Managing Diversity: An Assessment of the National Question of Pakistan

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Abstract

Modern societies and businesses are confronted with the complexity of diversity with immense implications for the current organizational practices. The intricacies of diversity in organizations mainly stem from state policies, organizational practices or business needs. In Pakistan, instances of violence at organizational level have serious societal repercussions. Irrespective of the form of accommodation or the violent outcome which a pluralist society may take, such societies face similar structures of conflict: the posing of a fundamental challenge to the idea of developing a homogenous society. Where societies were not homogenous, attempts were made to promote official nationalist projects by unifying culturally and ethnically diverse population. Though there cannot be a one-size-fits-all states solution to diversity, every state strives for contextual solution to face diversity. Pakistan, being dominantly a Muslim state, has religio-cultural and ethnic diversity. Minority groups have always raised their voices against their unjust treatment in the form of underrepresentation, undue share in the national economic pool and suppression of their identity by the state and organizations. This study searches the answer to this organizational challenge evolved in the last over seventy years of Pakistan's history in different forms. The paper attempts to assess the dimensions of grievances of the diverse groups and tries to answer the question 'why plurality has gone unmanageable in Pakistan?' The results demonstrates that it were the high degree of centralization of authority; the adoption of Urdu as a national language; a sense of domination of the central institutions by the dominant social and ethnic groups, underrepresentation in state institutions; and controlled and radicalized society which have aggravated the position of diverse groups in Pakistan and have colossal consequences to national economy and social harmony.

Keywords: Plurality, Ethno-religious minorities, Organizations, Underrepresentation, and Nation-building

In Pakistan since independence, the issue of diversity has been mismanaged at policy level. The repercussions of uneven state policies have many dimensions. For example, there are huge complaints regarding ethnic and gender underrepresentation in Pakistani organizations particularly in state bureaucracy both civil and military. Beside bureaucracy, state owned enterprises constitute over 70% of national economy. This uneven distribution of opportunities results in political unrest in addition to huge financial losses to government. For instance, the country currently retains190 business and State Owned Entities (SOE), which have been incurring huge losses to the national exchequer for example, the power sector drains a huge amount in the payment of circular debt. After coming to power, PML-N's government paid Rs. 1200 billion to cover the gap of circular debt (Iftikhar, 2015), while the current debt has touched Rs. 992 billion (Kiani, 2018).The total circular debt, tariff differential subsidy and developmental budget paid by government to power sector enterprises is closer to defense budget of the country. Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) is another business entity under state control which has an accumulated loss of over Rs. 250 billion in 2014 alone (Iftikhar, 2015). Pakistan Steel Mills (PSM) losses have crossed Rs. 180 billion with a monthly loss of Rs. 1.4 billion. Iftikhar (2015) reports that federal government paid Rs. 35 billion as a grant to cover employee's related expenses of Pakistan Railways, as the company is unable to cover these expenses. The above three SOEs are just a tip of an iceberg. This has directly and indirectly affected Pakistani businesses such as the poor performing of power sector in Pakistan forced investors in textile industry to wrap up and shift to other South Asian countries such as Bangladesh and Vietnam (Jafri, 2012). Rizvi (2011) reports that political parties representing different ethnic and social groups employed and overstaffed their activists and allied people in State Corporations and autonomous bodies such as Pakistan Steel Mills, PIA, Pakistan Railway, and WAPDA etc. and have become employment agencies. In 70's the Bengal separation is mainly attributed to the government's anti-diversity policies in Pakistani institutions.

Literature suggests gender as a distinct factor in organizational context. For instance, Kanter (1977) demonstrates that women and men exhibit differently in organization. Women are generally placed in low profile positions and have low access to positions of power and authority. The disproportionate representation of gender in organizations leads to performance pressures, social isolations and role encapsulation. Tanwir (2014) reports Pakistani bureaucracy as gender bias and hence not a socially transformative agent in the society. As these companies have an immense economic impact therefore, understanding the political dynamics of the scenario is crucial. To manage diversity, federalism with provincial autonomy was the commonsensical structure for a country composed of ethnically distinct regions. In a study Shah and Amjad (2011) confirms the distinctiveness of Pakistan's cultural diversity in all provinces. Pakistan is a multi-lingual nation with over 300 different dialects and languages of different roots spoken in the country. Urdu was chosen the national language to facilitate communication between the country's diverse linguistic populations, though only 7.5% of Pakistanis speak it as their first language. (Adeney, 2007: 101; Ayres, 2009: 189). Government statistics show that 96.28 % of Pakistan's population is Muslim (Sunni 77% and Shia 23%), Christians 1.59%, Hindus 1.6%, Scheduled castes 0.25% and others are 0.32 % (Adeney, 2007: 138). All of the constitutions have provided for federal structure. Each province has a distinct ethnic group in majority. FATA and KP are mostly populated by Pakhtuns, Sindh by Sindhis, Punjab by Punjabis and Balochistan by Baloch. Each province also has the members of other ethnic groups for example; Sindh's urban areas are also populated by Mohajirs and Pakhtuns. Balochistan is home to many Punjabis and Pakhtuns. The Punjab attracts people from across the country. Again, Pakistan ethnic groups are not contained only in Pakistan. The Baloch have transnational existence between Pakistan and Iran, Pakhtuns between Pakistan and Afghanistan, Mohajir and Sindhis between Pakistan and India. This might create irredentist tendencies and is looked by the Pakistani leadership suspiciously. The main Objectives of the study are: To identify the resentments of various ethnic groups in Pakistan about the state policy for the management of diversity. To find out why plurality has gone unmanageable. To find the remedial mechanisms for addressing the issues arose out of diversity in Pakistan. Hence, the questions to be addressed are: Why ethno-cultural plurality has gone unmanageable in Pakistan? What are causative factors which have aggravated the problems arising out of plurality in Pakistan? What effects the state policies regarding plurality have made on society and various ethno-cultural groups in Pakistan?

