

Empowering Pakistan: The Role of Democratic Development in Achieving Stability and Prosperity

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Article Information	Abstract
Received: Dec 16, 2024 Revised: Dec 15, 2025 Accepted: Dec 31, 2025	<p>The democratic process has been associated with Pakistan to some degree, contributing to stability and prosperity. It is concerned with political revolution, human rights, a responsive government, and pro-people socio-economic policies. This research paper will argue and explain the significance of democratic development in the realization of political stability, civil liberties, economic growth and peace in a heterogenous and in most cases polarized society like Pakistan. It is interesting to note that the paper investigates the reasons why democracies consolidate, such as military interventions, poor institutional structures, and social/economic inequalities.</p> <p>It is a qualitative study which involves both primary and secondary data. Interviews with political analysts, policymakers, policymakers and Pakistani scholars could be used to gather primary information. The secondary data will include academic, policy, historical, and reports on governance problems of democratic transitions and challenges in Pakistan.</p> <p>Such findings indicate that the promotion of democracy results in the engagement of the strengthening of the national cohesion, where the practice results in transparency, good legitimacy, and involvement of the citizens. It makes extremism unappealing, advances good governance, and results in sustainable economic and social reforms. Nonetheless, resilience in democracy can be attained by building stronger institutions, ensuring political inclusion, and socio-economic equality. The study finds that democratic governance seems to be the puzzle to the long-term peace, prosperity, and political stability of Pakistan.</p>
Keywords <i>Political stability,</i> <i>economic growth,</i> <i>democratic development,</i> <i>governance,</i> <i>human rights</i>	

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The dynamic process is democratic development, which preconditions the changes of political, social and economic life of the country. The outcomes of learning in Pakistan can be conveyed as the unbelievable one, considering the fact that this country has been going through the military and democratic governance over the years (Khwaja, 2020). However, during the past decade and a half since the foundation of the nation back in 1947, Pakistan has experienced multiple instances of political unrest, the fact of more than two military coups, and which have muffled the tendencies toward democracy (Akbar & Bhatti, 2018). The poor political institutions have also contributed by the overthrow of democracy in favour of authoritarianism and the reversion to democracy, thus compromising their output hence further weakening the stability of the political system in addition to the lack of confidence of people in political system. Pakistan is one such state where democratic development process has influenced political stability, economic development and growth, social justice and protection of human rights negatively (Rizvi, 2000). Democratic type of government, the government by the people and of the people, in its turn, is also characterized by the list of perks in the peaceful transfer of the power to it, responsibility in the course of the ruling, and forms of non-stakeholder in the decision-making (Hasan, 2017). The context of the issue where democracy has not taken root in Pakistan in this paper will be addressed considering the peculiarities of the global setting environment.

1.2 Research Gap

The relation of democracy and development has taken the centre stage of the political science and governance studies during the last decades. This has been attested by many foreign scholars that democratic governments have a great contribution in promoting stability, safeguarding human rights and leading to economic development. In some cases, democracy is seen as an avenue towards institutional accountability, social equality and inclusive development as it applies to developing countries. However, with regards to Pakistan, the academic interests have mainly been on the military dictatorship and democratic regimes and the reconstructions of the electoral sphere and the civil-military tensions. The spheres of democratic progress, therefore, have been considered a reactive political process instead of a conclusive step towards national happiness.

Despite the enlightening literature regarding the discontinuities of democracy and the imposed legacy of dictatorship in Pakistan, however, a gap in the literature is nowadays that encompasses the wholesome democratic growth as a tool to the eventual attainment of political stability as an instrument to the realization of economic growth and peace. The bulk of the literature is a one-off study of political events, elections or criticism of weak democratic transitions as opposed to a systematic study of integrative impacts of democratic development across the levels, political, social and economic in the unique environment of Pakistan characterized by ethnic diversity, weak institutions and economic inequality.

Also, the recent democratic practices in Pakistan (e.g., the post-2008 transition, the 18th Amendment, judicial activism, and decentralization under the 7th NFC Award) have not been analysed in terms of long-term effectiveness, as far as improving the quality of governance, citizen participation, and sustainable development is concerned. Most of the past research work fails to take into consideration the recent statistics, geopolitical developments and role played by civil society in ensuring that the democratic process is consolidated.

