal design on the management of ethnically diverse societies. A charming mass of literature has advanced on the use of federal institutional formations for the lodging of ethnic multiplicity. This form of federalism is generally known as "ethnic federalism" or "multinational federalism." It has to play a paramount role in

the distinctiveness recognition of its identity, habitually in accumulation to its supplementary conservative functions of decentralization of organizational and political autonomy and autonomy. As a consequence, it is also observed as a remedy for ethnic dissatisfaction and skirmish in some anthropologically mixed societies. By assembling the limits of political sovereignty compatible with the present territorially distinct ethnic populaces, this pioneering model of federalism pursues to provide a mechanical avenue for the authorized or official acknowledgment of ethnolinguistic or cultural characteristics. Hence, it is happening to reorient anthropologically based communal action into non-violent politics. Pakistan is a protuberant specimen case, as well as an exceedingly productive and fertile ground for the study of "ethnic federalism" since the 1970s political arena and the behavior of the elite leadership in Pakistan. This artifact is a challenge accepted to bring to light one of the most prime ethnic federations in the biosphere world on the map of erudite and strategy research on queries of federal enterprise for the lodging of local and marginal groups. The tenacity of extremely tempestuous and ferocious, and sometimes secessionist, racial conflict within sub-national units in federal structures proposes that traditional federalism has its own valid limitations. The main example can be considered, as Sindhi-Muhajir demonstrates, a sub-national political unit whose physical edge overlaps with an ethnically pronounced identity may in some ways worsen the ethnic conflict by putting the mainstream sub-national racial group in through hostility with the other sectional groups within the sub-national limits. This has been labeled by the researchers of this modern era as the "minorities-within-minorities" spectacle. Predominantly in cases where the marginal "migrant" group like the Muhajirs has been archaeologically leading and in full Rheostat of imperative political and economic capitals at the cost of the mainstream "indigenous" folkloric group comparably the Sindhis, the quirk of political authority and traditional identity through federalization in courtesy of the latter generates a hypothetically hotheaded situation. The Sindhi-Muhajir case study provides an outstanding example of the minorities-within-minorities problem in traditional federations. It suggests, in particular, that the minorities-within-minorities problem is as apropos to the analysis of organizational remediation for the inter-ethnic battle as it is the issue of ethnic rivalry at the added command division that associations the sub-nationalities to the epicenter and powered center of the Political Forces.

According to The Dawn(2006), the history of Pakistan is always witness to the fact that she has been challenged, confronted, opposed, antagonized, and provoked with momentous obstruction in fashioning authentic federal arrangement as envisioned by the Muslim League leadership in the origination of the 20th Century. The conception and creation of Pakistan was an obvious impermeable of the unyielding will of the Muslims of the subcontinent of South Asia. The republic was molded in the designation of Islam and was projected to be the metaphysical State where the legislature, Constitution, egalitarianism, equality, classlessness, consensus, fairness, impartiality, and the rule of law shall be sovereign and decisive. Looking back at the dream-like euphoria of nationalism, which escorted loads of people during the summer of 1947 to their new mother country, one wonders as to what happened to that dream. Pakistan was meant to mark the launch of the fulfillment of the dream, which had fascinated a whole cohort of Muslims living in the Indian Subcontinent. The past seven decades have seen Pakistan's social and cultural disintegration, splits, and regional cleavages on one hand and social inequalities on the other. It saw the advent of ethnic and regional forces, which gave an upsurge to an ethos of hatred and bigotry. Pakistan has been smacked by the unevenness in fiscal, political, and socio-cultural fields. Sadly so, "Pakistan has come to be known as a nation of persistent catastrophes, abiding change and recurrent militarism." Provincial disgruntlement is one of those glitches that has uninterruptedly hurt Pakistan and hindered its progress in numerous arenas. The dismemberment of the country in 1971 was due to nothing else but the same tumor, cancer, and polyp, which even today keep it up in our society. The divisive forces seemed to have been triggered, generating interruptions in our much-desired and already tardy national evolution. It is, therefore, obligatory for us to grasp the consensus to solve the unruly disgruntlement. Actual measures are required to grant all constitutional privileges to the federating units, license them to be architects of their imminent future, and involve them in the national progressive course. At the same time, it is of paramount importance to accede constitutional supremacies to the provinces and their supplementary devolution to the gross-root level.