Methodology

The study is exploratory and qualitative based on 14 semi-structured interviews conducted with the scholars having in-depth understanding of the nature, dynamics and repercussion of diversity in Pakistan. Beside, secondary data was also consulted and background information collected from books, journals, newspapers and internet sources. The interviewees were informed of their rights and were assured that information obtained from them will be specifically used for this study. Normal duration of interview ranged from 1 hour to 2 hours with an average duration of 1 and a half hour. The recorded materials of the interviews were carefully thematically analyzed and the important statements of the interviewees were coded which provided important insight and information complementing and strengthening the arguments presented in the secondary sources. The discussion revolves around the major aspects of Pakistan specific diversity such as ethnicity, language, economic disparities, population vs territorial dimension, cultural, historical, religious,

Assessing the Ethno-Religious Plurality in Pakistan

The well-known interpretation for the creation of Pakistan is directed at the religious aspect of the partition. Indeed Islam has a vital role in Pakistani society and, as Gaborieau, (2002) demonstrates, it is an indispensable ingredient of constitutional, institutional and political legitimacy. However, there is a secular interpretation too: the Muslims of undivided India wanted to liberate themselves from the political and economic domination of Hindus in post British Raj. Here religion played only a role of identity marker (Markovits, 2002: 5, Talbot 1998: 5; Cohen, 2004: 56; Khan, 2002: 139). Pakistan's sectarian diversities make any sort of consensus on Islam virtually impossible (Jalal, 1995: 239). Ayesha Jalal demonstrates that "If Islamic sentiments were the best hope of keeping the Pakistani provinces pulling in the same direction, their particularistic traditions and linguistic affiliations were formidable stumbling blocks" (stated in Embree, 2011: 227-8). The failure to develop a Pakistani national identity has resulted in strong ethnic identities demanding recognition of their cultural and linguistic distinctions and protection of their economic interests. The rising demands for cultural particularities alarmed the ruling elites, driving them to perceive dissents as a threat to national unity which was often defined in the idioms of homogenization and was seldom conceived as unity built on

diversity. After independence, Jinnah thought the unity of Pakistanis as vital to Pakistan's survival, arguing that "If we begin to think of ourselves as Bengalis, Punjabis, Sindhis etc., first and Muslims and Pakistanis only incidentally, then Pakistan is bound to disintegrate" (Jinnah 1962, 104). The government passed a law in 1975 prescribing a seven-year imprisonment for individuals advocating the presence of more than one nationality in Pakistan (Ahmad, 1998: 232).

Pakistan's ethnic problems are two-fold. The first is the disputes among the various ethnic groups within Pakistan like Pakhtuns, the Mohajir and Bihari in Karachi. These disputes are not much dangerous for the territorial integrity of Pakistan but can weaken it internally both at organizational and societal levels. The second type of disputes arises from the grievances of particular ethnic groups for example; the Sindhis and Baloch from the central government dominated by Punjabis. These disputes have dangerous ramification for Pakistan's territorial integrity and economy because these groups may have irredentist tendencies and regional autonomy may weaken central authority (Kapur, 1991: 8-9).

Though Bengali nationalism is now a history, the way this nationalism emerged can give us directions how to treat a diverse populace to thwart the effectiveness of their secessionist tendencies. The unfair treatment, socio-economic grievances, unfair representation in state institutions and, above all, not honoring the electoral mandate resulted in the disintegration of Pakistan in 1971[1] which brought three main negative consequences, first, it changed the political balance within the rest of Pakistan, leaving Punjab the overwhelmingly dominant province; second, it severely narrowed Pakistan's cultural and social diversity and; third, the balance of power shifted away from secular mainstream forces (Cohen, 2004: 76-7).

