

Public Perception regarding Weak Organizational Structure of Political Parties in Pakistan

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Headings

- [Introduction](#)
- [Statement. 2](#)
- [Statement. 3](#)
- [Statement. 4](#)
- [Statement 5](#)
- [References](#)

Abstract

The weak political organization of nearly all political parties is another contributing factor in political instability. No democratic culture prevails inside all political parties; all political parties, with the exception of very few, has been ruling by one family, and mostly are dominated by one family or person; their party of the election has been mostly blamed as selection and not an election. The scope of all parties has been limited to certain areas, religion and nationalities. As a result of weak organizations of political parties and dominant rule of the military do not allow any government to form a government alone; all political parties rely on other political parties to form government in centre as well as province.

Key Words: Public Perception, Organizational Structure, Political Parties, Pakistan, Politics.

Introduction

In democracies, the political parties playing a vital role to run the political system. The political parties are considered as a bridge between government and people. In the presence of political parties, the issues and political differences are decided in a democratic way, while in the absence of political parties, force is used to decide the differences. The national-level parties having their roots all over the country, and the members of the party adopt the same political agendas, so it creates unity among the units of a state its why in large countries, the parties are considering a symbol of integrity.

Political parties are the bridge between the government and the people. The political parties are essential for a healthy and strong political system. The group of people having the same mentality, the same ideas and the same interests when organized in a hierarchical structure with the aim to achieve power through the political process is called a political party. A well known American political scientist Antony Downs defines political parties as, "A political party is a team of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election" (Hofmeister, 2011). In democratic societies, citizens participated in a political process like expressing opinions on political issues and expressing personal like and dislike in leadership through casting their votes. Parties are the best parameter to judge the success and failure of the political system. In Pakistan, the political parties were weak and unorganized. In the formative phase, they have no strong roots in public due to the absence of general elections. The political parties were not given a chance by military governments to conduct elections and run the governments. The

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political parties in Pakistan have a weak organizational structure. Inner party democracy is not practised in the country. Most of the political parties are dominated by specific families. The post of party leadership reserves for the specific family members; thus, the leadership of the parties never comes through the democratic process.

In Pakistan, the political parties could not organize themselves in proper order. At the time of independence, there were a number of problems faced by the newly born country. The 69 members later 80 members Constituent Assembly was not enough to handle the situation. So to fulfil the need to run the country, bureaucracy got space to penetrate into politics. With the passage of time, the bureaucracy tightened its grip over politics. The entry of bureaucracy was followed by the military—the appointment of Ghulam Muhammad as GG laid down the foundation of undemocratic culture in Pakistan. Then Ghulam Muhammad introduced Gen. Ayub, Sikandar Mirza and Bogra as cabinet members. It was due to the weak organization of the political parties. The politics of the formative phase is evident that some small parties became tools in the hand of these undemocratic forces, which further weakened the political system. As per definition, the political parties are the reflection of public opinion, but the parties in Pakistan have no link with the people due to the absence of general elections. If we set aside the BD system elections, then the first general elections were held in the country in 1970. The political parties were given a chance to contact the public after 23 years since independence. Some political parties became the supporters of Ayub Khan during his military regime. Without the support of political parties, it was not possible for him to remain in power for such a long time. In the general elections, the then two major political parties adopted regional manifestos and participated in elections; as a result, the parties attracted the voters only in their concern regions, and the major parties failed to acquire seats in the other part of the country. Both the major parties failed to bring solidarity, harmony and integrity to the nation. During the Bhutto era, the country was heavily run with the help of civil servants instead of political workers and party members. After the implementation of the 1973 constitution, it was hoped that democracy would flourish, but ZA Bhutto adopted a dictatorial role in politics instead of democratic. Bhutto gave tough time to his political opponents, which are not the norms of a democratic society.

Another military ruler was supported by political parties. He once again used the political parties for the introduction of constitutional amendments like the 8th amendment and for the extension of the regime. The answer is clear the parties used by the dictators because of the lack of democratic norms and due to the absence of a strong organizational structure. A political party has a sense of democracy and a strong organizational structure never be used for the promotion of undemocratic norms in the country. One of the major reasons for the weak organizational structure is the absence of intraparty democracy in the political parties of Pakistan. The absence of inner-party democracy in the political parties caused the autocratic style of politics as the supreme seat is not available to the other leaders due to inheritance in political parties, so the desired leaders prefer political groups or factions of their own, which causes the emergence of a series of small parties and groups in the country. In the presence of strong and organized parties, the undemocratic forces have no chance to penetrate into politics.

A few families, for their monopoly over politics, have developed undemocratic values in the political parties of Pakistan. In the British Conservative Party, leadership is decided by the elected members of the Parliament, while in the British Labor Party, leadership is decided by-election in the National Executive Committee. The leadership in Pakistan is based on heredity.