It is precisely this gap that the current paper will fill by exploring the democratic development process outside the evaluation of a governance model and instead from the point of perspective of a strategic approach to the national transformation process. It will examine how democratic values can be applied to empower institutions, fight extremism, ensure inclusiveness to minorities, and create

economic justice. This paper will offer a multidimensional and up to date answer to the democratic possibility of empowering Pakistan, which will combine both quantitative and qualitative data, and references to the history of democracy. In this, it does not only offer a more mature academic argumentation but also gives some policy guidance on how to capitalise on democratic development in order to make Pakistan a stable, prosperous and inclusive nation with a secure future.

1.3. Research Questions

What is the effect of democratic development in the politics of political stability, peace and governance of the changing political system in Pakistan?

How effective in protecting human rights and inclusive socio-economic development in a multicultural society such as Pakistan are democratic institutions and processes?

Which are the major issues to democratic consolidation in Pakistan and which policy-oriented approaches are relevant to enhance democratic resilience and sustainable development?

1.4. Aims and Objectives

Discover how democratic development affects the political stability and peace in Pakistan.

Evaluate the contribution of democratic operations to the protection of human rights and the inclusive development.

Decipher the contribution of democracy to economic growth and sustainable development.

Trace some of the major obstacles to democratic consolidation in Pakistan and propose practical solutions.

2. Research Methodology

The current study involves a qualitative research design to explore the connection between the democratic development and the aspect of offering political stability, safeguarding human rights, economic well-being, and peace in Pakistan. Primary data will be collected using purposive sampling where semi-structured interviews are conducted with the experts, political analysts, scholars, human right activists, and policymakers. Such interviews would provide insights to the issue of the levels of democracy in Pakistan, obstacles to democracy, and the possibility of developing democracy to achieve stability and growth. The secondary data will include a synopsis of the scholarly sources, the executive reports, and the policy reports and grey literature on the democratic process, aspects of governance, and socio-political alterations in Pakistan. The special focus will be on exploring the experience of the democratic change, civil-military interrelation, the development of the electoral reform, and the signs of governance.

It will be discussed in a historical and thematic overview to establish trends and patterns and challenges on the way to the establishment of the democracy in Pakistan. Based on the synergistic engagements of the expert opinion, empirical and historical evidence, the study seeks to build a comprehensive idea of the different strategies that can be employed to facilitate national stability and socio-economic growth by indulging in democratic practices.

3. Purpose of the Study

The following research question is primarily used in this study: In the country of Pakistan, under the existing circumstances, how democratic development can help to produce stability, safeguard human rights, ensure growth, accountability, and generate peace? In this paper, the influential factors that

threaten democratization in Pakistan are political instability or corruption, social stratification, economic disparities, and the deteriorated institutions. This research will also give recommendations on how to improve and enhance institutions and functions that promote democracy in Pakistan where the society should move towards an inclusive and effective democracy. Better awareness of the forces influencing the growth of democracy would contribute to writing an article that provokes the discussion and inform individuals about democracy and how it has affected the future of Pakistan.

4. Structure of the Paper

The problems that democratization in Pakistan raises are addressed in various sections of this paper to ensure that the issue at hand is being addressed in a systematic and holistic way. The first one provides the background of the matter, and the setting and goes directly to the strength of the research questions. In the following paragraph, the paper will address the threats to democracy in Pakistan, and these could be divided into political, socio-economic, and institutional threats of democracy. The third part is the evaluation of the impacts of the democratic development in the terms of stability, human rights, economy and peace. The fourth section provides recommendations on how to empower the democratic institutions and inclusiveness. A short summary of the conclusions is also given at the end of the paper where the significance of democracy to Pakistan is reiterated.