Rizvi(2000) has investigated that in the advent of the nation-state, the world has seen many formulas of political systems oscillating from big monarchies to certain republics, from big aristocracies to certain oligarchies, and from certain tyrannies to basic democracy¹². After eras of various trials and certain



pronounced errors, Democracy has arisen as a favored choice. It is now considered universally valid and is also the most predominant, widespread, ubiquitous, and prevalent model of government in our era. The word Democracy comes from the Greek words 'demos' meaning 'people' and 'kratein' meaning 'rule'. It is a political scheme in which the people of a country rule through any form of government they elect to establish. In contemporary democracies, ultimate authority is worked out for the record part by representatives voted by common suffrage. The most extensively quoted definition is that it is a form of government "Of the people, By the people, and For the people." Owing to the same principle, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah envisioned a democratic Pakistan based on Islamic injunctions with an emphasis on social justice, equality, mortality, humanity, and accountability. In his address on 21 February 1948, he stressed the necessity for the growth, expansion, development, and maintenance of Islamic Democracy, Islamic social justice, and equality of manhood. At the same time, he reaffirmed unequivocally that Pakistan is not going to be a theocratic state to be governed by priests with a divine mission. Thus, he stood for a democratic face of Islam. Quaid only knew one of its forms, ruled by parliaments of the people's freely elected representatives. Quaid-e-Azam had got Pakistan on the basis of Democracy as he had no rearmament with him. Jinnah spelled out the rationale for Pakistan's claim in his address on 23 March 1940 at Lahore. He said we wish our people to develop to the fullest our spiritual, cultural, economic, social, societal, and political life in a way that we think best and in consonance with our own ideals and according to the genius of people.

The Dawn(2006) reports that soon after the independence and early demise of Quaid-e-Azam, the power struggle among the Muslim League leaders from the feudal class started to erupt. This helped in the shifting of power from the Muslim League to bureaucracy in Pakistan's early period. In such a situation, the equilibrium of governance is disrupted, and subsequently, Pakistan's repeated experiments with Democracy have not yielded any positive outcomes. Democracy collapsed many times under the weight of mismanagement, internal institutional imbalances, and decay. Military dictatorships replaced it, ruling the country for half the period of its existence. The military did not stand by as a disinterested observer when the fragile democratic system collapsed. It occasionally contributed to its weakening and then took power, proclaiming itself a savior.

Ali(199) views that the politicians have done no better. The political leaders have been much more adept at agitational politics than providing good governance. The ongoing political climate is a manifestation of politician's total disregard for national concerns for the attainment of their vested interests. Such a tendency may totally jeopardize the objectives of parliamentary Democracy as a system. Civil bureaucracy also became a major hindrance in the growth of political institutions, including legislative institutions, local governments, and political parties. Next to the military and civil service, the most powerful class is the feudal, which controls the rural population. The development of democracy conflicts with its interests, as it would lead to the loss of its power over the rural population. For the last fifty-nine years, our parliaments saw a large number of feudal as people's representatives with few exceptions. Three constitutions of the country, i.e., 1956, 1962, and 1973, have been promulgated in a short span of time. All these legislative frameworks have consistently fallen victim to dictatorial rulers and have never been allowed to mature. One of the major examples of distortion is the Eighth Amendment, which was incorporated for purely personal benefits and gains. Due to the weak position of the Constitution, the judiciary has not been able to play its role and remained under the influence of ruling parties, which provided an alibi for the birth and growth of unstable systems. Geo-strategic compulsion in the form of East and West Pakistan situated distant apart, has also resulted in the division of Pakistan on the pretext of neglect of people's will and involvement of foreign elements. East Pakistan became the first victim of this war between democratic and undemocratic forces in the country.

The aforementioned review of both local and international literature shows that the selected area of study is innovative and needs to be explored.

Research Methodology/Theoretical Framework

This research study is primarily qualitative in nature. The scholar shall mainly rely on secondary sources of data books, research articles, official documents, newspapers, etc. In addition to this, the scholar, if required, shall also take into account the interviews of various political leaders and analysts given to

various channels. The prime objective of this study is to carry out an in-depth analysis of the factors detrimental to our national Integration and suggest dynamic and viable measures to strengthen the federation and enhance national cohesion.

This study adds to the literature on national integration problems and solutions to contribute to policy-making decisions with a focus on the improvement of national integrity in Pakistan. This piece of literature will be a valid recommendation for the govt of Pakistan. The scholar shall also apply historical and analytical approaches to this selected study, and the Content Analysis method shall be used for data analysis.

