

Ruling Elites and Rational Democracy: An Analysis of Political System of Pakistan (1947-1993)



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Abstract: *This descriptive and analytical study aims to explore the ideology of ruling elites in Pakistan. Throughout the political and constitutional history of Pakistan, the governments, whether civilian or military, seem reluctant to politically mobilize the masses. The evolution of rational-democratic development in the country was tempered with undemocratic forces. Governing elite's lofty claims for the democratic and stable state are not fully materialized. This article highlights the reasons behind the reluctance of ruling elites to promote a rational democratic culture. The apparent reason is the lack of parliamentary culture in Pakistan. The representatives are elected by the people to present their demands in parliament. All policies, whether internal or external, should be originated within the parliament. Thus, the role of parliament is very important to introduce and promote the culture of rational, inclusive ideology. The governing elites, particularly the military regimes, introduced democratic reforms just to get political support for seemingly democratic legitimacy. The article investigates the causes of political instability and the patronage of political culture.*

Key Words: Politics, Ruling Elites, Inclusive Ideology, Civilians, Military Regimes

Introduction

The democratic and political institutions of the post-colonial state of Pakistan are the legacy of the colonial period. The discourse of liberal democracy, the power structure of ruling elites, civil society, and liberties of the people are inherited from the colonial period. If we look at the governing trends from the very early phase of Pakistan, the ruling elites, either top-ranked officials or the political class, were oriented and tuned with the traditions of their previous British ruling masters. Apparently, this political class was democratic but with factionalism tendencies. The democratic and political culture at that time reflected semblance to personality affiliations. The principles of the rational democratic process remained missing. ([Khan, S. A. 2016, p.40-60](#))

The predominant feudal structure was another factor to affect the growth of civil society. The military administration, contrary to their professional (bureaucratic) orientation, inclined towards democratic postures. While political elites, contrary to their democratic orientation, preferred

authoritarian practices. This particular composing form of Governing elites did not necessarily think about the consolidation of democracy. Instead of promoting the rational-inclusive governing model, the governing elite in Pakistan over a longer period of time adopted an irrational approach to managing state affairs. Whenever an evolutionary process of rational-democratic development starts in the country, the governing elites often intervene in the political process and manage the patronage of selective political groups. Ethno regional groups in the country could not be managed properly. Their democratic rights were exploited by the governing elites. The strategy of co-option and capacity-building on the part of the government was not implemented ([Husain, E. \(2012\), pp. 113-146](#)).

Similarly, the socio-economic reforms initiated by the government were not directed to uplift the masses but to maintain the status quo. The inconsistent state coercion and democratic accommodation have been used for specific purposes. Thus the governing

patterns of ruling elites remain oscillating between the authoritarian and democracy ([Husain, E. \(2012\), pp. 113-146](#)). In this research work, the governing pattern of ruling elites in Pakistan is analyzed. The early phase of unstable democracy, the different military regimes, the Islamic socialism, and the period of fragile democracy are discussed to find out the lack of rational democracy/ inclusive ideology on the part of ruling elites in the political discourse of Pakistan.

Statement of Problem

Despite the constitutional provisions of democratic parliamentary structure in Pakistan, the democratic norms in practice seem missing. The ruling elites in Pakistan employ the ideology for the justification of its dominance instead of nation-building. Civilian and military leaderships have introduced different democratic and constitutional reforms, but the real democratic culture could not properly develop in Pakistan. It seems as if the ruling elite's priorities are perpetuating their rule instead of empowering the masses.

Methodology

In this study, the analytical approach is used to trace the problems in the functioning of the democratic and political system in Pakistan. The main democratic programs initiated by the ruling elite during different phases of Pakistan are discussed. The phases of political development are 1947-1958 (nascent democracy), 1958-1971 (military regimes), 1971-1977 (civilian regime where Islamic socialism was introduced), 1977-1988 (third military regime), and 1988-1993 (the period of fragile democracy). In 1988, the first female prime minister under the banner of PPP formed the democratic government, but within the short span of the time period, she could not perpetuate her government. In 1990, the Benazir government was replaced by another popular leader Nawaz Sharif, but he was also unable to complete his tenure. In this study, the time period is confined from 1947 to 1993, where both civil and military regimes are analyzed. To cover the long period of time, efforts have been made in this piece of research paper to discuss briefly the main political reforms agenda introduced by the ruling elites in their respective regime. The hypothesis of the study is that the governing policies of ruling elites are not based on rationality; rather short-term measures aim to prolong their regime.

