Politics of Policy Making in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Public policy is a course of action for government to address the problems of general public. It is designed through systematic cyclic process by following different steps present in the cycle. Every step is a building block for next stage. Therefore, each and every step of the cycle is essential to follow in the process of policy making. Policies are developed in political environment and numerous factors from this environment are involved in this whole process of policy making. These factors include resources, actors, rules, goals, skills, expertise and knowledge. Each factor has its own implication and significance in the process of policy making. Likewise, some other aspects like political economy, political and social structure and context and forms of government alsoinfluence the policy making process in diverse ways. Pakistan has unique political history since its inception. Consequently, she has experienced different forms of government in different eras due to diverse reasons. The uniqueness of political history and different forms of governments in Pakistan had given birth to multiple factors which played their role in policy making process of Pakistan. It is required to analyze the numerous factors which are present in external and internal environment of Pakistan and influence the policy making process of the country. It is also required to explore the political environment of Pakistan and to discover its influenceon policy making process. These areas are dealt in this research study. This research study is based on secondary source of data collection. The published research papers and books on the same area are consulted for exploring the identified dimensions associated to policy making process of Pakistan. The content analysis of literature has been done for explaining the politics of policy development process in Pakistan. The findings of this research study haveexplained the diverse factors and theirinfluenceon the development of policies in Pakistan. The outcomes of this research study will help to understand the dynamics ofpolitics of policy making process of Pakistan and its associated environment. It will help to explain the prevailing situation in Pakistan regarding the policy process and on the basis of the discussion the improvements can be suggested forrefiningand improving the process of policy development.

Keywords: *Politics, Policy making, Pakistan, Institutions, Framework*

Introduction

Coercive Diplomacy

Politics is a broad activity which initiates for the common good of the community or society at large. It starts with the diverse types of interests of different actors of the state. This activity tries to create consensus among the actors on different goals and objectives for the betterment of whole community of people. According to Aristotle, man is a political animal (Simpson, 2000) so it shows that politics is an inexorable activity of human life. Politics is also considered as an action (Greenwood, Pyper, & Wilson, 2002) through which general rules are made and

amended in the state and people live their lives according to these developed rules (Leftwich, 2015). Politics is derived from Greek word polis which means city states(Hay, 2010). Thus, it is majorly concerned with the activities of the state and government which run the affairs of state(Marsh & Stoker, 2010). It includes all the processes which help to address and solve the issues of general public and for the good of the masses at large(Savigny & Marsden, 2011). Similarly, policy development or formulation is the process which is used for solving the problems of general public (Hay, 2010). Policies are devised for addressing the difficulties or issues of masses and it has its own politics (Albareda, Lozano, & Ysa, 2007) because there are multiple stakeholders in the policy process which have varied interests and it is responsibility of the state to create consensus among all stakeholders for the greater good of general masses and for developing an effective policy. There are different factors or dynamics which influence and contribute in the policy making process(Choudhury, 1955). These factors are skills and expertise of policy developers (Maniruzzaman, 1967), knowledge and innovation(Kennedy, 1984; Khan, 1980), legal frameworks of the state, specific happenings and events which demand political response (Akhtar, 2009), institutional influences (Corsi, 2004), external influences like donors, international political incidents, military happenings (Qadeer, 1996), external events (Ziring, 1988), treaties or agreements (Hasnain, 2008), environment which includes all type of environment like economic, social, and physical, demographics of the country in which polices are developed and interest groups including trade associations and different lobbies (Torres, 1989). The culture of the state or country is also one of the significant factors which influence policy process. All these factors and their relationship create complex web around the policy making process. The relationship of these factors initiates politics of policy making according to the context and environment which makes policy making a multidimensional process (Khan, 1980). Likewise, policy development is a complicated and complex process in Pakistan due to numerous factors and their undercurrents. There are multiple factors which play their due role in policy process of Pakistan. There are structural, environmental, cultural and situational factors which have noteworthy impact on policy process of Pakistan. The structural factors include political, economic and social structure of the country whereas situational factors include all types of changes occurs in the country due to internal and external happenings. On the other hand, culture includes both political and general culture of the society and environment explains all those factors which establish the environment of the country like trade agreements, international donors, and multinational organizations working in Pakistan, local and international NGOs. The geographical location and geostrategic position of the country also play an important role in the policy making of Pakistan. The relationship of these mentioned factors and interconnected activities of this process start politics of policy making in Pakistan which need to be explored thoroughly for better understanding and thoughtfulness regarding this process. Therefore, it is required to explore these factors along with their different dimensions and their influence on each other in the context of Pakistan to understand the politics of policy development as it is a main area of study of this research paper.

