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## **FAILURE OF DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENTS IN PAKISTAN**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Future of democracy in south Asia can be seen in an interesting context. Scholars consider India as a largest and successful democracy of the world where success of democracy in Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh seen from the view of doubt. If we talk about democratic experiments in Pakistan after independence they are not carried out successfully so far. Democracy in Pakistan is still in transformative phase. In present scenario Pakistan, Nepal and Bangladesh are going through democratic changes .Specially in Pakistan political dynamics have been changed. Authority and power has been transferred from one civilian government to another civilian government. Today military backed civilian government can be seen in Pakistan.

Main purpose of this paper is to explain why democratic experiments had failed in Pakistan. Both India and Pakistan came into existence together. India is a vibrant example of successful democracy where as Pakistan could not develop into democratic country. The paper keeping this fact in the view tries to understand and explain what was so unique in Indian political system that roots of democracy in India became strengthened after independence and why did Pakistan become authoritarian state. It also tries to elaborate why British heritage gave different type of political development in different countries of south Asia.

In Pakistan's history it was Asif Ali Zardari who was democratically elected and successfully completed his full five year tenure in 2013.This was the first civilian government who completed its full tenure. Scholars like S. Akbar Zaidi called him "Accidental President". After that Pakistan Muslim league (N) won the majority of seats

in 2017 but Supreme Court of Pakistan removed Nawaz Sharif from the office after revelations from the ‘Panama Papers case’ and he was sentenced to ten years in prison. Imran Khan came into power after Nawaz Sharif on the idea of “New Pakistan” in 2018. Scholars and political parties alleged him that he came into the power with the help of military and he was supported by the military during the elections. The question becomes relevant whether army is the king maker in Pakistan’s political system. Will Pakistan be able to establish a successful democracy without the interference of Army and Allah?

## DEMOCRACY IN THE INITIAL PHASE OF PAKISTAN

“The two nation theory” was the basis of the creation of Pakistan. According to this theory Muslims and Hindus were two separate nations by definition. Separate nation for Muslims was formed as Pakistan. At the time of formation Pakistan had adopted the parliamentary form of government but after some time of independence military-bureaucracy alliance established its power and authority. From the formation of Pakistan it became unstable and is still struggling for a stable political system. Pakistan’s unstable political history presents a conflict between constitutionalism and authoritarianism. At the same time it represents the contradiction between state and civil society.

The period from 1947 to 1958 is characterized as parliamentary form of government but in this period the spirit of constitution was crushed by the army boots. Pakistan’s army started to strengthen its root in Pakistan’s political system in the view of the lack of interest articulation, absence of general election and political participation. Hasan -Askari -Rizvi stated that first eleven years of Pakistan formation were crucial and extremely decisive. At this time Pakistan had to face bloodshed, disorder and refugee problems. According to Rizvi Pakistan under these harsh and barbaric situations kept itself alive. He said that under these circumstances the army saved Pakistan. At this time army took advantage of weak democratic institutions and formed military-bureaucratic oligarchy. This group formed a centralized administrative political system in Pakistan.

## CAUSES OF THE FAILURE OF DEMOCRATIC EXPERIMENTS IN PAKISTAN –

**Adverse circumstances** - After partition Pakistan had to face many economic, political and administrative problems due to communal riots, refugee problems and lack of qualified military officials.

**Leadership crisis** – After independence Pakistan was depended on Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s charismatic leadership. Although he patronized the democratic process at the central and provincial level but he died in September 1948, just after 13 months of independence. After his death Liaquat Ali Khan tried to fill this political vacuum but he

was also assassinated in 1951. After his assassination Pakistan had to face leadership crisis and could not get proper leadership who could strengthen the democratic institutions. In this era politics of dissent arose in Pakistan. Ayesha Jalal counters this statement. According to her Jinnah who is mistakenly considered the founder of Pakistan, was unsuccessful to prove himself as an institution maker.

**Lack of proper leadership or leadership crisis** -Jinnah gave priorities to those traditions and heritage which were handed over by the British rule, were not fair for a newly born country. Ayesha Jalal cited that the personality of Jinnah also reveals his quality of authoritarianism. Jinnah holds the office of Governor not prime minister and retained most of the power with him. It shows that Jinnah was authoritarian ruler.

**Weakness of political parties** - When Pakistan came into existence, there was not a well established political party system. Due to which political parties could not help in Pakistan's state formation. Due to this Pakistan could not developed permanent and participative political culture. According to Ayesha Jalal Muslim league became failed to convert into a "mass party". It could not the culture of internal discussion. Muslim league could not compile with rural power Bosses likewise congress party in India. Muslim league could not complete the following tasks: (i) Institution Building (ii) Politician soundness. Ayesha Jalal compares Muslim league with Indian National Congress. According to her Indian National Congress was successful not only converting into a Mass Party but also promote Interest articulation and formation. It was the result of Indian National Congress so that it couldn't play a vital role in Indian Politics more than three decades.