Ruling Elites and Rational Inclusive Ideology

The study concerns with the ruling elites and the influential members in state structure who have common orientations and interests. This ruling elites set the framework of decision-making. While in the nation-state discourse, the governing elite's assigned task is to work for the development of the state. So in Pakistan, this governing elite, being the part of the nation-state system, were primarily oriented towards and dependent on advanced western countries. All the development programs, whether economic policies or political programs, were attuned to the prevalent international development discourse of the time ([Kaplan, S. 2013](#)).

As for ideology is concerned, it is considered a pejorative term that is used for the justification of dominance of ruling group or class. It generates a strong emotional drive and thus directs the believers towards particular social goals. So ruling elite employs ideology for the promotion of particular social arrangements and justification of its rule. Hence, according to Sagheer (2016), 'ideology is a system of collectively held normative and reputedly factual ideas and beliefs and attitudes advocating a particular pattern of social relationships and arrangements.' Developing societies categorized the ideology on the basis of vested interests. The ideology which is employed for the justification of the ruling group's dominance and excludes the underprivileged groups is termed as exclusive ideology; while the ideology that rationalizes and facilitates the inclusion of underprivileged groups in state structure is termed as inclusive ideology ([Khan, S. A. 2016, p.56](#)).

New trends in state-building literature revolve that ideology should be constructed to rationalize the inclusion of underprivileged groups in the power structure. According to Geertz, a set of symbols of a particular society make social situations meaningful for the members of that society, so the ideologies are cultural maps that facilitate social interaction. Hence societies that move from one socio-political order to another socio-political order need integrative ideology for nation-building ([Khan, S. A. 2016, p.56](#)).

First Democratic Phase and the undermining of rationality (1947-1958)

Pakistani ruling elite being the product of authoritarianism had primarily concerned with the

perceived external threats as well as was cautious about disruptive internal elements. This orientation led the elites to maintain strict order instead of empowering the people. This very strict ideology of coercion created an environment of a strong state. The task was fulfilled by the elected parliament. A pliant and submissive political class was also used to serve the objectives of the ruling class. Only Quaid-i-Azam, the founder of Pakistan, was exempted from the vested interests. Being a popular and charismatic leader, he did not need submissive politicians for legitimacy. During his governorship, it was evident that he maintained democratic legitimacy without much depending on the political class ([Khan, S. A. 2016, pp.40-42](#)).

But after his death, the precedence of institutional hegemony was set, and the politicians were given the subservient role. The strong attitude of governing elites was not only confined to politicians but also affected the economic policies of the country. With regard to the economic welfare of people, the ruling elite with the western orientation implemented state-guided capitalist development instead of an equitable approach acceptable to all the communities and classes ([Khan, S. A. 2016, pp.40-42](#)).

Interruption in the Evolution of Rational Democratic Development

Since the creation of Pakistan, the governing elites have been claiming to make it a democratic state. Unfortunately, the evolutionary process of democratic progress was tempered with manipulations and state coercion. When military intervenes in politics, it always try to restructure the polity. These reforms on the part of the military regime could not leave lasting effects as the democratic developments were replaced with the status quo, which further deteriorated the situation. While pursuing the primary task of making the state more developed, the ruling elite were primarily oriented towards and dependent on western countries. Thus, under the prevailing international development programs, they had to construct the developmental policies accordingly ([Khan, H. 2005, p.203](#)).

During the early phase of Pakistan, the focus remained on institutional pressure rather than accommodating the mainstream politicians. Those popular politicians who were contradictory approach with the AIML, were intentionally labeled as disruptive elements. Through strong institutions,

these high caliber politicians were sidelined, thus undermining the growth of rational democracy. This irrational tradition paved the way for the incapable politicians who were patronized to share the coercive approach with the administration ([Khan, H. 2005, p.204](#)).

Starting from first Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, the next powerful ruling elite after Quaid e Azam. He took not only the charge of bureaucracy but also arbitrary powers of the position of Governor-General. Contrary to the personality of Quaid e Azam, the Prime Minister lacked the charisma to secure himself from challenges to his authority from defiant politicians. To enhance his power constitutionally, the constituent assembly in 1949 passed 'Public Representative Offices Disqualification Act (PRODA)'. This was helpful in further perpetuating the authoritarian control of the central government. The Prime minister was empowered to take legal action against any defiant politician under the guise of corruption. This trend in the power structure created a subservient class of politicians which reinvigorated factionalized politics ([Khan, H. 2005, p.205](#)).

The same pattern of centralized power was sustained after the death of Lique Ali Khan. It was the period of fragile democracy (1951-1958). During this period, Ghulam Mohammad, Chaudhary Mohammad Ali, and Iskandar Mirza owing to the members of the bureaucratic-military elite played the decisive role in governing the state affairs. Ghulam Mohammad being more assertive than the Prime Minister, became the next strong man, and thus power reverted to this office. Contrary to his predecessor Sikandar Mirza adopted the policy of manipulation to persist his power. Preference for order necessitated an emphatic role hence authority was not linked with the office of either the governor-general or the prime minister; rather, authority at the apex was dependent on the personal capacity to assert oneself. In such a situation where power and personality play a decisive role than rationality, the other organized institutions of the state like the army that traditionally had been experience and remained part of the major power structure since the colonial period were compelled to intervene in power politics ([Khan, H. 2005, p.205](#)).