5. Pakistan Democratic Development Threats.

5.1 Managing Political Hurdles

Pakistan is a newborn nation. She has been a witness of numerous political upheaval and political shifts in government and dictatorial regimes in the military. The military seized power and blocked the democracy several decades and decades; the actual manipulation of the election could not be determined as cynical enough. The interactional democracy has endangered the existence of the stable democratic culture, the dilution of the political institutions and the prolonged impaired deficiency of the government. This particular political factor can exacerbate the politics of the nation since different parties are built on an ethnic and regional level (Murtaza, 2021). However, the emergence of new political elites representing families of political influence, and the fact that the military continues to contribute significantly to the political life of the country are also among the most crucial issues that continue to burden democracy in the country (Ahmed, 2019; Naseem and Ahmad, 2022). This has proved to be a lethal combination to the democratic processes of most of the countries with poor political conditions, which have not allowed the democratic bodies to play productively, and in most instances, could not meet the demands of the citizens (Freedom House, 2023; UNDP, 2018).

Among the political instabilities that have plagued the political situation in Pakistan are political instability, dictatorships and military coup. The below figure, which is aesthetically presented as timeline of Pakistan, displays the political history of Pakistan, the periods of stability and regime change are depicted as two opposite periods between 1947 and 2023.

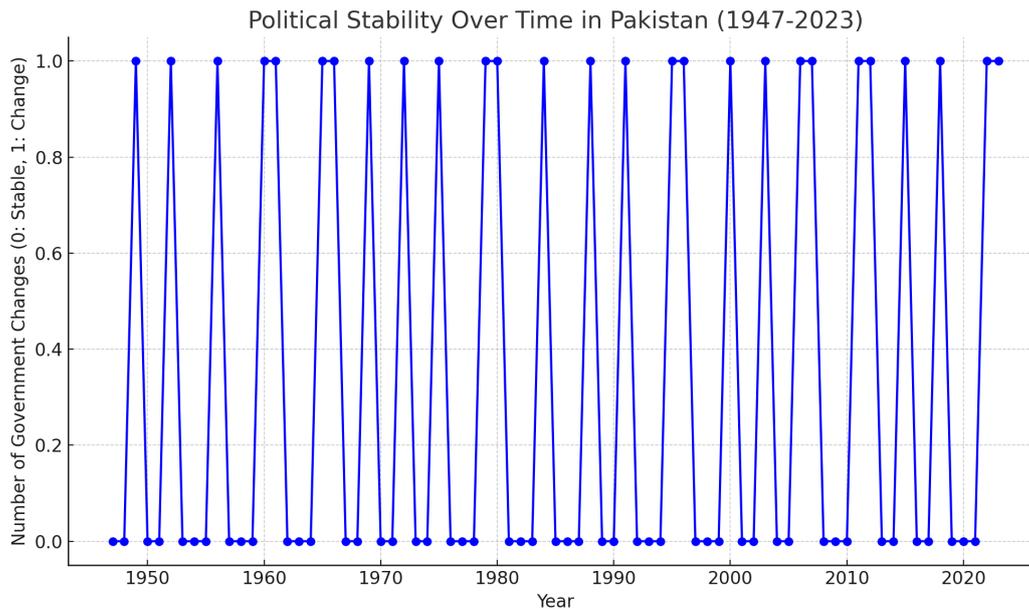


Figure 1. Source: Political Stability Timeline –IDEA database.

The history of Political Stability in Pakistan (1947-2023). This chart shows the difficulty of survival time of a democratic system. It shows that the only way that democracy can continue to exist is through a longer and stable democracy, which in itself, guarantees political stability.

5.2 The Response of Social Inequities

Due to ethnic and religious diversifications, it is even harder to have a democracy in Pakistan. This comprises of Punjabis, Sindhis, Pathans, Baloch and Mohajirs; other ethnicities have large minorities in the country. The country is a multi cultural one and various religions are practised in the country- Christians, Hindus and Amirids. This is racial and geographical diversity, which should be the primary strength of the Party, yet over the years, it has become the subject of conflict. These ethnic and sectarian divisions have taken flight into violence at other times, compromising social contract and faith in democracy by people. It diminishes/converts the representative nature of the governance; the ostracizing and social exclusion of minorities and poor people forms of people make them remain out of the democratic process. These social questions should be responded to in order to guarantee proper kind of inclusion and equity in the Pakistani democratic process.