Sindh which is drastically divided into Mohajir and Sindhi communities also present a similar case. In 1989 G. M. Syed led a demonstration for a separate state (Sindhu Desh) for Sindhis (Ziring 1990, 130–31; Siddiqi, 2012: 76). Sindhis are concerned about their access to positions of power and marginalization of their cultural and linguistic identity. A sense of great 'national' exploitation exists in Sindh and, according to Ali (1992: 187-8), resentments are directed against Punjab, the Punjabi settlers and small and large businessmen in the Interior Sindh, the central government (which Sindhis consider as Punjabi dominated), the Punjab-dominated military (Adeney, 2007: 150-51, 160; Ganguly, 2010: 89-90) and the Mohajir middle and upper class. Sindhis are also concerned about their land. New irrigated land carved out of Sakhar Barrage in Sindh was mostly sold out to Punjabis and not to Sindhis, sometimes favored by the Sindhi landlords themselves wishing to keep local peasants in control (Waseem: 1994: 40).Today about 40 percent of Sindh's prime agricultural land is held by non-Sindhis, mostly Punjabis and Mohajir (Ahmad, 1998: 71).

Similarly, the allocation of irrigated land to the retired military officers, the setting up of industries in Sindh by Punjabis, the bulk of labor for these industries from the Punjab, the attitude of the *waderas* (big landlords) and *zamindars* (small landlords) to resist change, the dominance of the Mohajir in the bureaucracy and entrepreneurship are the causes insulating Sindhis from development in the province and increasing their sense of deprivation (Mumtaz, 2002: 109).While Siddiqi (2012: 81) argues that Sindhi nationalism is the result of the influx of Mohajir from northern India into Sindh who filled the political, administrative and economic position in the province; making Karachi as the capital of Pakistan in the initial stages and its separation from Sindh (which Sindhis resented as the dominating tactics of the Mohajir and Punjabis); making Urdu as the national language and finally the proclamation of One Unit in 1955 which further marginalized Sindhis and was sensed by them as Punjabi domination. "Sindhi nationalists regard the One Unit period as one of the darkest epochs in the history of Sindh for it was during this time that Sindh came under the whole-hearted influence of the dominant Punjab and…the Mohajir" (Siddiqi (2012: 84).

Mohajir have their own grievances. They had high representation in state institutions in the early days of Pakistan because of their high literacy rate and Urdu being the national language. Out of the 101 Muslims of the Indian Civil Service, 95 were Mohajir (Rahman, 1996: 230-1) making Christophe Jaffrelot (2002: 16) dubbed Pakistan to be the creation of the Mohajir[2]. However, quota policy (where the province was divided into rural and urban constituencies with 60% of seats reserved for rural areas, while 40% for urban areas) caused major resentment among the Mohajir (living in urban area) who felt that their cultural and economic rights had been attacked (Malik, 2008: 163; Mohiuddin: 2007: 239-40). Language and quota legislations were made to downgrade the influence of Mohajir in the province of Sindh which led to violent demonstrations because Mohajir viewed the laws as a

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[1] For detail on the causes of the Fall of Dhaka see Ian Talbot (1998: 186-213).
[2] On the rise of Mohajir nationalism see Yunas Samad (2002).

symbolic rejection of their identity (Adeney, 2007: 144) which was the prime cause of the creation of the Mohajir Qaumi Movement (MQM).

Mohajir nationalism owes its existence to their perceived discrimination by the state and the maneuvering of Zia ul Haq, a military dictator, to avoid the threat of mass mobilization of Sindhis after Bhutto's death. Bhutto's policies of nationalization of industries, most of which were owned by Mohajir (Mumtaz, 2002: 112), implementation of quota system to help Sindhi rural population, programs for greater recognition of Sindhi language[3] (see Rahman, 1996 chap. 7), the domination of Punjabis over industry, bureaucracy, and the military, a substantial reduction in their privileged position; a lack of meaningful participation in decision making (see for example Zaidi, 1992: 338-9; Ahmad, 1998: 279; Talbot, 1998: 265; Samad, 2002: 65) deeply hurt the Mohajir who saw these changes as destructive to their socio-economic and political role and resulted in their agitations. Fahad Ahmad, a Mohajor, also argued that the unilateral imposition of quota policy and Sindhi as a language on Mohajor were mainly responsible for the rise of Mohajir nationalism (personal communication, January 12, 2018). The case of Baloch, who are controlled under the tribal system, is also not different. Long periods of dictatorial military rule have kept them away from decision-making process and stunted their political maturation. To keep their dominant position, Sardars (the tribal leader) have led common Baloch to believe that the policies of the federal government and the Punjab are responsible for their misery. Baloch Nationalism throughout most of Pakistan's history seems to be less attached to language policy and cultural dimensions and more to economic deprivation and an unfair resource allocation by the federal government (Ayres, 2009: 62). The important constitutional body responsible for the distribution of revenues between the federation and provinces is the National Finance Commission constituted under article 160 of the constitution of Pakistan. Till 2010 the only criterion for the horizontal distribution of resources among the provinces was population which was much criticized by the smaller provinces who demanded multiple-criteria formula taking into account poverty, backwardness, revenue collection and territory.

