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A Novel Transformation in the Party Politics of Pakistan: An Analysis of Shift in the Political Culture Post 2013 Elections

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The aim of this research is to analyze the transformation in the political culture of Pakistan post 2013 elections.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The work of Gabriel Almond and Sydney Verba has been used in this study. Qualitative method was used in this study to analyze the transformation in the Political culture of Pakistan.

Findings: The results revealed that this decade will be remembered as a climacteric in the political history of Pakistan because it saw a significant drop in dynastic politics and an increase in the political clout of the middle class. The study also finds that Political parties are abstract forces that mold public opinions and values; hence, it makes sense to delve deeply into competing political subcultures with "politics" at the center of such analyses.

Implications/Originality/Value: The results of the study's analysis show that Pakistan's dominant system of dynasty politics encountered a problem when a new party emerged as the main rival for the premiership.



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1. Introduction

Communities have different perspectives on politics, and this diversity of inclination and belief is referred to as political culture. The political culture largely determines political engagement. Political history, background, and value orientation all play a role in the diversity of political cultures. Each of these factors fosters nationalism and racism. The behavior, values, and preferences of the populace must also be studied if one wants to understand the politics of a community; research institutions and political elites will not suffice (Lane and Ersson 1994).

Gabriel Almond, one of the more distinguished scholars, has made significant contributions to the development of the idea of political culture. He contends that by concentrating on three orientations, political culture can be

understood. The first category is cognitive orientations, which deal with information regarding political concepts and convictions. The second category is emotional orientations, which are concerned with emotions, attachments, involvement, or rejection with regard to political objects. Finally, there are evaluative orientations, which are concerned with opinions and judgments regarding political objects. Almond continues by elaborating on these approaches and offering models of "subject," "parochial," and "participant" political cultures (Almond and Verba 1963).

In a democratic society, political culture actively influences how the population and the state interact. When people with similar views of the state and how it performs come together on one platform to effect change, the state and how it performs may be significantly impacted. It may result in a revolution or a substantial political shift, such as a change in the party system or how responsive the system is (Voinea 2020).

When Lucian Pye looked into the political systems of Asian nations, he found that, in contrast to western systems, they lacked the essential elements of pluralistic democracy since they placed more value on their inner circle than anybody else, including those outside the system. Because of this, the pace of democratization in Asian nations is much slower than in western nations.

Since its creation, either the military or dynastic families have been in control of Pakistan's politics. Hundreds of families use dynastic politics in today's culture to maintain their influence. All dynasties, including the major and lesser dynasties, participated in and won seats in every election from independence until 2013. Since independence, Pakistan's institutions have changed, and the military has shifted power from the civilian to the military, yet dynastic representatives have maintained their position. Even religious groups like Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (Noorani Group) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazl-ur-Rehman) are led by dynastic figures, similar to how the Pakistan Muslim League (N) is led by the Sharifs and the PPP by the Bhutto (Hussain 2020).

Chaudhry of Gujrat is the leader of PML Q. The Chaudhry brothers represent the party both nationally and provincially. The late Wali Khan's family is in charge of the Awami National Party of KP (Paracha 2017). Dynastic politics are prevalent not only at the national level but also at the provincial and even local levels, where political families have long dominated their own local seats. As political parties in Pakistan strive for personal advantage rather than the state, dynastic politics has an impact on how laws are implemented (Hussain 2020).

Pakistan's political culture is based on division rather than harmony, and this form of political culture subjugates nations. Pakistan has struggled to find true leadership from the beginning, which has allowed the military to meddle in political affairs. As a result, these circumstances have an impact on both urban and rural residents, dividing the political culture. The British heritage also had a significant impact on Pakistani political culture. If given political power, we will compete for it and instigate political warfare, according to Winston Churchill, who has long predicted the essence of our political culture. Alas! His forecasts proved accurate. Our history has influenced the political culture we have now. Some examples include the use of religion for political gain, military interventions, clan dominance, bureaucratic supremacy, institutional imbalance, and Muslim League weaknesses. Local power politics, where wealthy families control everything, are analogous to our political culture. In a nutshell, our political climate is anti-democratic (Akhter 2010).