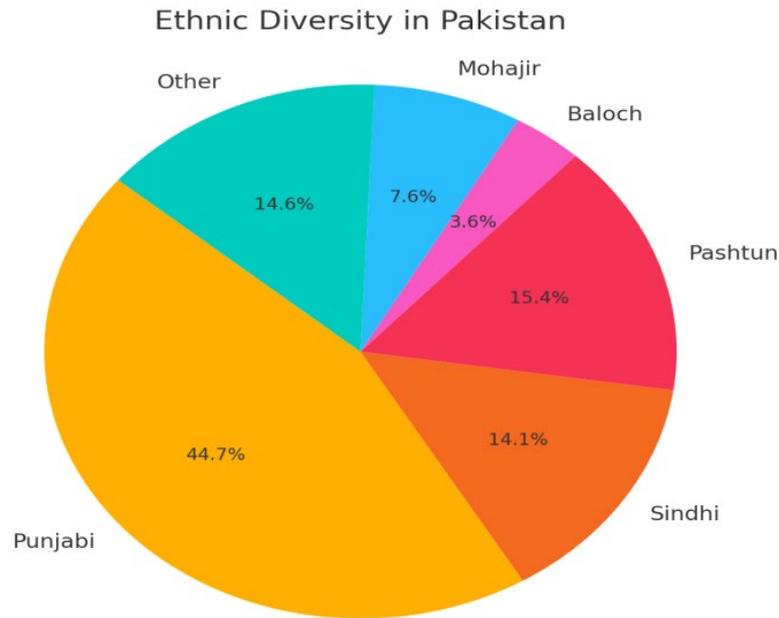


Figure 2: Ethnic and Religious Diversity- Human Rights Commission data. One of the issues that democracy has to confront in Pakistan is Ethnic and Religious diversity that must serve the ethnic needs of Punjabis, Sindhis, Pathans, Baloch, and Mohajirs.

5.3 Economic Constraint Overcoming

Economic Factor: In this paper, the four primary factors which influence development of democracy in Pakistan were identified; one of them being Political development and economic factors. All these have made the history of this more complicated, as the corruption that has rocked through the business and the political systems has made people less trusting of the democratic institutions. The total transparency of the economic management and the extensive permeation of favouritism and patronage only aggravate this issue to unrealistic levels (Mahmood, 2016, p. 251). The second problem is the economic situation and the increase of poverty that predisposes masses of the population to unwillingness to participate politically and change the society. The overall outcome is that the utilization of resources is not efficient creating a situation of disillusionment by the people, which in turn creates unstable situations. It is not democracy that only benefits in overcoming these economic challenges but sustainable growth and economic development as well.

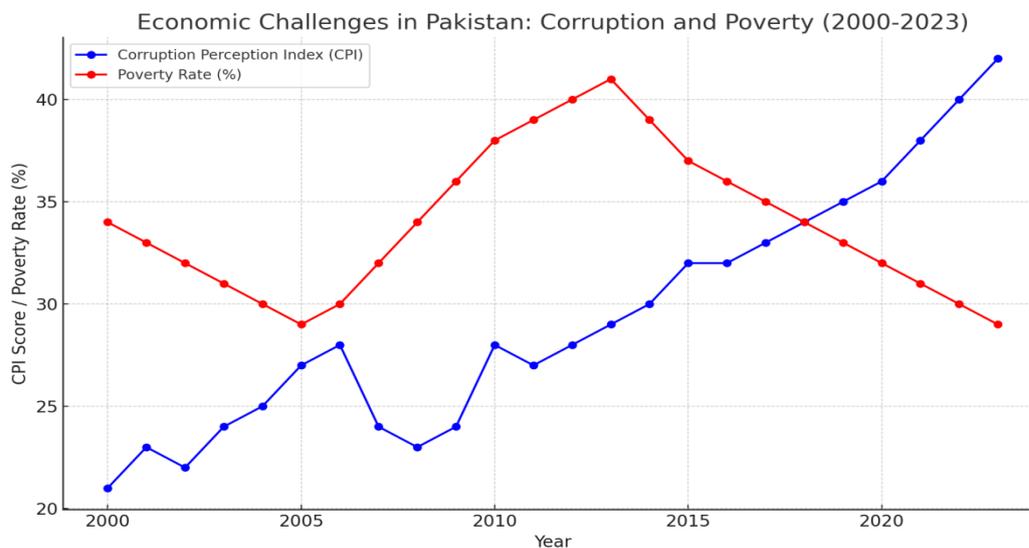


Figure 3: CPI and Poverty rate- Transparency International. Corruption Perception Index (CPI) and Poverty rate in Pakistan (2000-2023). This graph reveals the trend of corruption rates and poverty rates per year which constitute the economic issues that do not guarantee effective democratic government and self-sacrificing and consistent development.