Scope and Significance

Public Policy provides the solution of problems of general public in the form of course of action. According to Thomas R. Dye, public policy is what government chooses to do or not to do. Thus, it shows that if government does not respond to any issue then it is also its policy for dealing with certain situation but it is a complete process through which policy is devised according to the need and requirements of the situation. There are different factors which influence this process. In the context of Pakistan, there are different dynamics which play their significant role in the policy making process. Thus, it is required to explore these dynamics and factors which contribute in the policy formulation of Pakistan for better understanding of this process. This study will open new avenues of research in the arena of Public Policy of Pakistan. This research study will identify and explain different factors, dimensions and their relationship which affect the policy process of the country. This aspect of policy process can help to give comprehensive recommendations to all the beneficiaries and stakeholders of this process to make it effective and effectual on the basis of better understanding of this process. There are multiple swaying factors which have identified and explained above but this research paper focuses on institutional aspect only which has influenced the policy development process of Pakistan in different capacities.

Methodology

This research study is based on secondary data collection source. Different research articles on the said topic and books on similar issue have been consulted for writing this research paper. The content analysis of literature has been done for explaining the politics of policy making in the context of Pakistan.

Discussion

Pakistan is a country with unique history (Wheeler, 1970). She has inherited British legacy at the time of inception in 1947 in terms of judicial system, political structure and system, form of government along with its institutional arrangements, bureaucracy and military set up (Leftwich, 1993). British Empire had ruled this region for long time due to which newly formed states of Pakistan and India had adopted British system of power for their own countries. Pakistan had started its journey as a nascent with less resources and huge set of problems (Zaidi, 2004). Therefore, same structure of different institutions had been adopted for immediate tackling of numerous problems (Ahmar, 2013). Later on, different amendments and changes had been made in different institutions in different time periods but the British influence remained in the working and functioning of these institutions. Bureaucracy was the main tool in the state machinery which played its key role in running the state affairs efficiently after independence. The bureaucracy was well trained and skilled by British Empire which contributed positively in dealing with the nuisances emerged at the time of independence (Chaudry, 2011). This contribution and role had strengthened the position of bureaucracy in the realm of affairs of the country. On the other hand, military had strong hold in Pakistan due to geostrategic position of the country in the region. Likewise, there are other institutions which influence the affairs of state as well as policy making significantly due to multiple reasons (Kamran, 2008).. Hence, it is required to explore the reasons of influence of these institutions on the policy making of Pakistan for understanding the politics of this process of policy development.

Politics of Policy Formulation in Pakistan

The local and international scholarship shows that there are different factors which contribute, inspire and affect the policy development process. In the same way, there are different factors which play important role in the policy making process of Pakistan. The dynamics and the relationship of different factors of this process initiate politics in policy making of Pakistan. The important factors or aspects which influence the policy development of Pakistan are skills and expertise of policy makers, knowledge of actors involved in this policy development process, legal framework of the country like constitution, specific events includes social, political, cultural, calamities and natural disasters, economic structure and conditions of the country, religious context of the state, interest groups and institutional sway (Torres, 1989). The institutional aspect includes bureaucracy, military and political parties of Pakistan. These institutions have strong impact on policy making in the context of Pakistan due to unique history of the country. The below mentioned details explain and explicate the influence of these institutions on the policy process of Pakistan.

Bureaucracy

Pakistan has inherited the British bureaucratic structure at the time of independence from British empire (Chaudry, 2011). The civil servants were trained and groomed by British system as they had strong and professional bureaucratic network in Sub-continent for maintaining their control in the region (Kamran, 2008). The bureaucratic structure was established on the basis of Max Weber's principles of bureaucracy. There was clear hierarchical structure, impartiality, career progression and handsome perks and privileges in bureaucracy which helped to deliver services efficiently to general public. Although, there were few Muslim officers in Indian Superior Services but they had expertise and skills to run the affairs of state efficiently due to rigorous training and development (Chaudry, 2011). Pakistan had started its journey after independence with abundant issues and there was scarcity of resources especially human resource. The small number of bureaucrats had handled the pile of problems efficiently at the time of independence due to their grooming and development. The proficient and skillful contribution of bureaucracy in the helm of affairs since the inception of state had strengthened its position in the power structure of Pakistan (Jeffrey, 1994). Though it was realized and reminded by Quiad-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah in his only visit to Staff College in June 1948 that the bureaucratic officials were the servants of the general public (Chaudry, 2011) but later on, the dynamics and political structure of Pakistan made bureaucracy the masters of people of Pakistan. Theoretically, bureaucrats are the implementers of public policies whereas political representors are developers of policies for general public. The advanced democracies are perfect example of this fact but in the context of Pakistan, bureaucrats are both developers and implementers of public policy due to their skills, knowledge and expertise as compare to political representors (Javaid, 2010). Political elite of Pakistan always depends on bureaucracy for running the