Illahi Bakhsh Marghazani, a Baloch, during interview said, "The NFC award giving much weightage only to the criterion of population is unjust and inequitable. The territory and natural resources should also be given some weightage to make it more just and equitable. Though the recent NFC Award has made some improvement but is inequitable" (personal communication, December 5, 2017). The 7th NFC Award (2010) increased the vertical share of the provinces from 49% to 57.5% and the traditional population based criteria for the horizontal distribution of the resources among the provinces was changed to Multiple-Criteria Formula where 82% distribution was given to population, 10.3% to poverty and backwardness, 5% to revenue collection/generation and 2.7% to inverse population density. However, the smaller provinces are still not satisfied of this Multiple-Criteria Formula saying it has given a big chunk to population. Many of the projects initiated by the central government marginalize local people. Ataullah Mengal, a Baloch leader, said "The construction of Gwadar town and allocation of land to the military, civil bureaucrats and other influential groups from Punjab will result in the influx of outsiders into the province…and will change the local politics because the majority will be outsiders" (stated in Ayesha, 2007: 204). The CPEC has now opened new avenues of development in the region but Baloch fears influx of outside ethnic groups to take the opportunity from them Illahi Bakhsh was disappointed saying the present state policies in connection with CPEC will convert us in minority in our own region (personal communication, December 5, 2017). Besides, the presence of natural gas and other resources in the province the continued poverty has aggravated their sense of deprivation. The businesses and industries in Sindh and Punjab have been benefitting much from these resources than the Baloch themselves.

As far Pakhtuns are concerned, Pakistan discouraged the use of Pashto for fear of its contribution to the consolidation of a Pakhtun identity which might result in strengthening the irredentist claim of Afghanistan. Pakhtuns had nationalist struggle for a separate state on the eve of and after independence under the leadership of Khudai Khidmatgar but the struggle lost it strength due to their larger share in power, fair representation in state institutions, and the domination of transportation industry as Pakhtuns specific business (see for example Amin, 1988). They have been better incorporated into Pakistani state structure and political economy than the other smaller ethnic groups during the past few decades and unlike the Baloch and the Sindhis, the Pakhtuns are masters of their own fate at the provincial level with a major share in the civil and police services (Jalal, 1995:

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[3]For more information on the policy of the government toward the Sindhi language see Tariq Rahman (Nov., 1995).

193-4; Kukreja, 2003: 127).Recently a Punjabiyat Movement (Punjabi nationalism) has started which goes outside the instrumental framework of language politics. Punjab is the core of state economic and political power and has an enormous representation in the state's bureaucratic and military institutions and this struggle, in the opinion of Ayres (2009: 69), "Is a struggle for recognition–a struggle for a particular language tradition to gain acceptance as a legitimate language–in a context entirely without the analytic interference of economic, political, or even demographic distractions" [4]. In Pakistan, as in many other occasions, linguistic identity formation is mainly instrumental and power-oriented except in the case of Punjab where it is mainly for reviving her past glory and saving the culture (Rahman, 1995; 1997). Muhammad Ashfaq, a Punjabi, argued that despite being the language of the majority of Pakistanis, Punjabi has been marginalized by Urdu and English and it is this fact that has instigated Punjabiyat Movement for recognition of the Punjabi language which is seen as oppressed, though it is a joke to the people outside Punjab (personal communication, December 21, 2017).

Punjab is dominating but not culturally. Underprivileged social groups in Punjab lament on the deteriorating status of Punjabi as a cultural aspect of their lives and try to revitalize Punjabi prose and poetry but have faced the wrath of the military-bureaucratic state in much the same manner as their counterparts in other provinces (Jalal, 1995: 232). Politicians and army officers (mostly Punjabis) oppose the use of Punjabi. This, according to Rahman (1997), may possibly be the fear that if Punjabi is allowed to be used in institutions in Punjab, then the speakers of other languages would increase pressure on the state to use their languages in their provinces which will ultimately increase ethnic conflicts and weaken the federation. Mostly in multinational companies and state institutions the lingua franca remains Urdu or dominantly English.

4. Why Plurality has Gone Unmanageable

As stated above, it were the high degree of centralization of power; the adoption of Urdu as national language without taking all the ethnic groups on board; and the underdeveloped civil society that have aggravated the conflicts arising out of ethno-religious plurality, disadvantaged the ethnic minorities of the smaller provinces and marginalized other communities. These issues are tackled in turn to show their effects on the society.

Centralization of Powers: The centralizing tendencies in Pakistan can be seen from the very beginning. Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founder of Pakistan, had held four most important positions: as a Governor-General of Pakistan; as a President of the Muslim League; and as a President of the Constituent Assembly as well as its legal adviser (Kapur, 1991: 24). Sayeed (1996: 253-71) shows that Jinnah was not responsible to the Constituent Assembly; he was empowered to adopt and modify any part of the Government of Indian Act 1935; the advice of ministers was not binding on him; he could overrule the prime minister's orders; could declare emergency; and could legislate for any province. The views of state and ethnic elites at the time of independence were opposed to each other. The former were in favor of centralization while the later supported provincial autonomy who saw the 'nation-building' efforts by the former as 'nation-destroying' (Amin, 1988: 72). According to Ahmad (1997: 91), the state elite opted to create centralized administrative structures; co-opted selected segments of the socio-economic elites; and used coercion to suppress dissents. What the emphasis on unity brought was a federal structure only on paper with substantive unitary bias. Sheheryar Khan, a Pakhtun, said that Pakistani state elites have always thought of ethnicities as highly challenging and dangerous for the integrity and security of Pakistan. Islam has been used as a unifying force to overcome the negative effects of ethnicities but it has not worked as was shown by the fall of Dhaka (personal communication, November 17, 2017). Each of Pakistani leaders has stressed the importance of a strong center and criticized the idea of greater provincial autonomy. Jinnah said "If you want to build yourself up into a nation, for God's sake give up this provincialism" (cited in Cohen, 2004: 205).

