
EXPLORING THE FACTORS OF ELITE-POLITICS AND ITS IMPACT ON FOREIGN POLICY OF PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this paper is to analyze the impact of elite-politics on the making of a foreign policy of Pakistan. Throughout history, elite-politics has influenced the process of decision-making in the country. The paper argues that the elite-politics uses ideology, security, dilemma weakness of democratic institutions, national identity, language, and culture to form a justification for exercising huge political power. Elite politics also justify the legitimacy and their dominance over domestic affairs by identifying the ingredients of reasoning. In this way it influences the process of foreign policy making and shape the foreign policy. In addition the paper investigates the impact of religionization of politics on the relations of the country with its neighbor countries.

Keywords: Power Elite, Ideology, National Identity, Security, Dilema, Foreign Policy and Ethnicity.

INTRODUCTION

In international politics state needs to demonstrate its ability to utilize tangible and intangible resources in a way as to influence the outcome of international events for achieving national interests. Foreign policy of state also reflects the internal and external environment. Thus internal factors including nationalism, language, social power structure, leadership, ideology and public opinion can become sources of strength for foreign policy but mishandling of these factors can pose a serious threat to national interests. Thus, it is the national interest of the state which actually determines its foreign policy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Isphanai M.A.H. (1964) Pakistan foreign Policy (1947-1964): The author has given detailed background for the creation of Pakistan. This article also explains Two Nation Theory. The author describes that Muslims faced economic, social and political problems in Sub-continent. The author highlights the role of Dr.Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Liaquat Ali Khan in protecting the rights of Muslims.

Group study published in Pakistan Horizon (1956) discussed fundamentals of Pakistan's foreign policy. Group study has described the

factors of Pakistan's foreign policy including size and geography of the country. The study argued that geographically Pakistan was divided in two wings East and West Pakistan. The study further discusses the security issues as one of the important challenges Pakistan faced at that time.

Delvoie, Louis, A. (1996) *the Islamization of Pakistan's Foreign Policy*: The author has brought account of information about the vision of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He quoted speech of 11th August 1947. In article he also described the role of Liaquat Ali Khan. It further discusses the process of making Islamization in Pakistan. The President Ayub Khan established advisory council of Islamic ideology in 1962. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto banned the consumption of alcohol in early 1970. General Zia-ul-Haq promulgated the Hudood Ordinances in 1979. As a result, Pakistan's foreign policy was affected by the use of religion in politics.

Rizvi Hassan Askari (1983) *Pakistan: Ideology and Foreign Policy*. The author has given enough evidence that Pakistan's foreign policy makers have always tried to blend Islamic ideology with foreign policy of the country. The writer concluded that Ideological pursuit of Pakistan has created so many external and internal pros and cons for Pakistan.

Kennedy Charles H. (1991) *the Politics of Ethnicity in Sindh*: The author of the article has revealed the intensity of ethnic politics in Sindh. He argues in his research article that the aim of ethnic competition was to control the power through induction in civil and military bureaucracy of Pakistan.

PAKISTAN'S SECURITY DILEMMA

Since its independence, Pakistan has had to contend with a reality of bigger and hostile neighbor. In order to survive in harsh security environment, Pakistan was in search of security (Shahi, 1988). Thus in the initial phase of foreign policy it was dominated by principles of security and protection of territorial integrity. In the beginning Pakistan faced lot of issues including economic, political, constitutional, administrative, military and refugee's problem (Fukuyama & Rand, 1980). Thus, Pakistan had to face two biggest challenges. The first challenge was to establish Government and various institutions including foreign policy department. The second challenge was to establish friendly relations with other states. These challenges were not properly responded due to political dominancy of the power elites. Political and economic instability further created opportunity for this elite class to exercise huge power for their own benefits.

These challenges further multiplied. Political instability, lack of leadership; military coups, weak economy, and impact of migration were major problems which were not addressed by political elites in effective manner. The first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan sought the political control of Pakistan. After Jinnah's death Liaquat Ali Khan exercised

authority and power and tried to fill in the space in politics. Liaquat Ali Khan chose to opt for joining Western block. Under his rule, relations with neighbors were far from friendly. He was murdered due to a political conspiracy in 1952 and his death remained mystery in political history of Pakistan (Ziring, 2003).

The autocratic rule of West Pakistan's elite had created sense of deprivation in the East Pakistan. This created trust deficit between two wings and gave opportunity to foreign powers to interfere in internal situation of Pakistan. Eventually, East Pakistan became separated from West Pakistan in 1971. It took time to revive the domestic conditions but Pakistan faced the phases of convergence and divergence of interests and changed policy for economic support from other countries particularly United States. Thus foreign policy was influenced by the domestic affairs and political conditions of the country. In addition, foreign policy was dominated by security requirements of Pakistan. Overemphasis on security emerged as one of the key techniques of the elite-politics (Burke & Ziring, 1990).