affairs of state due to low skills and expertise level as compared to bureaucracy. It has one disadvantage also those Political elite has politicized bureaucracy for their personal interests and benefits which affect the performance of bureaucracy negatively. The different military regimes of Pakistan have also strengthened civil bureaucracy by relying on them for running the affairs of state smoothly. Consequently, it has made the position of bureaucracy unchallenged and unrestrained in the corridors of power even with low performance. Bureaucracy is a main tool of Public Administration for service delivery to general public. The politicization of bureaucracy by political elite and low compensation packages have demotivated bureaucracy in Pakistan which results in low performance and deteriorated service delivery to masses but still its position is strong and unopposed in the helm of affairs of state due to dependence on them for running the affairs of state.

Military

The second vital institution of Pakistan is military. It has the responsibility to protect the country and countrymen. The significance of military has increased manifold in the context of Pakistan due to geo-political and strategic position of the country in the region (Rizvi, 2000). Furthermore, the recurrent wars of Pakistan with its neighboring country India have elevated the position of military in the realm of affairs of state. Military has also ruled Pakistan in different periods after abrogating the democratic governments. The first dictatorship was started in 1958 after abrogating the constitution of Pakistan and General Ayub Khan became the first Field Marshall of the country. This dictatorship remained in the country till 1969. It had involved military directly into the policy development matters of the country. The government of Ayub Khan relied mainly on civil bureaucracy for running the affairs of state. It had created the civil-military partnership in the country and elevated the position of bureaucracy in the country. The second military regime was of General Zia-ul-Haq as civilian democratic government was dismissed in 1977. This military regime was lasted for almost eleven years till 1988. In this era, the major development in terms of state machinery was induction of military personnel in civil bureaucracy. It had involved military into governance of the country directly and enhanced the military's role and influence in the policy making process of Pakistan. The next military era was started in 1999 when General Pervaiz Musharraf sacked the democratic government and declared Martial Law. The military regime governed the country in that era and it had again involved military directly into the policy process of the country. The happening of 9/11 has changed the scenario and situation of the region as well as it has also changed the global scenario. The military's position in the policy process has further enhanced and strengthened with the passage of time due to changing geo-political dynamics of the region as well as fluctuating situation within the country after this powerful external event of 9/11.The military has cordial relations with civil bureaucracy since the inception of Pakistan against political setup of the country (Chaudry, 2011). The induction of military officials in civil bureaucracy as per British rules which later continued in Pakistan in Zia-ul-Haq regime has

further strengthened the civil-military ties. The bureaucracy has noteworthy impression on policy making of Pakistan and the genial civil-military bureaucratic relationship has boosted the direct and indirect influence of military in the policy development of the country. Furthermore, the internal and external security conditions of the country for recent past and weak civil institutional performance in current era of Pakistan have fortified the influence of military in the policy making of Pakistan.

Political Parties

Pakistan has a weak political system since its birth. She had inherited only one political party at the time of Partition which was Muslim League (Palombara & Weiner, 2015). It was a national movement which turned into a political party (Chaudry, 2011) and never been into government before partition in 1947. Thus, it did not have any experience of governing a state through government(Schlesinger, 1994). Later on, Muslim League formed government after partition but it was mainly relied on civil bureaucracy for running the affairs of state due to lack of experience in this regard which had weakened the position of political system and braced the bureaucracy in the country. Repeated Martial laws in the country had further weakened the position of political parties in the power structure of Pakistan due to discontinuity of political governments. On the other hand, the weak internal structure of political parties has also played substantial role in weakening their position in the political system of Pakistan. There is no democracy within the structure of political parties and these are groups of elites only instead of political institutions. The structure of political parties has promoted dynastic politics instead of true democracy. These political parties have created a network for protecting the interests of elites by gaining power through political process of the country. This objective has undermined the actual and real purpose of political parties. The genuine goal of political parties is to promote democracy and train real political actors for creating political environment in the country for representing and addressing the problems of general public. These political parties are institutions of democracy whereas in Pakistan these parties only protect the interests of political elites. It has weakened the position of political parties in the power structure of Pakistan. Therefore, the influence of political parties or political governments is limited in policy making process of the country due to their weak position. The low knowledge base, lack of experience and low level of skills and expertise of political elites have further made their position weakened in the policy making process of Pakistan. Political governments of Pakistan in every era mainly rely on bureaucracy for policy making due to their expertise, skills and knowledge base in which political elite is lacking. It has further strengthened the position of bureaucracy in policy process of the country.