Niaz (2010: 62-83) is of the opinion that authoritarianism and centralization of power was the result of the inability and lack of experience of the politicians, provinces and the provincial elite in administering the provincial affairs and their willingness to leave them to be dealt with by the center. Though both India and Pakistan got the same administrative structure from the British rule, Pakistan has experienced a more authoritarian and centralist governments because, for the Britain, the regions forming present Pakistan were militarily and strategically more important; were volatile and required military presence not only to quell the local uprisings but also the Russian and Afghanistan's expansionist designs. Each of the Pakistan's constitution has kept the central government so powerful

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[4]For more on the case of Punjabiyat and the grievances of Punjabis see Ayres, A. (2009: chap. 4 & 5.

that provincial autonomy has been reduced to a farcical status. Though, Pakistani Constitutions provided multinational federation to some extent, they were/is highly centralized with the center controlling the subjects falling within the provincial jurisdiction. This centralization has accentuated the ethnic divide in the country (Kukreja, 2003: 21). Babo Ali, a Balochi, argued that the centralization of power has aggravated the situation of the non-dominant ethnic groups who see it as the domination of the Punjab, Punjab dominated military, and bureaucracy and has brought about the Punjabization of Pakistan (personal communication, November 21, 2017).

The solution to Pakistan's development and survival, as Talbot (1998: 183) argues, lies not in maintaining a strong center, but in developing a consociational type of arrangement of power-sharing taking cultural plurality of the state into account which has been barred by the inherited traditions of viceregalism and political intolerance with the resultant tragic consequences. The smaller provinces supported the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan in the hope of negotiating a constitutional arrangement based on strong provinces and a weak centre (Jalal, 1995: 15) which was incorporated in the Pakistan Resolution (1940) which stated that the future Pakistan will be consisted of 'Independent Muslim states' in which the constituent units would be 'autonomous and sovereign'. The smaller provinces complaint that centralization of political and economic power in the federal set up dominated by the Punjabis and Mohajir, Shahid Kardar (1992: 308) explains, has brought about political, economic, cultural and linguistic suppression of the ethnic minorities and has blocked their development.

Jaffrelot (2002: 31) is of the opinion that self-determination movements reinforce their activism in reaction to the over-centralization and authoritarian methods of the state while the co-option of the ethnic leaders or the making of alliances between their parties and national parties tend to defuse the centrifugal tendencies. Haroon Muzaffar Buttar, a Punjabi, opined that the integrity and security of Pakistan can only be found in respecting the diverse nature of Pakistani society. The non-dominant groups need to be justly and fairly represented in state institutions and access to employment and economic opportunities, and their cultural heritage must be respected and, if need arises, be protected (personal communication, November 9, 2017).

Urdu as a National Language: The second causative factor creating a sense of deprivation among the smaller ethnicities was the imposition of Urdu as a national language without taking all the ethnic groups on board. Jinnah's insistence on making Urdu as the national language was resented by many ethnic groups. In connection with the state language Jinnah said to Bengalis "Ultimately it is for you, the people of this province, to decide what shall be the language of your province. But let me make it very clear to you that the state language of Pakistan is going to be Urdu and no other language" (Jinnah, 1962: 85-6). Ian Talbot (1998: 1) argues that "Language and religion, rather than providing a panacea for unity in plural diversity, have opened a Pandora's box of conflicting identities. Pakistani elite thought of regional and linguistic identities as inherently dangerous and as undermining the national project". Talbot (1998: 26) further argues that "Attempts at strengthening Urdu as part of nation building enterprise proved counterproductive as was demonstrated most clearly in East Bengal." In October 1947, two months after independence, a "State Language Committee of Action" was founded in East Pakistan to protest against Bengali language's exclusion from the new official forms, currency notes and stamps. Street demonstration took place at Dhaka University in December, 1947 to oppose the new Education Conference's recommendation which held Urdu to be the only state language (Ayres, 2009: 42). In Sindh, G. M. Syed founded the Jiyae Sindh Mahaz (JSM) in 1972 in response to linguistic politics. The issue of language and identity in Sindh has posed serious challenges to the integrity of Pakistan[5]. After independence, Sindhis were surprised, like Bengalis, to find that their language had been denied of its formal official role and would be subservient to Urdu. Saifullah Bhutto, a Sindhi, said that in the beginning medium of instruction at the universities was Urdu and bureaucratic transaction and appointment to the high posts required fluency in Urdu which the Mohajir, whose mother tongue is Urdu, were competent to compete for thus leaving the Sindhis behind in high administrative positions (personal communication, October 18, 2017). Rahman (1996: 9) argues that if a language is used in the domains of power, those who know it can enter the positions of power with much ease. Sheheryar Khan, a Pakhtun, also said that Urdu has got a dominant position in Pakistan. Those who can speak it with clear accent can find good job everywhere, specifically in media, while those have no fluency in Urdu are mostly discriminated against (personal communication, November 17, 2017). Sindhi nationalists consider the decline of

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[5] For more on the Urdu-Sindhi controversy and the resultant violence and bloodshed see Ayres, A. (2009: 48-55).