2. Political Culture: Theory

Since its inception, Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, in their renowned work *The Civic Culture* (1963), have used point gauging as a medium to spell out political culture as a theory regarding the linkage between the individual as a citizen and the state as a superintendence (Almond and Verba 1963). The connection between people and the state can be sculpted according to classic political culture theory, which has in-depth demonstrated both the

necessity for similar notions and the severe procedural restrictions necessary to produce a blueprint for this connection.

One significant factor was the widening gap between the conceptual definitions of attitudes and their measurement and operationalization (Rosenberg and Hovland 1960). This variance greatly sparked social psychology and political psychology as a *modus operandi* in order to operationalize attitudes as multifarious systems of credence, influence, enlightenment, and action contemplation apparatuses that could elucidate behaviors and operation preferences. The eventual objective has consistently been to explain the connection between the political leanings of citizens and the processes of the state (polity), administration, and authority.

From the middle of the 1970s to the present, the two underlying causes have been potent enough to influence the directions taken by research approaches addressing questions of political culture. The primary and utmost significant result was that, in the ensuing years that followed the 1970s, methodology research endeavors were alienated in order to cover every aspect of the attitude configuration that was held back for an operationalization solution: sentiments, conviction, insight, and subsequently, emblem and value configuration.

The study of social and political science has shown a great deal of interest in and an intense development of political culture theory over a number of times (Seligson April 2002). The expounding potency of its assertion concerning the transitional role that culture has in the connection between citizens and the undercurrents of state composition, structuring, and function has been the underpinning of its boom. Political culture theory, for example, only provides areas of comparative evaluation without essentially defining how it works (Welch 2013). This is an important feature of the theory. Furthermore, without explicitly providing for attitude operationalization, it uses attitude measures and assessments of attitudes' effects on political conduct or act consideration. The certainty that political culture theory has not coalesced state scholarships and culture into a separate theoretical and applied scaffold is an additional crucial aspect (Steinmetz 1999).

3. Features of Political Culture of Pakistan

Following are some features of Pakistan's political culture that are more operational in nature.

3.1 Dynastic Politics

Dynastic politics are inevitable; they exist in every polity. However, they are more powerful in nations that are still in the early stages of democratization. The primary source for the creation of dynasties is people from the same region and heritage. Dynasties are built on relationships. Politicians who want to broaden their base of support frequently make room for their family since they can be trusted and support one another better than others. Dynastic politics appear to be the best method for preserving political power.

Most traditional families in Pakistan participate in dynastic politics; these families were under British control and have continued to hold influence until now. Hundreds of families use dynastic politics in today's culture to maintain their influence. They are landlords, have sizable financial accounts, are well-known, and hold significant social and political sway. These dynasties also made constitutional attempts to maintain their hold on power, as in the 18th Amendment, they removed the provision requiring intra-party elections. Dynastic family's control most of the party's leadership. The Sharifs lead the Pakistan Muslim League (N), the Bhutto family leads the PPP, and the Khan family lead the Awami National Party (ANP). Even dynastic leaders led religious parties like Jamiat Ulema-e Islam (Fazl-ur-Rehman) and Jamiat Ulema-e Pakistan (Noorani Group) JUP (N). Sindh and Punjab are the two states with the most parliamentarians from dynastic families. The majority of dynastic candidates won in the 2013 elections. Pakistan has the most dynasties in its parliament as compared to other nations. The percentage of national assembly members with dynastic ancestry was much greater in the elections of 2002, 2008, and 2013 (Web Desk 2021). Elections in 2002, 2008, and 2013 all favored dynastic trends. Dynasties made up half of the successful candidates.

In each constituency, 1/4 of the dynastic politicians ran for office. It is evident from the aforementioned evidence that these families control Pakistan's electoral process. Only in KP were candidates chosen for office based on their merits rather than their ancestry (Rehman, Ahmad, and Nasir 2022)

3.2 Personality Oriented Politics

The political infatuation of the ruler, whether they are military or civilian, dominates Pakistani politics. Pakistan's politics under Jinnah were centered on his personality and power, and the populace regarded him as "an exemplary leader, above and beyond serious criticism (Syed 1978)." The public romanticizes this type of leadership as a means of eradicating societal problems like corruption or as being positively linked to the dynamics of economic growth and development, counting requirements for employment, education, and health. Ayub Khan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, Benazir Bhutto, Nawaz Sharif, Pervez Musharraf, and Imran Khan are just a few examples of the ruling elites who, like the general public, have self-described themselves as the political system (Syed 1978). All Pakistani Presidents and Prime Ministers have adopted stances and meanings that present them to the public as protectors and rescuers of the country who are aware of their wants and desires. Apart from these national-level parties, this trend is also evident in regional parties.