Conclusion

Pakistan is an elitist state which is ruled and controlled by the elites of the society (Husain, 2000). Anatol Lieven has considered Pakistan a hard country (Lieven, 2011). In his famous book, Pakistan: A Hard Country, he states that there is an elite capture in Pakistan in terms of its resources, processes and systems. Elites are

the rulers of this country and they influence the system of the country for their personal benefits and gains. Likewise, policy process is also captured by the elites of the society. Policy development of Pakistan is based on the interests of elites of the country. Public policies are initiated and formulated according to the wishes of the masters of this country whereas the problems and issues of common man are neglected in this environment. The resources are utilized as per their will instead of benefiting the masses of the country. Political parties are combination and association of elites and powerful people of the country for fulfilling their own goals and objectives (Chadda, 2000). The true objective of a political system is not yet established and achieved in our society. Therefore, the political awareness is less among the large section of society of Pakistan and this factor is exploited by the political parties for their power gains in the power structure of the country. Equally, bureaucracy has also made itself an elite of the society and they keep themselves distant from general public (Sayeed, 1967). They are become the masters of the masses instead of servants. Bureaucracy of Pakistan has been politicized by the political elites of the country for their own comforts and benefits. It has contributed in the worsening performance of this institution of bureaucracy but still it has strong influence in the policy process of the country due to the reliance of political elites on them for policy making. On the other hand military has also noticeable and significant influence on the structure of the country. The strengthened position of military in the policy development is due to the repeated martial laws and military regimes in the country. Second, the geopolitical and geostrategic position of Pakistan in the region has further enhanced the influence of military in the policy development of Pakistan. The low performance of political democratic governments of Pakistan has also provided space to military for influencing the policy process of the country. Thus, it has been established and ascertained that the troika of these three institutions is mainly involved in the policy making of Pakistan. The relationship and coordination of these three institutions start politics in the policy making of Pakistan. Policies are mostly devised according to the aspirations and wants of the elites of these mentioned institutions instead of general public who is main stakeholder and beneficiary of this policy process. Consequently, the problems and issues of common man are unresolved due to the avoidance of miseries of general public. Although, there are numerous well developed and well documented policies in Pakistan but the masses are suffering and governance of the country is deteriorating day by day due to this politics of policy making in Pakistan.

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Theoretical Framework of Factors influence the Policy Making in Pakistan
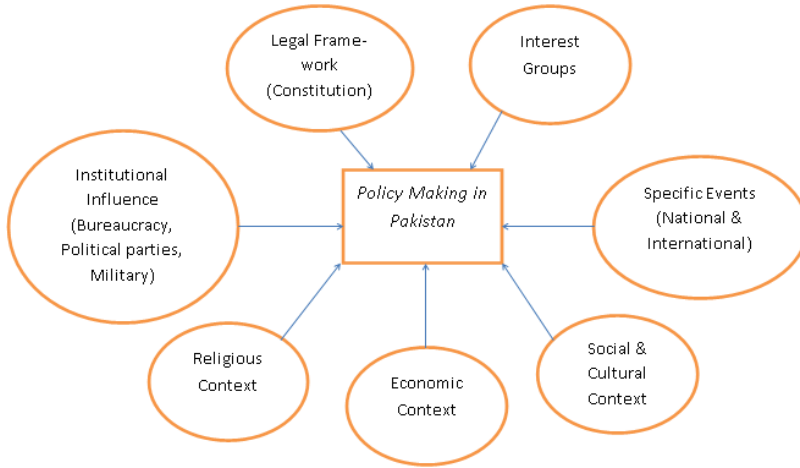

Figure 1

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