Sindhi medium schools and the replacement of Sindhi by Urdu on the official buildings like railway stations etc. as a part of general conspiracy.

The riots in East Bengal in 1952 and Urdu-Sindhi controversy leading to brutal riots in June 1972 are illustrative of the fact that unilateral imposition of Urdu as a lingua franca was seen by the ethnic groups as an onslaught on their cultural heritage. Language was one of the main issues for East Pakistan and was a factor in bringing about the division of the country in 1971 (Ayres, 2009: 41). For the centrist political elites Urdu as a national language and Islam as an identity became the foundation for engineering a common national outlook within the multi-national state of Pakistan. The policy pursued by the government was the policy of one state, one government, one economy, one language and one culture which marginalized many groups (Chowdhury, 1988: 50-2; Amin, 1988: 73). Most of the Muslim League leaders came from the Muslim minority provinces in India like UP and Bombay (Waseem, 1994: 62-5) and Urdu was their first language so it could be believed that they made it the national language for their own convenience. Ethnic and linguistic minorities complain that the imposition of Urdu as a national language has marginalized their own regional languages. For example, Aitbar, a Balochi, lamented that the imposition of Urdu as a national language of Pakistan has kept them away from many state offices, on one hand, and has restricted the growth of their own regional language, on the other (personal communication, October 11, 2017).

Pakistani elite equate the recognition of ethnic languages with secession and consider it as a threat to the integrity and survival of Pakistan. Rightists and national elite have always looked through the prism of national integration with the application of Islam and Urdu as tools to achieve it and have mostly ignored the pluralist structure of Pakistani society. The elite of Pakistan thought the linguistic identities inherently dangerous and detrimental to the national unity. Though, Pakistan has a federal polity, provincialism continued to be a dirty word in the political vocabulary of the central leadership. Rather than emphasizing on logical and egalitarian politics based on accommodation and consensus, various regimes in Pakistan have sought to carve out an overarching Pakistani identity at the expense of ethnic pluralism.

Controlled and Radically Islamized Society: A civil society, according to John Keane (1988: 14), is the name of all those voluntary economic, socio-cultural and religious institutions that are concerned with activities outside the domain of state, and if necessary, apply and/or exert different forms of pressure on the state, so as to maintain autonomy vis-à-vis the state. The weak position of the Pakistani civil society has also contributed to the grievances of the ethno-religious minorities.

Pakistani civil society has been controlled by the state institutions during civil, martial law and mixed civil-military governments alike. The political culture of Pakistan to enable its society to take control over the state has remained underdeveloped and has not checked the arbitrary functioning of the state. Individual rights; state accountability to the citizenry; freedoms of expression, dissent, critical thinking; provincial autonomy and decentralization have been skewed on the plea of defence imperatives and threats to national security posed by hostile neighbors. The politicians and military leaders have used and abused the apparatus of the state to punish opposition leaders and dissenters through repressive rules, laws and ordinances like section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code; Public and Representative Officer (Disqualification) Act (PRODA) of 1949; Security of Pakistan Act of 1952, Electoral Bodies Disqualification Order (EBDO) of 1959; Takeover of Progressive Papers of 1959; Political Organizations (Prohibition of unregulated activities) Ordinance of 1962; Press and Public Ordinance of 1963; and Defence of Pakistan Ordinance of 1965 (for explanation of these ordinances see Shafqat, 1997: 38-9; Rizvi, 2000: 64-5, 101-2; Newberg, 1995: 79) to control rather stunt the growth of civil society.

The state started to restrain the secular, civic and religious organizations of society because of the fear that these organizations will nurture a legitimate and active civil society which could question the policies and practices of the state. Akram, a Sindhi, also said that Pakistani state has always tried to curb and suppress societal institutions. These societal organizations mostly represent ethnic groups. So by controlling the society, the state actually controls the ethnic groups (personal communication, February 14, 2018). This culture of intolerance towards opposition and ethnicities has resulted in curbing of liberties and selective accountability, violence and lack of consensual and accommodationist culture (Talbot, 1998: 12-3).

Various arguments can be offered for the week and controlled position of society. The dominant position of military is one of the factors under whose hegemonic rule societal groups have remained stagnant and fragmented (Shafqat, 1997: 8-9, 255; Shah, 2004). The immense power of bureaucracy is also a factor responsible for the under-developed position of society. Muslim League's inability to harmonize the diverse political and ethnic entities in Pakistan has given immense power to

bureaucracy (Kamran, 2008: 29; Waseem, 1994: 83; Jalal, 1995: 19). Similarly, an independent judiciary is an asset for democratic society where various religious, ethno-linguistic and cultural groups can gain justice and equity. Pakistani courts have become increasingly sensitive to political pressures to bend their rulings in favor of the military or civilian governments and have pretended that military coups are legally and constitutionally justified under the 'doctrine of necessity' which has remained an anathema restricting Pakistani judiciary to be independent and pro-democracy (Hussain, M. & Hussain, A., 1993: 55; Newberg, 1995: 91; Kamran, 2008: 11, 51-2).