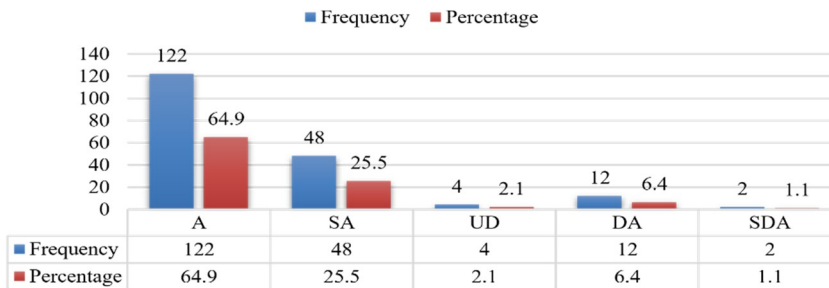
During the research, the following questionnaire was distributed among the respondents to know their views about the role of political parties in the political development of Pakistan.

Table I.

S. No	Statements
1	The political parties in Pakistan are family parties, and leadership come through inheritance and not by a democratic process in political parties of Pakistan.
2	The political inherited leadership in a political party is a great hurdle in strengthening overall democracy in Pakistan
3	The intraparty democracy will create a democratic culture in the country as well as minimize the personal monopoly over the politics
4	Due to different martial laws in Pakistan, most politicians in association with the military government adopted bureaucratic rather than democratic behaviour in politics
5	The immature behaviour and misuse of the power of political parties are responsible for weak democratic values in the country.

The outcome of the survey is discussed in the following lines.

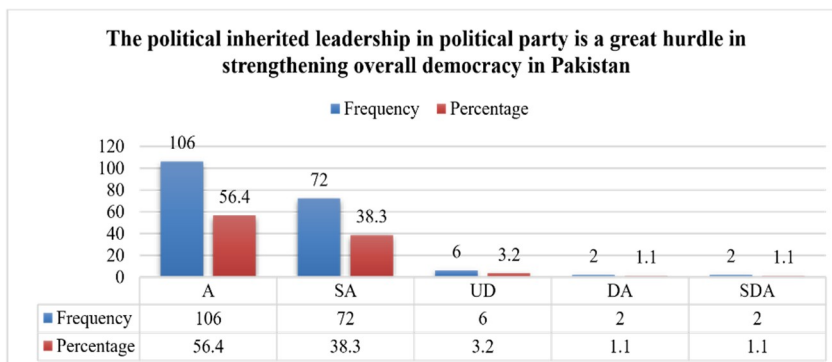
The Political Parties in Pakistan are Family Parties, and leadership Come through Inheritance and not by a Democratic Process in Political Parties of Pakistan



Graph 1:

In Pakistan, it is a serious issue of the political parties that even the major parties are not practising inner-party democracy inside their parties. Most of the parties are monopolized by some specific families in Pakistan. On the statement mentioned in the table, 64.9 % of respondents agreed, and 25.5% strongly agreed that most of the political parties are family parties; it is why the leadership in the country comes through legacies and not by a democratic process. Only 6.4% of the total respondents did not agree with the statement.

Statement. 2

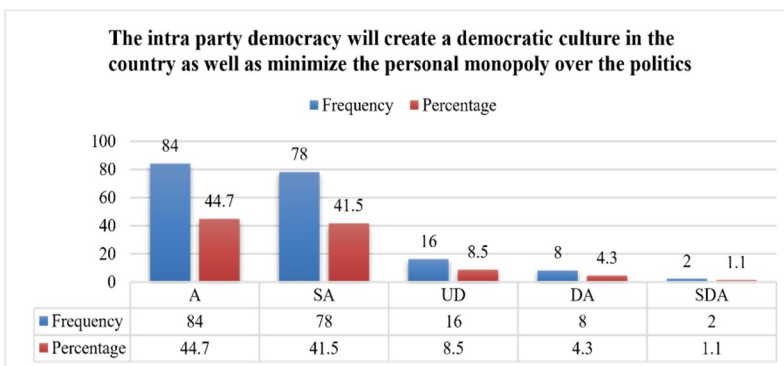


Graph 2:

The statement agrees and strongly agreed by the heavy majority, which is 56.3% and 38.3%, respectively. Only 2 % of the respondents remained disagreed with the statement.