5.4 Dealing with Institutional Weaknesses

The other issue that is faced by the democratic evolution is the organizational weakness of the business-like democracy in Pakistan. The laws, the electoral machineries and the police are partisan, and its political independence is extremely low. They are rather conditioned, however, to be quite appendages of the administrative state but not to be relatively independent institutions capable of uplifting the values of good governance and relieving the cynicism of the people with the democratic institutions, in particular. The second limitation of the democratic consolidation and stabilization is lack of civic engagement and political participation because the majority of the provinces have a literacy level of 40 and less where the people have access to the internet, little knowledge and general apathy. More to the point, the institutions should be unified, and people should be made to participate in the democratic process actively in a manner so that there can be any new democracy in Pakistan.

Further, the political systems and demonstrations of the democratic processes of the country have also been scaled down to bare minimum, as nobody believes in anything on any of the levels.

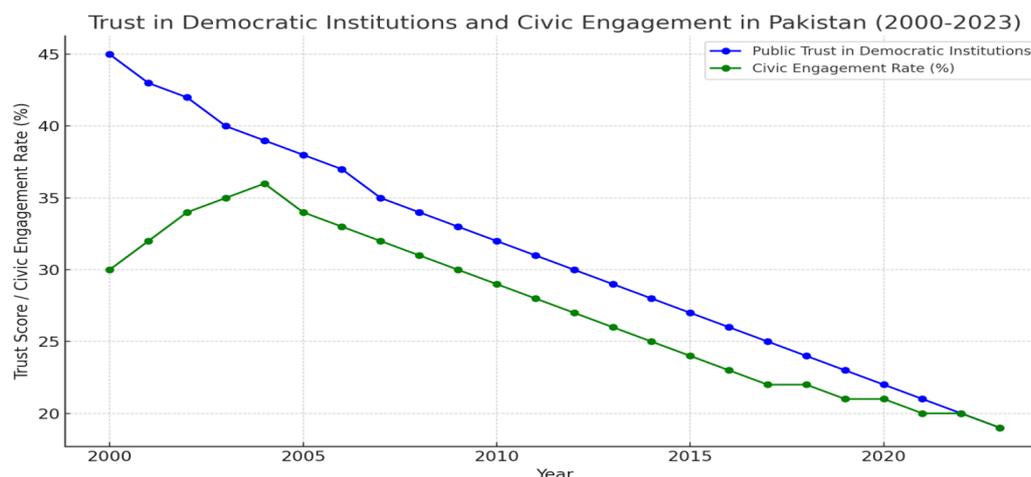


Figure 4: Other reports that the data is compiled by are that of Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT), (2000-2023) level of Public Trust in Democratic Institutions and Level of Civic Engagement: The negative trend over the years that are reported under include that there should be some sort of a reform to bring some form of energy in these ineffective systems in order to bring a fighting force of ordinary people who want some change brought about through democracy.

6. Summary of the Problems

In conclusion, it is possible to say that Pakistan is vulnerable to numerous threats, which are rather interdependent and include political uncertainty, social fragmentation, economic inequalities, and low institutional foundation. Such issues can merely be addressed by a holistic solution that may include the reformation of political and governance system, addressing social cohesion, enhancing financial governance and empowering the democracies. To advance on the path of sustainable democracy, Pakistan must get over these forces that have a great impact on society.