Findings

The examination of various scholarly articles sheds light on the multifaceted challenges and intricate dynamics surrounding the pursuit of national Integration in Pakistan, with particular emphasis on the province of Baluchistan. Scholars endeavor to define the elusive concept of national Integration within the diverse tapestry of Pakistani society, stressing the imperative of fostering unity and cohesion to fortify the foundations of the nation-state. However, numerous formidable obstacles impede the realization of this lofty goal, ranging from sectarianism and power struggles to uneven economic development, ethnic tensions, and regional disparities. These challenges are deeply entrenched in the historical, socio-political, and economic fabric of Pakistan, posing significant hurdles to the attainment of genuine national unity. The historic disintegration of East Pakistan serves as a poignant reminder of the perils of neglecting regional grievances and underscores the critical importance of inclusive governance in nurturing a sense of belonging and collective identity among diverse populations. The role of political elites in shaping the trajectory of national Integration cannot be overstated, as their relationships with ruling families and external actors often exacerbate ethnic and regional tensions, undermining efforts towards cohesive nation-building. Pakistan's tumultuous journey towards democratic governance has been marred by recurring cycles of instability, characterized by power struggles among political elites, military interventions, and weak governance structures. The failure to establish robust democratic institutions has perpetuated a climate of uncertainty and volatility, hindering the consolidation of national unity and exacerbating existing fault lines within society. Moreover, Pakistan's geo-strategic location has profound implications for its internal dynamics, with regional conflicts and external pressures exerting significant influence on domestic politics. Geopolitical rivalries and security concerns further complicate the process of national Integration, exacerbating ethnic and sectarian divisions and undermining efforts towards inclusive governance and social cohesion.

In light of these challenges, scholars propose a range of recommendations aimed at promoting national Integration and fostering a sense of unity and belonging among Pakistan's diverse population. Central to these recommendations is the imperative of inclusive governance, which entails recognizing and addressing the grievances of marginalized communities, decentralizing power to the provincial level, and ensuring equitable distribution of resources and opportunities across regions. Furthermore, efforts to address socio-economic disparities and promote dialogue and reconciliation among diverse communities are essential for building trust and fostering a shared sense of national identity. However, achieving genuine national Integration is a complex and multifaceted endeavor that requires sustained commitment and collective effort from all segments of society.

According to the findings, the pursuit of national Integration in Pakistan is fraught with formidable challenges and complexities rooted in the country's intricate socio-political and historical landscape. While the road ahead may be fraught with obstacles, the imperative of fostering unity and cohesion remains paramount as Pakistan continues its quest to build a resilient and inclusive nation-state that honors the diverse identities and aspirations of its people.

Discussion

A nation is commonly defined as a community interwoven by mutual experiences and shaped by common religion, culture, and tradition. The concept varies across diverse societies, from the Latin expression "Nation," denoting a group with a common origin and language, to the Islamic notion of "Ummah," emphasizing unity beyond differences. In Pakistan, the concept of nation is termed "Millat," signifying a



group sharing a common attitude towards life and destiny. Integration, in its literal sense, implies fitting together fragments to form a cohesive whole, extending to social systems where societies are held together by loyalty. Functional Integration relies on needs, technology, and efficiency, while psychological Integration is driven by deep loyalties and emotional bonds. National Integration requires elements like protecting constitutional values, preventing conflicts, promoting economic growth, and preserving Democracy. It involves strategies such as assimilation or unity in diversity to achieve a cohesive national identity. The creation of Pakistan was influenced by the Two Nation Theory, which recognized religion as a unifying force amidst Hindu dominance and exploitation. The 1857 War of Independence and Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's efforts contributed to shaping a Muslim identity, emphasizing language and culture as integral to political identity. The contours of national Integration involve understanding consensus and conflict perspectives, balancing ruling group perceptions with those of the ruled, and addressing perceived frustrations and deprivation. Integration seeks to marry distinct social, political, and cultural clusters under a single identity, preserving individuality while fostering common norms and consensus.