According to the political legends, the lack of leadership is a hurdle in the way to strengthening democracy in a society. The country is facing the issue of a leadership just after independence. Even recently, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari became the Chairperson of the party on the wish of his mother after her death. In political and democratic societies, the leaders emerge through a gradual process from bottom to top. The quick rise to the position of leadership occurred in authoritarian or non-democratic societies. In the societies where personalized and non-democratic parties work, the leaders are not pass through the democratic procedure but nominated are appointed by the parties chiefs. In Pakistan, the leaders are the output of non-democratic parties, and most of them are unaware of democratic norms. However, they adopted the slogans that their party will work for strengthening democracy but personally adopts an authoritarian lifestyle and keep a distance from the public by adopting protocol culture. The cader of these leaders is not sincere to promote democratic culture in politics and society (Rizvi, 2013).

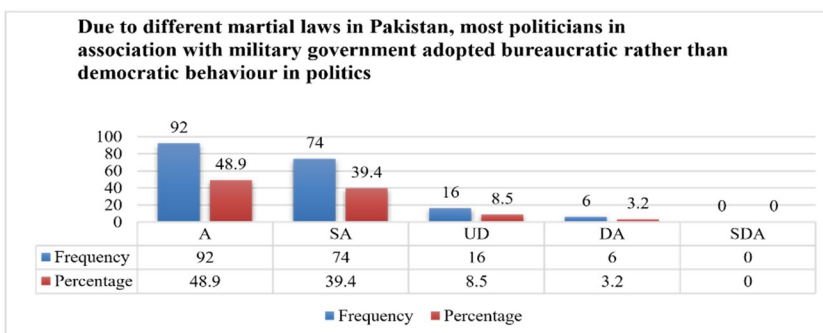
Statement. 3



Graph 3:

The statistics regarding the statement about intraparty democracy is calculated as mentioned in the table. 44.7 and 41.5 % of respondents agreed and strongly agreed, while 8.5 % left the statement undecided while only 4.3 % of the respondents opposed the statement.

Statement. 4

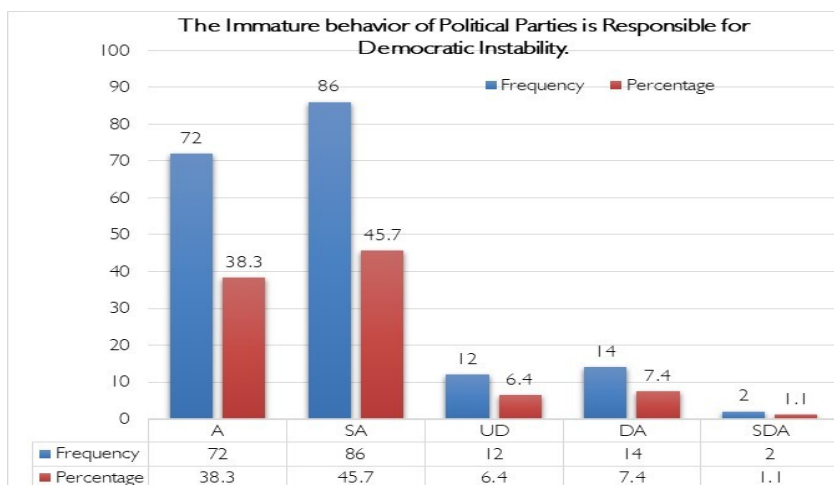


Graph 4:

In the political history of Pakistan, most of the politicians during their government adopted a bureaucratic behavior rather than democratic. The protocol culture in Pakistan creates a distance between the rule and ruled section, which is not suitable for democracies. The rulers adopted the way of dictating instead of consulting, which cause differences among the institutions. According to the concerned literature, the main cause of this complication is the frequent Marshal Laws. Authoritarian behaviour is the output of non-democratic societies (Dawn, 2019, 12, 03).

The statement is agreed and strongly agreed by 48.9% and 39.4%, respectively. This figure shows that near about all the respondents show their agreement with the statement. Only 3.2 % show their disagreement with the statement.

Statement 5



Graph 5.

The 38.3% respondents agreed, and 45.7 % respondents with the statement, while 7.4% disagreed. The 12% are recorded left the statement undecided.

The political parties with weak organizational structure and immature political culture provided space for non elected elements to interfere in the politics. Only strong and democratic political parties have the potential to prevent military and bureaucratic interference in politics (Khan, 2009). Democratic growth and continuity are possible in the presence of mature and strong political parties.