Deviation of Rational Democratic Discourse under first Martial Law of Ayub Khan

The mismanagement and instability in the political

system paved the way for the unconstitutional government. Iskandar Mirza, the first president of Pakistan, invited the army chief to take over the political affairs of the state. People welcomed Martial law in October 1958. President Ayub diagnosed that the parliamentary form of government was the real cause behind the instability. The bad performance on the part of politicians at that time provided an opportunity to the army chief that he built a notion that political class was the reason of all evils in Pakistan. He was of the opinion that the people of Pakistan were brave and patriotic and the parliamentary system was not suitable for their genius ([Rizvi, H. A. 2000, pp.46-48](#)).

This new system must ensure uniformity of mind and action. Therefore, he devised another strategy to eradicate the hurdles in the way of democracy. So, the Basic Democracy (BD), introduced by Ayub Khan, was designed and structured to redesign the entire economic progress and democratic legitimacy. We can say that this new political arrangement apparently aimed to design Pakistan to look like a real and genuine democratic country ([Rizvi, H. A. 2000, p.46-48](#)).

But the intention behind the BD system was to secure democratic legitimacy leaving aside the traditional political elite. This new class of politicians was bound to show their political loyalties before contesting elections. They were also restricted to their assigned roles so that the main political class could be sieved out and a new inexperienced class is inducted in the governing elites. Thus, the mainstream politicians and their political parties were not only banned, but Elective Bodies Disqualification Ordinance (EBDO) was issued in order to keep politicians and political activities under government control. Thus the BD system was to establish an immature and pliant new political class available for the purpose of legitimizing the authoritarian regime ([Rizvi, H. A. 2000, p.46](#)).

The first example was the ratification of the already framed 1962 constitution by the Basic Democrats for the military regime. This was how the centralized presidential form of government was introduced under the 1962 constitution. The objectives of the ruling elites were to prolong their regime with the strategy of democratic posture. It was not among the priorities of the governing elites to develop Basic Democracy (BD) as an apparatus of a democratic structure and culture. It became a personal instrument for staying in power by the military regime in a seemingly democratic manner. Resultantly, the

BD in essence could not develop itself as a rational-democratic institution. It performed merely clients to their patron 'Ayub Khan' ([Khan, M. A. 1965, pp.109-113](#)).

The second example seemed at the time of the presidential elections of Ayub Khan. He won the election and got himself elected by the electoral college of patronized voters of Basic Democrats against the strong candidate, Miss Fatima Jinnah. She was supported by the alliance (Combined Opposition Party) of main political parties. To win the election from Fatima Jinnah Ayub Khan manipulated the diverted and traditional politicians and created the political party named Convention Muslim League (CML). This new political party was not based on principle and rationality as it was an extension of clients and submissive BD councilors ([Rizvi, H. A. 2000, p.47](#)).

On the economic front, the higher economic growth rates were also achieved on the basis of institutional discipline of military and the concentration of power in the name of president. It was highly criticized by the opponents that crony capitalism was introduced by the Ayub Khan. Economic benefits were confined to twenty-two families in Pakistan. This higher economic growth did not produce the desired results as it was not based on an inclusive approach. This exclusive ideology with changing stances and a patronage culture did not succeed in converting the initial enthusiasm of people with military regime into consistent attachment with the system ([Khan, M. A. 1965, pp.109-113](#)).

So the military regime could not maintain the development of rational democratic ideology and stable society of rules-based civil servants. Ultimately nation had to face the same constitutional and legitimacy crisis as before martial law.

Civilian Regime under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Lacks Rationality

The next democratic phase started under the issue-oriented left leaning groups. Pakistan People Party was founded under the leadership of Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Like the policies of previous military and civilian regimes, Bhutto's move was also not towards institutionalizing democratic values into the polity and inculcating rationality into society. As Peoples Party was supported by the amalgamation of different left leaning groups and sympathizers, it participated in the elections without any coherent structure and deep

coordination. Therefore it was natural that without institutionalized mechanism, the power and positions of competing factions and all the disruptive elements in the party had to be dependent on the goodwill of the party leader (Bhutto). It was the time when the east wing of Pakistan had been separated and became an independent Bangladesh. Still, in new Pakistan, the emotional affiliation with the charismatic leader and authoritarian control over the political party was reflected in the governance (Badejo, B. A. 1988, pp.240-250).