Discussion

A greater awareness of the obligations and attributes of pluralism is an urgent need. Shah and Amjad (2011) assess the cultural diversity of Pakistan is based on Hofstede et al (2008) model which confirms Pakistan as a distinctively diverse nation while the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was found possessing peculiar culture than the rest of the provinces. Pakistan has not been able to accommodate diversity, as Talbot (1998: 1, 19) and Malik (1997: 168) also argues, because governments' elite view all dissents as law and order issue rather than a political issue. Pakistani elite must recognize the plural nature of the society rather than imposing a unitary nationhood from the above. Loyalties to the state can be augmented through representation and ethnic minorities' alienation and separatist tendencies can be reversed if they are fairly represented in state institutions. Taha, a Sindhi, was of the opinion that efforts of nation building in Pakistan have been futile not only because of the continuous conflicts between regional, religious and nationalist identities, but also by the attempts of the successive regimes to forcibly impose a national identity rather than achieving it by consensus (personal communication, August 18, 2017). The imposition of a monolithic Islamic national identity with the hesitation of the center to fully allow for the enjoyment of multiple affiliations by various ethnic groups has compounded the task of integrating provincial sentiments. The ruling elite have taken ad hoc measures and no comprehensive plan has been undertaken to co-opt the plural forces through bargaining and appropriate political and economic measures with the result that ethnic heterogeneity, demands for provincial autonomy, devolution of power, decentralization and equitable policies governing center-province relations have been ignored and dismissed. To adequately address the marginalization of the smaller provinces for state integrity, prosperity and development, Pakistan needs to reassess her policies and federalism to give greater voice to the smaller provinces and address issues related to discrimination. Diversity does not necessarily lead to conflict and civil wars. It is the behavior of the dominant groups and the state that make the conditions for disturbance. The Acehnese in Indonesia and Tamil in Sri Lanka were the strong supporters for independence but the policies of these states alienated them and contributed to their nationalism. The uneven relationship between the Punjab and other regions in the conduct of national affairs needs to be rationalized. Pakistan bulging population and increase in education have also highlighted the gender imbalance and feminist struggle for rights. Ullah (2015) found women's low access to property rights and enjoyment of its affects. The government has taken many steps for redressal by offering quota in different jobs but still it needs much to be done. The current violence and workplace issues with Pakistani transgender community also reflect the poor governance and state affairs in providing rights to underrepresented and marginalized groups in Pakistan.

The need of the day is to honestly implement multinational federalism scheme with practical autonomy to the provinces. Both inclusion (in power-sharing and adequate representation) and exclusion (free to develop and preserve their culture) of the non-dominant ethnic groups should be adopted by the Pakistani state elite if national integrity is to be attained. This policy will create a sense of belonging among the smaller provinces and will thwart the sense of discrimination. Again, increase in the number of provinces from 4 up to 15 or more will not only solve the problem of domination of Punjab which is visualized as the Punjabisation of Pakistan but would also contribute towards good governance thus addressing the grievances of the smaller provinces.

However, the homogenization project was not the strategy followed by Pakistan only, most of the Asian states, according to Baobang He and Will Kymlicka (2005: 1-3), followed the path as a response to hostile environment; secure national integrity; and the belief that plurality will fade away in future. But, this model failed and many centrifugal forces started claims for redressal. The demands of the unrepresented groups based on the given discussion appear genuine. Ahmed (1998: xii, 160-1) also argues that suppression of diversity in the name of national unity is counter-productive to the aims of suppression and that unity must be sought within the cultural and ethnic diversity of Pakistan.

Thus substantive representation, constitutional politics, rule of law and independence of judiciary are the best institutional tools to protect and advance the interests of ethno-religious minorities. The coercive machinery of the state may keep the tight lid on the ethnic cauldron without a safety valve, but it cannot eradicate the grievances of the smaller ethnicities, which require a restructuring of the political and economic system, efforts to establish substantive democracy, egalitarianism and devolution of economic, political and administrative power to accommodate the reality. Thus the remedy for Pakistan's better future, as Talbot's (1998: 373) also explains, "Lies in the genuine political participation of previously marginalized groups. This would not only redeem the 'failed promise' of 1947, but also provide hope that Pakistan can effectively tackle the immense economic, social and environmental challenges of this century". The study findings have also been endorsed by Syed (2010) showing that issues related to Pakistani society's sub-cultures remain generally downplayed or ignored resulting in unrest among Pakistan's ethnically diverse population. The study further highlights significant discrepancy in the concept of Pakistani national identity and the challenge to fit the realities of a multicultural and diverse society.