Allama Iqbal presented the idea of a separate state for Muslims in his 1930 presidential address at the Muslim League session, emphasizing Muslim-majority areas and cultural contiguity. He foresaw differences among Muslims, suggesting they could be reconciled within a progressive Islamic framework. Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah advocated for a separate nation for Muslims, recognizing irreconcilable differences with Hindus. His vision of Pakistan aimed to provide Muslims with a homeland where they could live according to Islamic principles. Under Democratic Rule (1947-58), the Muslim League governed Pakistan with centralized power, delaying elections and constitution-making, which led to dissatisfaction, especially in East Pakistan. The One-Unit system was introduced to achieve parity between East and West Pakistan. During Martial Laws (1958-71), Ayyub Khan and Yahya Khan centralized power, promoting Urdu and controlling Democracy. Bhutto's rule brought socialism but also repression of opposition and regional autonomy demands. Zia's rule (1977-1988) emphasized Islamic revival, banning political parties and centralizing power. The post-Zia era witnessed political turbulence, polarization, and regionalism. Musharraf's regime (1999-2008) introduced economic reforms, poverty reduction, and education improvements. He emphasized Islamic Democracy and centralized power, facing challenges of internal and external crises. Musharraf's achievements include poverty reduction, increased literacy, and investments in education and infrastructure. His government focused on economic stability, infrastructure development, and energy projects like dams and CNG stations. However, his centralized rule and military interventions continued to impact Pakistan's political landscape.

The constitutional perspective of provincial autonomy within the framework of federalism in Pakistan underscores the delicate balance between unity and diversity. Federalism serves as an organizational mechanism to accommodate the diverse characteristics of the population while maintaining the integrity and autonomy of regional political units. However, for federalism to function effectively, certain conditions must be met, including a sense of unity among the constituent units and a desire for union without sacrificing autonomy. The principles of federalism entail political, administrative, and financial autonomy for federating units, as well as mechanisms for conflict resolution and consensus-building on national issues. The 1973 Constitution of Pakistan, enacted following the separation of East Pakistan, provided for a larger federal jurisdiction with specific subjects allocated to the federal legislative list. While the Constitution included safeguards for provincial interests, such as equal representation in the Senate and the establishment of the Council of Common Interests, challenges remain in terms of effective implementation and dispute resolution mechanisms. The role of the Senate, intended to balance Punjab's dominance in the National Assembly, has faced criticism due to unequal legislative powers and inadequate fiscal authority. Additionally, the Council of Common Interests, tasked with addressing areas of common interest, has been criticized for its limited effectiveness and infrequent meetings. Furthermore, the provision for legislation through ordinances and emergency powers vested in the President raises concerns regarding provincial autonomy and constitutional integrity. The judiciary, although intended to serve as a guardian of the Constitution, has faced challenges to its independence and credibility, undermining its role in upholding provincial rights. Overall, the constitutional framework of provincial autonomy in Pakistan reflects a complex interplay of political, legal, and institutional factors, requiring ongoing dialogue and reform to strengthen federalism and promote equitable governance across all regions.

The contentious issues surrounding center-province relations in Pakistan reflect deep-rooted political, economic, and social challenges that have persisted over the years. Historically, the relationship between the central government and provincial authorities has been marked by tension and conflict, leading to a lack of cooperation and progress. Key issues contributing to this divide include political intolerance, reluctance to implement constitutional provisions granting autonomy to provinces, weakened democratic institutions, and centralized control over development projects. The National Finance Commission (NFC) award, water distribution, royalties from natural resources, and disparities in economic development further exacerbate inter-provincial tensions. Ethnicity, sectarian violence, and the war against terrorism add layers of complexity to the already fragile balance of power. The devolution plan, unemployment, and the quota system have also become sources of contention, fueling frustration and negative sentiments among the populace. These divisive issues pose significant threats to national integration, confidence in the political system, and socio-economic stability. Failure of political governments to address these challenges has led to a cycle of instability, corruption, and governance failures, undermining the prospects for democratic governance and economic development. Addressing these issues requires comprehensive reforms, genuine dialogue, and a commitment to inclusive governance that respects the rights and aspirations of all provinces and ethnic groups in Pakistan.

Pakistan grapples with an identity crisis stemming from its diverse historical experiences and the struggle to define its national ethos. The country's provinces lack a shared pre-1947 history, leading to a stronger identification with localities rather than a national identity. The dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 raised doubts about Islam as the basis of its identity, prompting debates over whether Pakistan is a Muslim state first or a Pakistani nation with Islamic ideals. The nation has grappled with various labels to define itself, reflecting the ongoing struggle with identity. To revive a sense of nationalism and brotherhood, there's a call to reinterpret the Two Nation Theory and emphasize the concept of "Millat" while promoting unity in diversity. However, Pakistan faces leadership challenges rooted in a feudalistic system where power is concentrated among a narrow elite, hindering long-term policy and stability. The political structure requires streamlining with a focus on ideological fundamentals, party accountability, and transparency mechanisms. Moreover, sectarianism and religious extremism pose threats to national solidarity, necessitating efforts to foster religious harmony amidst deep-rooted Shia-Sunni and Brelvi-Deobandi differences. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort to redefine Pakistan's identity, streamline governance, and promote religious harmony to build a more cohesive nation.