7. Evaluation of the Impact of Democratic Development

7.1 Slideway of Democracy to Political Resilience

Democratic development is one of the processes required, and it is to constitute and solidify institutionalism, which assists in maintaining the stability of state by heralding the free-flowing power via electoral processes. Whereas autocracies have been cited to have experienced violent upheavals during the process of handing power, democracies have come up with measures that reduce the strains of handing power. This is similar to the recent election processes in Pakistan though not flawless as it has not yet demonstrated any substantial change in democracy with regard to power transfers through civilian government. Democratic governance can be considered as a form of offering a legitimate political power that signifies the desire of people and as such enhances trust with the state. The legitimacy is also required as it is vital in the provision of a cohesion in the country and the avoidance of anarchy as far as legitimate governance means the representative government of the people and hence holds the people accountable.

7.2. Empowering Human Rights and Strengthening Social Equity

Democracy is required as well since democracy is a form of ensuring civil liberties and the equality of rights to vote. Democracy helps in the achievement of social justice and human rights. Along with the free media and the civil society, just as it is the case with the other democratic states, they are highly appreciated within the context of the government power check in the countries and the protection of the liberties of individuals. The process of democratization of Pakistan has been accompanied by the general awareness of human rights and activism by the civil society organization CSOs as the activists to maintain vigilance upon the minority, women, and other minority groups. Nevertheless, they are not alone, and we find them in the implementation and maintenance processes of human rights acts most of the times. It will also promote discourses and bargaining in a manner that individuals, particularly those who are socially marginalized individuals in the decision-making will not miss.

7.3 Economical Impact of Democratic Governments

This is because democracy provides economic stability and development because it culminates in transparency establishment, mobilized accountability, as well as participatory policy making. Democratic governments will possess much greater policy which is much better suited to the needs and wants of the people and much less tend to shortsighted exploitation of the environment. The reforms of finances in Pakistan have been accompanied by democracy in some respects which include liberalization, privatization and creation of market-oriented government. Nor is the government, which is Democracy, an obstacle to the volatility (we are as secure as we can be against any one of the methods of losing us by a coup), or will fail to bring in the funds, both foreign and internal, which are the blood of growth. The predictable democratic state is nonetheless the most appropriate countermeasure to the ills of poverty, inequality and unemployment that can be achieved by enacting inclusive growth policies and improvement of social well-being. As recalled, these policies are a blend of strategies which imply some social spending on education, health, establishing jobs and other projects that strive to equal the population groups that have been left behind in the game and thereby reduce the difference in incomes. Such systems are not as well-organized as well as the population has more opportunities of being engaged. Hence, the latter plans are less prone to represent such a need of the elite in comparison to the needs of the population as a whole. The view that democracy is a wisdom in decision making may result in policies on the economy tailored to reach developmental goals as opposed to demagogic rhetoric, the institutionalized economic policy as such will thus be at liberty to plot a proper, hegemonic and future equity in all classes in the society.

7.4 Nurturing Democratic Systems Accountability and Transparency

One of the principal democratic values is power sharing which facilitates economic stability and growth. Democracy guarantees transparency, responsibility and participatory in the decision-making process. Democratic governments stand high probabilities of promoting policies that meet the fantasies of the people and therefore sustainable development. The liberalization, privatization and neo-liberal neoliberal economic shocks are normally equated to the spurts of democracy in Pakistan. The two which constitute the foundation of any type of democracy are transparency and accountability. The checks are in accompaniment of the accountability mechanisms and the democratic power relations are decentralized. The task of all our institutions which we own especially in a democratic country like Pakistan is of unimaginable magnitude to strive to bring out Big Liars like we have done the same thing in this country. It provides the citizens a platform to talk and what drives the voters to desire change is the setting of a facet of an opportunity to win. Democracy I can think of any kind of reasons why democracy is such a good thing ... 'Transparency', Yes, especially because it makes them the harder to maintain within their corrupt course and it gives a material incentive in the direction of the administration and supply of public.