In Pakistan majority of the political parties are family-oriented parties. The parties are control and guides by some specific families. Even the major national-level political parties are following inherited politics inside the party. PPP is founded by Bhutto; after his death, the party is considered to be the property of the family. As Nusrat Bhutto, Benazir Bhutto, Asif Ali Zardari and Bilawal Bhutto used the party according to their own wish. Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz is the same example of the above statement as PML(N) is the party of the Sharif family. Similarly, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, ANP is the party of Bacha khan. The leadership of the mentioned parties come through inheritance, not through the democratic process. According to the political legend, intraparty democracy is compulsory to flourish democratic norms in politics. The writers agreed that the leadership of the members of central committees or executive committees should come through a proper democratic process. As the members of central committees are responsible for making laws and guideline for party politics and the same committee is also responsible for the election of party leadership. If the members of these committees come through the process of nomination, then they cant

raise their voices against the person who nominated them. Because the member has fear, if they opposed the policies and politics of their leaders (the nominating authority), then he has the power to remove him as a member of the committee. In this situation, all the party leaders bow before their supreme leader and have no courage to oppose his negative practices. But, in the presence of intraparty democracy, the committee members come through elections, and they can be removed through proper procedure. So in the presence of intraparty democracy, the supreme leader is bound to follow the policies of the central committee. The process of elections within the parties can eliminate the inheritance leadership and provide capable and honest leadership to the country.

According to (Zafrullah khan, 2004), in political parties, the chairperson central executive committee was responsible for decision making and the introduction of new policies. But actually, in Pakistan, all the central organization and committees act upon the advice of top leadership as he/she is the power to nominate and remove them. So, the members are not in a position to openly oppose the dictations given to them by a great leader.

Political parties in Pakistan remained weak and unorganized. The main reason for the weak organization of the political parties is the absence of intraparty democracy. The failure of the democratic regimes during the 1980s and 1990s was due to the weak political parties as they have no power to prevent the influence of other powers in politics. In the absence of intraparty democracy, dynastic politics grow. (Usman. A Sajjad. A , Amjad.A., 2016)

Two mainstream political parties of Pakistan are practising the politics of dynasties as PPP leader Bhutto was accepted on the basis of his vision and his commitments for democracy by the people, but after his death, the workers and family members change the party into a family party. Similarly, among the Muslim Leaguers, Nawaz was the prominent leader to compete with the liberalism of PPP, so he was accepted as the leader of the followers of traditional politics. But this party was too changed into the family party, and after long dynastic politics, now Bilawal, Maryam and Hamza preparing to occupy the driving seats of their respective parties. This trend prevents the way of new leadership recruitment in the country (Zahid, 2019).

The leadership institution in our country is weak. In Pakistan, the principle of heredity is followed in the selection of leadership. In a modern democracy, the political worker remained in the party for several years, and some of them promote the rank of national leadership step by step. This is known as the principle of leadership from bottom to top, while in Pakistan, the leaders of political parties got leadership by birth. (Memon. P, Memon. K and Shaikh. S, ND)

The weak political organization of political parties is the main factor of political instability. The party can strengthen their organizational structure through the introduction of party democracy. Intraparty democracy will reduce the domination of families or group, or ethnicity within the party. Through the introduction intra party democracy, the political parties can present the national politics, which will broaden the spare of voters of the parties. (Memon. P, Memon. K and Shaikh. S, ND)

The intraparty democracy makes responsible the second-line leadership. This pattern reduces the centralization in the party, and the process of policymaking and party politics are made by multiple people who are more appealing to the people. Intraparty democracy creates integration among the various parts and ethnic group. (Sarrow, 2005)

In most countries in South Asia, like Pakistan, India and Bangladesh, the political parties are not practising the intraparty democracies and based on dynastic politics. The selection of candidates to contest elections for legislative assemblies are selected behind closed doors without involving the process of democracy. Strong and inclusive parties are the need of these countries for the promotion and strengthening of democracy in the region. To flourish democracy in the region for the welfare of the people, the parties need to adopt the practice of intraparty democracy (Azher.M, Khan. B.A, Bukhari. M.H, 2019).

Due to martial law and long military government, some politicians secured their future with the military government with the passage of time; they adopted bureaucratic behavior as this was the way of their leader. This bureaucratic behavior of the politicians dominated undemocratic practices in our politics. ([Sayeed, 1970](#))

The political leadership in Pakistan has always raised their voices for restoration of democracy, greater participation of masses in the political process promised for constitutionalism and for promotion of liberal democracies to provide equality and the rule of law for the public, but at the same time, the leadership reflect authoritarian behavior and rule the party like a dictator. His personal behavior is harmful to democracy and the rule of law. It is because of the elitism and politics of inheritance. Z.A. Bhutto rose to political eminence and popularly known as a liberal democrat as he dissociated himself from the Ayub government and raised his voice in favour of social justice, equality and democracy, but he never introduced democracy within the party. He adopted autocratic behavior and ran the party and government with undemocratic means ([Shafqat, 1998](#)).

The political history of Pakistan is full of evidences that due to the wrong policies and steps adopted by the political parties, the country faced the problems of derailing democracy or weakened the system. In most of the regimes, immature and inexperienced politicians in government caused derailing democracy and the immature behavior of the political parties in opposition often responsible for weak the system. Political immaturity gives space to undemocratic forces to penetrate politics.

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