Muslim league was such a party which had majority in Punjab and Bengal not in Western India. In the areas which were included in Pakistan at the time of its formation Muslim league had no mass base. The leaders in Pakistan who were ministers were from Muslim minority states. They had no popular and strong base. Leaders from Muslim majority states were not considered and thought of as committed, faithful and loyal. Which later proved fatal for Pakistani politics. Khalid Bin Sayeed considers that the parliamentary form of government cannot function properly in heterogeneous societies. Not with standing that Pakistan adopted this model.

**Ethnic Disputes:** Muslim league had to lead such a country which was fragmented both geographically and ethnically. Muslim league had neither the well structured organization nor the experience to resolve the disputes and bring unity. it was essential that Muslim league get re-structured so that it can resolve the ethnic conflicts. For this Muslim league leaders lacked such foresight and attitude. Multi ethnic Pakistan had majority of Bengalis who were distinct from Western Pakistan geographically and culturally. If the elections were conducted on the basis of adult suffrage the transfer of power would go into the hands of Bengalis from Punjabi and Muhajir group.

Bengali's and Sindhi's were not included in the politics of participation in parliamentary democracy of Pakistan. Due to this Bengali, Pathan and Sindhi ethnic groups opposed Punjabi and Mujahir ethnic groups' dominance.

**Insecurity feelings towards India** - Since its creation Pakistan has disputes with India for property, water and territory. Pakistan has always considered India as enemy, which promoted the purchase of traditional weapons so that it could be superior to the military capacity of India. Pakistan face serious shortage of officers specially experienced staff.

Yet Pakistan had no defense industry for production of military weapons. It developed the clashing situations at early stage with India which fostered the enmity between the two. According to Wilcox "Military needs had to command foreign policy because foreign and defense policy are also essential for maintaining the existence of a new state. Due to this reason high officials of Pakistani Army were given priority in decision making by the center unlike India where civilians dominate the defense policy process. At early stage the army played the role of advisor but later it became the king maker and authoritarian in Pakistan political system.

#### **PRIORITIZING THE DEFENSE EQUIPMENTS-**

Defense equipments enjoyed the highest priority in Pakistan. The civilian and military leaders both were equally convinced that Pakistan's disturbed relations with India-a strong military power and Afghanistan irredentist territorial claims presented a serious threat to national identity and integrity. Which led them to allocate the largest part on national budget to the military. Both civilian and military officers were agreed for a strong military. All prime ministers and cabinet minister from 1947 to 1958 shared the same perspective that Pakistan must have a strong and powerful military. For example first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan stated that the security of the state is our prime concern. Pakistan spent on an average 60.69 percent of its national budget on defense from 1947 to 1958.

Even after the united states started giving military aid in 1954, defense expenditure has continued to increase in Pakistan provides such an example of a country where a poverty of resources for human needs contrasts with the affluence under which military programmes operate which negatively impacts employment, food security and health conditions etc. Beside these democratic experiments, there were numerous efforts to establish democracy in Pakistan like office of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (1971-77) and the period of restoration of democracy and crisis of governability (1988-99). But in 1999 General Pervez Musharraf took over the Nawaj Sarif government on 12<sup>th</sup> October in a bloodless coup. After this event rejected the possibility to establishment democracy in Pakistan.

In the Era of (1971-77) Zulfikar Ali Bhutto came into the power with the slogan of "Roti Kapda and Makan" and the implemented some socialist policies like land reforms, labor reform etc. The people of Pakistan seen a new hope in Zulfikar Ali Bhutto but after some time he also became authoritarian ruler. Bhutto was deposed in a military coup by army chief Zia-Ul-Haq. After the death of Zia-Ul-Haq in 1988. The hope of establishing democracy again emerged. In this period Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto came into power twice. In this period crisis of political system was prevalent too specially the crisis of governability. Both, the regimes were alive in the shadow of military. At this time, troika system of power prevailed in Pakistan's political system in which the post of Prime minister was weak. In this troika system of power sharing comprised the president and the army chief. Whenever these two leaders tried to reduce the power of army it overthrew these leaders. Hence it proved quasi democratic experiment in Pakistan. According to Atul Kohli, during 1988-1999 a crisis of governability occurs in Pakistan and army played back seated role. In this period the civilian government had to share its power with army and president.

Arif Ali Zardari who completed his 5 year term on 8<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2013, became the first democratically elected president to complete his tenure in the 66 years long history of Pakistan. He tried to reduce the power of president by 8<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment. In this constitutional amendment the power of president to dissolve the parliament has been reduced. The purpose of this amendment was to reduce the authoritarian tendency. After this civilian government in 2013 election Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) emerged as largest party in Pakistan. People of Pakistan sensed a new hope for democracy but this government was dismissed by Supreme Court of Pakistan on the basis of corruption accusation steaming from the "Panama papers". At this time the national building process in Pakistan was challenged by religious extremism and terrorism. In 2018 elections Imran Khan the former cricketer of Pakistan came into power but he was alleged that he came into the power with the help of military. In other words military was seen again playing back seated role in Pakistani political system.

In Pakistan wants to become a successful democracy then the political parties of Pakistan will have to change themselves into mass and grass root political parties. Without this the grassroots political parties' democracy cannot be strengthened in Pakistan. So the political parties of Pakistan like Pakistan Muslim League, Pakistan People's Party and others will have to improve their organizational structure to establish the successful democracy.

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