Transparency, accountability and mechanism of inclusive decision making enabled through the democratic vision of power sharing makes the economy stable and grows. The elected governments have higher chances of containing the policies which have high probabilities of sustaining the needs and aspirations of the people to sustainable development. Democratic surges in Pakistan are linked with the liberalization, privatization and economic reforms that are friendly to the markets. Transparency and accountability forms the basis of any form of democratic governance. The system of democracies includes decentralization of power and entrenched checks and accountability. A democratic state like Pakistan requires the Parliament, judiciary and the media to play a critical role during the process of bringing to light such people as we see in Pakistan and who are described as dishonest. They give citizens the voice and the desire of winning drives voters to want to vote so that something can be changed. Democracy is a great form of governance as there are numerous benefits connected to it. Transparency Yes, because this will make it harder to participate in what they are doing will guarantee better management and delivery of their services as well as give some additional credibility to the manner in which more democracy ruling societies are run.

7.5 The Contribution of Democracy towards the Achievement of Peace and Security

Lastly, the model of democracy can be regarded as a condition to the peace and safety of individuals as they have an opportunity to raise their voices and resolve conflicts through the assistance of the democratic process and the law. Politicization of opposition is quickly boiled down to extremism and even violence in dictatorship. Democracy on the contrary gives them the freedom to negotiate and co-exist with their utensils in harmony. The ethnic, religious and provincial wars are dissolvable thus providing all communities with means to govern the country like democracy in Pakistan. Despite the fact that the democratic regimes are supposed to generate trust towards the government and tolerate all the voices of the government, they are opposed to the extremist opinions that would not help to generate peace and security.

8. Strategies on Enhancing Foundations of Democracy

8.1 Development of Effective Democratic Institution

This research suggests that the judicial institutions play a major role in strengthening the democratic institutions in Pakistan since they are effective and independent. No secret is that the concept of judicial independence is strongly linked with the human rights, rule of law and accountability as far as the constitutional law is concerned. It would also require the election reforms that are highly important aspects (such as the enhancement of the voter registration systems, printing of the colourful electoral material, simplification of the electoral registration system and improvement of the electoral

management). On the same note, political stability and legitimate political mandate requires democracy and therefore free and fair elections.

8.2 Multicultural Inclusion

One of the policy concerns that elicit the necessity to provide more people with access to quality education is social and economic mobility. So, it is challenging considerable expansion and diversification to the Pakistani democracy and creating a more inclusive and progressive society. The reserved seats or affirmative action should be used to control the number of oppressed populations and minority in the political institutions. The first steps towards establishing liberal political environment should also include improving dialogue that brings about understanding between two or more groups. Weaknesses of civil society Empowerment is amplifying of the institutions of civil society and help them in their efforts to develop awareness and mobilization of the citizens and democratization of the society.

8.3 Economic Governance in Reform to sustainable growth

To make sure that the economic policy represents democratic values and principles, the opportunity to make economic governance more transparent and accountable should be employed. This can be extended to the instances where we roll out the anti-corruption campaign, civil servants reform and engage politics and balance in the public financial management and the economic policies of pro-poor growth. It also must be interested in the sustainable development that the other policies are educational and healthcare, and the infrastructure, which is required by the sustainable long-term economic growth and stability.

8.4 Community Bonding and Unifying the Nation

Any form of social cohesion that Pakistan must achieve must be founded on such pillars, there must be end-link that makes the country to be established, and everybody must have the feeling that he/she belongs to this country. Such signs as wish of inter-faith dialogue, cultural interchange, and multi culturalism within the political structures are processes that will strengthen the cross-cultural sensitization. The more secured society, one whose tendencies towards violence are lower is also linked with democratization of the mechanisms involved in ensuring social integration.

9. Conclusion

This paper therefore attempts to ask questions concerning what lies at the heart of democracy that forms the cornerstone of the repertoire upon which Pakistan can be trained to progressively be guided toward such a future. This paper has firmly determined that democratization is one of the pertinent variables of defining political stability, human rights, economic growth, accountability, and peace. There are, however, many conditions and limitations of the transition of Pakistan into consolidated democracy that includes political polarization of the state, social conflict, economic imbalance, and the poor institutions. Such a reaction, in that case, ought to promote civic and pluralist type of democracy, restructure state institutions, enhance distribution of economies and bring a social bonding process. With this, Pakistan will strive to make the country more tolerant, prosperous and stable to all the citizens of the country. The findings of this study are important in highlighting the importance of democracy and associated institutions in Pakistan, and hence establishing democracy as the foundation within which development and interpersonal relationship in the country should be built.

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