RELIGIONISATION OF POLITICS

Since its inception in 1947 Pakistan faced inconsistent political process. Governments were toppled and parties' were formed overnight. The lust for power was a factor which motivated the rulers. This was a peculiar nature of few elites who dominated all institutions of the government. A game of musical chair was performed during the entire period of 1947-1971 (Waseem, 2002).

It's axiomatic that a country's survival as political entity is its supreme interests; continued physical existence of its territorial integrity, political system, institutions, spiritual and moral values, ideas and cultural experiences. Pakistan no doubt, was created in the name of Islam; however, the purpose was not to create a theocratic state but to safeguard the political, cultural and economic rights of Muslims. Once Pakistan was established, the rights of even non-Muslims were to be protected and they were to be considered as equal citizens of the state.

The religionisation of politics could not be avoided. Religion was used as an instrument of capturing, perpetuating and legitimizing power. For instance, under the Zia regime (1977-88) religion was used for political purpose. The regime tried to legitimate power by unconstitutional means needed a reason to legitimate his rule (S. M. H. Shah, 1996).

Zia's Islamic measures aggravated the existing polarization in society. Regime extended full patronage to sectarian development.

DELAY IN CONSTITUTION MAKING

The partition of Indian sub-continent created two independent states of India and Pakistan out of British India. In order to run new country, the

Government of India Act 1935 became law of land. With certain modification, it became the interim constitution of Pakistan. Constitution-making has been a lengthy process in the country. The interim constitution was replaced only in 1956 by a new constitution of 1956. General Ayub Khan imposed Martial Law in 1958 and he gave new constitution to the nation. However, another Martial Law was imposed in 1969 by Yahya Khan and country worked under Legal Frame Work Order (LFO) in 1970. In 1971 East Pakistan was separated and Bangladesh was created on 16th December 1971 (Choudhury, 1969; H. Khan, 2005).

The West Pakistan came to be ruled under interim constitution of 1972 till permanent constitution was promulgated in 1973. Martial Law was again imposed by General Zia-ul-Haq in 1977.

INTERNAL CHALLENGES

One of the internal challenges Pakistan faced was elite-politics. The elites adopted various techniques to dominate power. For instance, since the independence, the political and social institutions were not fully developed. Thus, civil and military elites were able to occupy the space and became most powerful segment of society (Alavi, 1991; Subrahmanyam, 1974).

In addition, internal weakness became one of the serious problems faced by Pakistan. After independence, regionalism and provincialism posed threat to Pakistan's security. Thus, the power elites justified their intervention in politics. Securing integrity of the country and protecting from the external threats justified the role of power elites in the decision-making process (A. Khan, 2005; Rahman, 2002).

EXTERNAL CHALLENGES

External challenges to the country also created need for the power elite's intervention in the politics of Pakistan. The power elites believed that they are capable of responding any aggression by enemy country and they proved that they can defend the territories of Pakistan. The civil and military elites strongly believed that lack of integration is solely because of poorly managed public opinion which was sharply divided on the basis of culture, ethnicity and regionalism. Power-elites also believe that India which never recognized Pakistan's independence and wanted to undo partition of 1947 and Kashmir problem was not resolved yet, India controlled Kashmir militarily and posing a persistent threat to the security of Pakistan (Rahman, 1995).

Thus, civil-military elite considered that political institutions are so weak and vulnerable that they could not build effective deterrence to India's aggression. The second external threat is perceived from Afghanistan that Afghan's government did not accept the Durand line as a border between

Afghanistan and Pakistan which was drawn by British in 1896 through agreement. India's threat to Pakistan's existence has been a permanent factor according to the power elites; therefore, these threat perceptions form strong justification for role of power elites in politics (Rizvi, 1991).

THE POWER ELITES DOMINANCE ON FOREIGN POLICY

The power elite has used security situation as a powerful technique for intervention in the power politics of Pakistan (Goswami). This was a major reason that Pakistan's foreign policy revolves around the security issues. Foreign policy always accommodated the inputs of power-elite and decisions were made to secure the well defined interests of Pakistan in the region and in the World.

It can be argued that Pakistan's foreign policy is focused on the security and territorial integrity since the independence. The joining of the Western block was decision and choice of the power-elite of Pakistan. (Ali, 2008). This approach helped Pakistan to survive in the security environment marked by active conflict on the issue of Kashmir.

CONCLUSION

The power elites of Pakistan have always remained in power. External and internal security situations have justified their intervention in power politics in the country.

According to various researchers, the economy of the country remained weak because of the elite's control and interventions. The natural resources have not been properly distributed among the provinces and communities. Thus, the polarization between classes is becoming wider; poverty in the country has been increasing due to the exploiting resources by the power elites (Easterly, 2001; Siddiq, 2017).

It has been argued that due to low level of public participation in the process, the foreign policy has not been very effective in protecting national interests. Further, the foreign policy is heavily dominated by security concerns, thus economic and social objectives are received less attention because of elite politics. As a result, democracy has not worked as per aspirations of common masses of the country.

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