The political landscape in Pakistan is characterized by a lack of broad-based popular leadership, leading to coalitions and compromises that prioritize short-term gains over long-term policy. The leadership elite often serves the interests of specific constituencies, neglecting the broader national agenda and exacerbating regional disparities. Moreover, the military, committed to protecting Pakistan's ideological frontiers, has been inadvertently drawn into politics, contributing to a lack of continuity in leadership. The religious leadership has also failed to keep pace with contemporary challenges, further complicating the nation's identity crisis. To streamline the political structure, it is proposed that fundamental issues like ideology, territorial integrity, and sovereignty should be prioritized above political controversies. Political parties should be subject to periodic elections and scrutiny by an autonomous body composed of retired judges. Mechanisms for accountability and transparency, including anti-corruption agencies and an independent judiciary, must be established to ensure good governance. Sectarianism and religious extremism pose significant threats to national solidarity. Measures to promote religious harmony include prohibiting negative utterances against religious figures, fostering tolerance, disarming religious militant groups, and subjecting religious education institutions to strict scrutiny. Awareness campaigns and diplomatic efforts to address external influences are also suggested. Improving the education system is essential for fostering national cohesion and identity. Suggestions include implementing a uniform system of education, promoting Urdu as a national language, and aligning Islamic education with national values while addressing sectarian divides. Weak relations between the central government and provinces stem from political intolerance, non-implementation of the Constitution, and uneven economic development. Key irritants include issues related to resource allocation, economic disparities, and demands for greater provincial autonomy. Addressing these concerns requires political will and dialogue to ensure equitable development and power-sharing.



The NFC Award, a contentious issue, requires a multi-indicator-based formula for resource distribution, devolution of constitutional taxes, and the creation of a permanent secretariat for monitoring implementation. Achieving national consensus on the war against terrorism entails addressing perceptions of foreign influence, ensuring respect for sovereignty, and addressing genuine grievances of provinces and opposition parties. Improving the judicial system requires safeguarding judicial independence, revising appointment procedures, and enhancing the judiciary's capacity to interpret the Constitution and resolve disputes. Finally, initiatives like the Gwadar Port project can contribute to national Integration by generating economic opportunities and addressing regional disparities. However, concerns about resource distribution and ethnic tensions must be addressed through dialogue and inclusive decision-making processes.

Conclusion

No country can develop in any meaningful manner without an inter and intra-society harmonious environment. Uneven economic development is the root cause of resistance to political and social change and development, which leads to the movements of secession. Unity, integrity, and sovereignty can only be achieved by molding the different ethnic and religious segments of society into an integrated nation. Even-handed economic policies are essential for the development of a sense of identity of a nation and State. The center has to put aside its bias and negotiate with the provincial government to address their grievances. At the same time, the provinces have to reciprocate and cooperate with the center in allowing new development projects like mining, oil and gas exploration, and infrastructure development in their areas. The need is to remember that united we shall rise and fragmented shall we fall. Judged by the chronometer of history, seventy-four years constitute a brief period in the life of a nation. However, a review of the vastly quickened era encompassing three generations provides enough evidence of democratic turbulence and tragedy. The political edifice raised over a bureaucratic foundation has yielded grave organized and institutional imbalance between the political decision-making process and the policy-implementing bureaucratic and military structure. Conferred interests and economic disparities have adversely influenced the development of a feasible democratic regime. The concentration of power in the hands of military and marshal law elites for about three decades, with abrogation and annulment of the Constitution, has totally immobilized the political process. The dominance and supremacy of the feudal class, representing rigid and authoritarian ethos, and the absence of middle-class stabilizers presented a political culture not conducive to the democratic process. On the other hand, resilience, pliability, flexibility, elasticity, suppleness, bounciness, and assurance of the people despite the political downfall is remarkable and must be recognized as a great advantage. Whenever given a chance and opportunity, they opt for a democratic dispensation. It is a known fact that respectable governance cannot be brought about in a day; however, enthusiasm, eagerness, interest, fervor, passion, and gusto of a nation imbued with integrity and patriotism will pull the country away from despairing democratic progression. Against this backdrop, it is determined that the democratic form of government is the only scheme that provides the concept of self-governance and needs to be reinforced with due regard to constitutionalism. Therefore, the formula of progress, development, growth, advancement, improvement, evolution, freedom, liberty, autonomy, self-determination, independence, and the correct choice of governance for a Nation and State lies in the strong democratic tradition and intact pillars of Democracy.

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