Policy Implications

a) Pakistan's integrity, development and survival is best ensured not by maintaining a strong center but a consociational type of arrangement of power-sharing taking cultural plurality into account. Self-determination movements reinforce their activism in reaction to the over-centralization and authoritarian methods of the state while the co-option of the ethnic leaders or the making of alliances between their parties and national parties tend to defuse the centrifugal tendencies. To adequately address the marginalization of the smaller provinces for state integrity, prosperity and development, Pakistan needs to reassess her policies and give greater voice to the underrepresented groups and address issues related to discrimination.

b) Policies addressing the genuine complaints of the smaller ethnic group should be adopted. The smaller provinces complain that centralization of political and economic power has brought their political, economic, cultural and linguistic suppression and has blocked their development. They further complain that the ethnic dominance of groups, unfair distribution of resources, issues in the criteria for NFC Award and the dominant role of the army have marginalized their status. The NFC award giving much weightage only to the criterion of population is unjust and inequitable. The territory and natural resources should also be given some weightage to make it more just and equitable. Though the 7th NFC Award (2010) has increased the vertical share of the provinces from 49% to 57.5% and the traditional population based criteria for the horizontal distribution of the resources among the provinces was changed to Multiple-Criteria Formula where 82% distribution was given to population, 10.3% to poverty and backwardness, 5% to revenue collection/generation and 2.7% to inverse population density. However, the smaller provinces are still not satisfied of this Multiple-Criteria Formula saying it has given a big chunk to population. These issues need redressal on priority basis.

c) The state must develop a fair method of sharing power with all the ethnic groups. This will help in reducing the effectiveness of ethno-national movements. The state elite should not monopolize power or pursue unitary policies. If they do so the ethnic elite may begin to formulate secessionist ideologies and mobilize public support among their respective ethnic groups. Again, economic development should be supported through participation because in its absence ethnic sentiments are fueled which may lead to counter-productive results. There should be no discrimination of the members of the marginalized group(s). Ethno-nationalism is generally a response to perceived injustice. Conflict may reveal the trust deficit on the authorities and in most of the cases ethnic conflicts are the results of state policies like uneven distribution of resources, social benefits, over-centralization, and dominance of one ethnic group in power hierarchy. As a result, the marginalized and discriminated groups are bound to revolt and their discontent can find national expression.

d) Again, the intensity of ethnic assertiveness will be decreased if the ethnic groups are both included in power-sharing and adequate representation and excluded to freely develop and preserve their culture. This policy will create a sense of belonging among the smaller provinces and will thwart the sense of discrimination.

e) A greater awareness of the obligations and attributes of pluralism is an urgent need. Pakistan has not been able to accommodate diversity because governments' elite view all dissents as law and order issue rather than a political issue. Pakistani elite must recognize the plural nature of the society rather than imposing a unitary nationhood from the above. The elite of Pakistan thought the linguistic identities inherently dangerous and detrimental to the national unity. There is an

urgent need to respect, encourage and support the local languages. The ethnic minorities should be given the opportunities to promote their cultures and languages.

f) Longstanding measures and comprehensive plans should be taken to co-opt the plural forces through bargaining and appropriate political and economic measures. Policies accommodating ethnic heterogeneity, devolution of power, decentralization and equitable policies should be formulated.

g) Similarly, women and transgender have low access to position of authority specifically in bureaucracy and army. They also have low access to property rights and basic liberties. The government has taken many steps for the redressal of the issue by offering quota in different jobs but still it needs much to be done. The current violence and workplace issues with Pakistani transgender community also reflect the poor governance and state affairs in providing rights to underrepresented and marginalized groups in Pakistan. These issues need redressal.

h) There is an urgent need for the establishment of substantive representative democracy, constitutional politics, rule of law, independence of judiciary, a restructuring of the political and economic system, efforts for egalitarianism, devolution of economic, political and administrative power and lastly, a legitimate and active civil society questioning the policies and practices of the state to accommodate the reality. These are the best institutional tools to protect and advance the interests of ethno-religious minorities. Thus the remedy for Pakistan's better future lies in the genuine political participation of previously marginalized groups.

i) Some of the ethnic group like Sindhis and Balochis are concerned about their land. Today about 40 percent of Sindh's prime agricultural land is held by non-Sindhis, mostly Punjabis and Mohajir (Ahmad, 1998: 71). Similarly, the allocation of irrigated land belonging to the smaller ethnic groups to the retired military officers (mostly Punjabis), the setting up of industries in their provinces by Punjabis and the bulk of labor for these industries from the Punjab have been severely objected by the smaller ethnic groups. The state must chalk out a comprehensive plan to address these and related issues.

Limitations and Future Directions

a) The study takes the most prominent ethnic groups into account and leaves out the groups which are minor and least prominent for future research. All of our interviewees were from Pakistan, but we couldn't find any volunteer interviewee from the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) which is a serious limitation to our study. Again, we have taken only the prominent causes which have aggravated the situation of plurality in Pakistan and have left out the minor ones. One of the limitations of our method is the issue of objectivity vs. subjectivity. In social research and specifically the one conducted on a group to which the researcher belongs, the issue of subjectivity intrudes one way or the other, intentionally or unintentionally, though researcher will try utmost to avoid biases and subjectivity.

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