3.3 Corruption

There is a strong opposition to corruption and demands that political elites be held accountable in Pakistani politics. As a result of the PTI's growing support and in response to accusations of corruption against the PPP and PML-N regimes, this part of Pakistan's political culture has become more prominent. Though the single-member constituency meant that the new party would remain the third-largest party in terms of seats in the National Assembly, it performed remarkably well in the 2013 elections when it won the second-highest number of votes in the general elections (Malik 2014). The PTI's popularity is mostly focused among younger people in the metropolitan centers that the party chose as the focus of its advertising campaigns. While just 13% of PML-N and 33% of PPP campaign ads specifically targeted youth, the PTI's conversing highlighted corruption as a factor in the exodus of young people leaving the nation (Hussain, Sajid, and Jullandhry 2018). Following the Supreme Court's removal of the ex-Premier Nawaz Sharif in the wake of the Panama Scandal, the PTI's anti-corruption rhetoric completed a circle in 2017 (Saleem 2017). The Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf was propelled into power after securing a majority of seats in the 2018 general elections and establishing governments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Punjab following the conviction of Nawaz Sharif and his removal as prime minister, which gave the party justification to mobilize (Shah 2019).

3.4 Skepticism Towards Religious Political Parties

The tendency of the voters to vote in slim pickings for such parties reflects Pakistan's political culture of being skeptical of religious parties and their religious programs. It is a point of fact that no religious party has received sufficient support and seats to form a majority administration (Islam 2013). This can be referred to as a persistent aspect of Pakistan's political culture, with theocratic parties only emerging as major players in the 2002 and 2018 elections, mostly due to dependent factors. General Musharraf manipulated the 2002 general elections by denying Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto the chance to challenge him. As a result, the alliance of six religious parties, Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal, gained 59 seats in the National Assembly and established governments in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Baluchistan (Khan 2011). This victory was fleeting and took a tumble since the MMA only gained a small number of National Assembly seats but lost support at the provincial level. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the 2008 elections (Robinson 2008). Conservative religious party Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) garnered the fifth-largest number of votes in the 2018 general elections, despite failing to secure even a single seat at the center and securing only two in the provincial assembly of Sindh. As the blasphemy law squabble grew in intensity, the party mobilized its support base (Khan, 2018). Although the spiritual tagline serves as a rallying cry and emotionally charged appeal for the mystically inclined supporter, the general public's interest in this component of Pakistan's political culture is undermined by their disregard for political, social, and economic concerns.

3.5 Split Preference between Democratic Government and Military Regimes

In terms of promoting political, economic, and social stability, Pakistani political culture shows a split preference between democratic and military governments. Opinions that support military rule accuse Pakistan's self-centered and corrupt civilian leadership of being to blame for the country's problems, while proponents of democracy blame military meddling for internal political, social, and economic volatility. Pakistan's contentious political antiquity, which alternates between eras of democratic administrations and military control, is reflected in this fundamental civil-military division in the country's political culture (Shah 2014). These two roles can also be separated based on their federal and unitary qualities. Political elites favor a federal, autonomous relationship between the federal government and the provinces, as the 18th Amendment exemplifies, over military regimes' propensity for a unitary, central government with established local bodies (Rizvi 1984). Additionally, military-autocratic governments in Pakistan favor a presidential system in which political parties play little to no role and receive little to no support, whereas the parliamentary system following the 1973 Constitution involves a premiership punctuated by balloting competition between political parties.

Economic development data indicate an upward trend under "military-technocratic," which contends that military regimes are different from civilian administrations (Monshupuri and Samuel 1995). When comparing the performance of military and democratic regimes, it can be shown that the latter were better at managing inflation and increasing the GDP, while democratic administrations did better in terms of per capita income. Both democratic and military regimes receive comparable scores when it comes to foreign direct investment and unemployment (Hayat et al. 2016).

4. Transitions in Pakistan's Political Culture

Political culture is dynamic and multifaceted, meaning that governmental actions have an impact on citizens' behavior as well as the changing values, attitudes, and approaches of their population (Rutberg 1999). When it comes to Pakistan's political culture, illustrious families tend to dominate everything, and our political culture is similar to local power politics (Paracha 2017).

As new trends emerged, such as the changing party system, rising voter turnout, altering political behavior, the beginning of political equality and youth elections, and online campaigns, they swayed the previously stagnant political culture.

4.1 Change of party System

Only when some parties appear or disappear does a party shift result in a change to the party system. This shift was seen in Pakistan, where the emergence of a new party changed the way in which parties competed with one another (Peter 2006).

Although Pakistan is a multi-party state, its Politics is dominated by two main parties, the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and the PML-N, governing concurrently with help from smaller parties including the Muttahida Quami Movement (MQM), the Awami National Party (ANP), and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI). Over the course of 22 years, these two parties dominated Pakistan. As a new party (PTI) entered the political scene and changed the nature of competition in the 2013 elections, the party structure was reformed. As a result of PTI receiving the second-highest number of votes, the long-standing two-party system was changed into a three-party system. PTI, which came in third, established a government in KP and won seats from three different provinces. PTI received a lot of votes for each candidate compared to other parties (Ahmad and Skoric 2014). (PTI), under Imran Khan's leadership, gave the middle-class cause for optimism (Marari 1999).

4.2 Increased turn out

Increasing turnout is also linked to the success of new parties. A new party entry brings in fresh voters. It is

comparable to those areas of Pakistan where the new party did well. A Gallup analysis of the 2013 elections found that in these areas, voter turnout also rose dramatically. Voting increased by 53% in KP and by 40% in FATA. Also in Punjab, there was a noticeable increase in turnout where PTI was in second place (Tavits 2008). There was also an appreciable rise in turnout in the two remaining provinces where PTI did not perform. The majority of the youth population was located in KP, and many analysts referred to this election as the "youth elections."

4.3 Changed Political Behavior

In cases where the existing party is unable to meet the requirements of the populace, new parties are encouraged. In nations that are now transitioning to democracy, these trends are evident. The politics of the growth of the party system and the consolidation of democracy are heavily influenced by new parties and their success. Voter behavior and the candidates' rational choices have caused the party system to change. In fact, a voter's choice to support a new party is a vote against the alternatives that are already on the ballot (Tavits 2008). However, given the way the PTI has energized youth participation and forced conventional actors to respond to popular sentiment, current circumstances in Pakistan, where the public of KP and other regions supported a new party, offer the PTI the chance to grow into a political alternative capable of bolstering civilian effectiveness (Flamenbaum 2012).

Party identification was not a significant factor influencing the voting preferences of KP voters in the 2013 elections (14% decrease). Since more than half (53%) of voters preferred short-term factors to long-term forces (Gilani 2013).

Following 2013 elections, the KP voters were categorized by many analysts as floating voters. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the floating voters have a significant impact on the outcomes of the elections for the national and provincial assemblies (Badshah, Rehman, and Muhammad 2018). However, KP, which has never reelected the government, experienced a change in trend in 2018 after PTI was reelected, which transformed the category of voters from floating to retrospective voters. Voters reject an unruly incumbent and elect a well-behaved one in a retrospective election (Cho 2009).

4.4 Youth Election First step towards political Equity

A democracy cannot function effectively without political equality, which is achieved when every member of society has an equal impact on the political process (Derksen et al. 2018). Political equality is uncommon in developing nations since women and young people tend to be underrepresented in politics for a variety of reasons, including lack of knowledge, cultural barriers, and a lack of enthusiasm. A lot of nations are working towards achieving political equality.

More than ever before, youngsters participated actively in the 2013 elections. The percentage of young voters climbed to 11% in the 2013 elections. It needs to be regarded as the first step towards political equality (Ahmad & Anwar, 2018). Voting in one election significantly increases the likelihood that someone will vote in the next election, indicating that voting behavior is a habit. The increase in voter turnout in 2013 was mostly attributed to youth engagement. Turnout rates vary according to a person's race, gender, age, financial situation, and level of education (Gerber, Green, and Shachar 2003).

4.5 Online Campaign

The 2013 election was Pakistan's first 'social media' election, during which both new and established parties used social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter to mobilize voters (Asad, and Mackenzie 2019). KP saw the longest-running PTI election campaign out of the four provinces. In his election campaign, Imran Khan responded to 21% of tweets, bridging the communication gap between voters and candidates (Ahmad & Skoric, 2014).

Social media was intelligently utilized in the 2013 election campaign. Every region of the nation heard the candidates' voices. The party leaders' social media engagement with the people set it apart from prior election

campaigns. All of the major parties were present on social media throughout the election campaign, although PTI's use of these platforms was more successful. This social media marketing strategy significantly aided the success of PTI.

5. 2018 Elections and Start of Class Voting Regression

Class voting is the propensity of voters in a certain social class to support a particular political party or candidate over a competing candidate as compared to voters in other classes (Evans 2000). The social class system, as well as other factors like religion, political views of the city and the village, ethnicity, and regional differences, all have an impact on voting behavior (Sheikh, Bokhari, and Naseer 2015). Some of the major political parties in Pakistan receive votes from a certain class, which helps them maintain their position (Badshah et al. 2018). Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) province's Pashtun community is the Awami National Party's (ANP) main support base, while the working and peasant classes are loyal to the PPP (Paracha 2022).

The degree of class voting is reduced through drift in political culture. A number of reasons contributed to this regression, like the rise of new parties in the political arena, shifts in class votes, declines in candidates' loyalty, and changes in preferences.

According to the Gallup 2018 Exit Poll Report The decline in PML-N support partially, but not entirely, explains the increase in PTI support. PTI's emergence comes at the expense of other parties as well. The majority of the working-class votes migrated from PPP to PTI. The PML-N lost some of its higher-income supporters to the PTI. The proportion of Pakistani voters who cast ballots based on party leadership rather than candidates during the previous two elections broadened the voters' perspective. This shows that the way voters are acting has changed significantly (Flamenbaum 2012). With time, candidates from religious parties lost some of their significance. According to a 2018 General Election Gallup report, MMA's electoral support has decreased as a result of their 29% seat loss (Badshah et al. 2018).

Since PTI emphasized more accountable and responsive rules, people preferred responsiveness. It not only affected the general population but also the conventional parties that were attempting to adopt this responsive governance. This trend is evident in the development of Pakistani democracy (Flamenbaum 2012). PTI is referred to as the youth party. They became drawn to PTI rather than continue waiting for other parties to evolve. They favored a party with a contemporary outlook.

6. Conclusion

The results of the study's analysis show that Pakistan's dominant system of dynasty politics encountered a problem when a new party emerged as the main rival for the premiership. The sea of heads that gathered in Lahore in 2011 to show support for this party demonstrated how popular it had become. PTI was no longer regarded as a one-man party after that day but as a challenging party. Moreover, the PTI won the second-highest number of votes in 2013, which altered the Pakistani party system. With the responsible use of social media for political mobilization, it also gathered new voters. Because of this, the turnout increased the most in the areas where PTI won.

Many regions saw an increase in youth involvement, which should be seen as a first step towards political equality. It is normally observed that less politically aware voters would choose "long-term" party affiliation, whereas politically aware voters are more inclined to "short-term" forces. As a result, people made their decisions based on short-term forces like charismatic personalities and prior performances from other parties, which indicate awareness. This slide did not stop there; it carried on. PTI rose to the national level in 2018 from the provincial level. Additionally, a shift in voting culture was seen. In Pakistan, a particular social class consistently chooses one political party over another, even when there is a superior option available.

However, a different pattern (drop-in class voting) was seen. When many classes that previously supported the conventional parties switched to the new party, the PTI vote was made up of a diverse group of classes. PTI received a higher percentage of votes from lower-income people, more votes from upper-income groups, and the most educated and affluent citizens who had previously supported conventional parties. With time, the impact of candidates waned since many voters this time were not devoted to them. Religious scholars who served as its representatives in the past caused the religious class to vote for MMA, but as elections went on, the candidates' importance diminished, and PTI also garnered ANP voters. The percentage of voters seeking development climbed to 9%, while the ratio of votes cast based on kinship declined to 6%, indicating that people chose responsiveness and accountability above loyalty. All of the aforementioned events indicate that Pakistan's political culture transformed over these years.

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