Bhutto had built his ideology on the basis of his previous experience from the united Pakistan that weak politicians either could be removed from the scene or become subservient to the bureaucratic-military power structure. On this conviction, he started maximizing power in his person. He took charge of civilian martial law administrator and later became prime minister. The favorable circumstances further strengthened him. His popular support in the 1970 election and the military terrible defeat in 1971 enhanced his power. He had to introduce various socialist reforms promised during the election campaign (Akhtar, S. 1989, pp.573-594).

The various reforms under the socialist agenda were related to bureaucracy, agriculture, labour, and industry. But the manners and his authoritarian styles in which he pursued his reform agenda served another purpose of maximizing power for himself (Badejo, B. A. 1988, pp.240-250).

He was aware of the fact that the army being the influential guardian of the state was a potential threat to his rule. Thus he ensured civilian supremacy by inserting clauses of punitive actions against the transgressor. He established the new security force replacing the military reliance for civilian security. He also restructured the military higher command and got the power to terminate the top ranking officers.

The other area of reform to maintain a hold over the power structure was bureaucracy. In Pakistan, bureaucracy was the heritage of colonialism. The general perception about civil servants was the colonial posture. Bhutto decided to address this problem through his authoritarian mindset. He did not infuse in them the spirit of civil servants; rather, he resorted to intimidation and threatening. He also weakened their position by adopting the policy of lateral entry in the service cadre. He even politicized the powerful service group. Thus the culture of rivalry and antagonism between bureaucracy and executive

prevailed instead of ratifying the problem and rational discourse (Khan, H. 2005, pp.574-78).

The next reformist agenda was related to land reform. Here again Bhutto tried to sideline the rational approach. Although the many land reform measures like the tenancy laws, tax relaxation for small agriculturists, different schemes like five marla for the landless and artisans were beneficial for both tenants and farmers, the ceiling of landholding was fixed for individuals instead of the family, and this and other loopholes diminished the effectiveness of land reforms and did not eliminate feudalism (Khan, S. A. 2016, pp.50-70).

Similarly, the labour policy introduced by Bhutto was meant to address the grievances of those urban laborers who were the vanguard in the mass agitation against the Ayub government and supporters of the newly emerged political party PPP. This government support to the laborers and trade unions and anti-capitalist policy encouraged them to adopt aggressive behaviors against factory owner. The relaxation on the part of the government encouraged them to adopt violent encirclements and agitations against factory owners for the satisfaction of their demands (Akhtar, S. 1989, pp.573-594).

The political immaturity and irrationality seem at the time of using coercive measures to solve the conflicts and difference. The culture of peace negotiations was replaced with violence by using the newly established Federal Security Force (FSF). The government scheme of nationalization was also not based on socialist principles. It seems as if the government was intended to shift the mode of the economy from private to state capitalism. Excessive politicizing the industry and centralized bureaucratic control of many enterprises caused further inefficiency and financial loss (Ahmed, F. 2019, pp. 64-68).

Analysis of General Zia ul Haq Regime

Gen. Zia ul-Haq became CMLA after deposing the Bhutto on the charges of rigging the election. He took charge of government on the impression of saving the country from the impending threat of destabilization; otherwise, he was constitutionalist and committed to democracy. As he had intervened the politics, therefore he pretended reluctance on assuming the charge of CMLA. With the passage of time, he re-evaluated his strategies according to the changing internal and external developments.

As for as his ideological programs for governance, he devised the policy of restructuring the polity on the Islamic system. All the spheres of social, cultural, economic, and legal were molded on Islamic injunctions. He had the objective of removing the political crises and demobilizing those groups in society that were earlier mobilized due to the progressive agenda and economic reforms introduced by Bhutto. Therefore Zia had to ultimately adopt the coercive measures and the impression of fear where no one could ever try to challenge his legitimacy ([Qadeer, M. 2006, p.176](#)).

He visualized the fulfillment of his desires by promulgating the comprehensive program of Islamic punishments. The program of Islamic punishment included the amputation of the right hand, and it was implemented through martial law order on 8th July 1977. The rest of the complete set of punishments was implemented in February 1979. This set of punishments comprises of publicly lashing, right-hand amputation, stoning to death, and adultery, popularly known as *Hudood Ordinances* ([Qadeer, M. 2006, p. 176](#)). The government was using different tactics of fear and coercion to suppress the disruptive elements. For instance, students unions were banned while he patronized the Islamic student organizations. He contained political parties through regulatory mechanisms. Other discriminatory laws were enforced to curb the labour unions and women ([Shah, A. S. et.al, 2016, pp. 260-270](#)).

The very effective tool used by the Zia regime was state owned media. The propaganda campaign was effectively launched to promote Islamization. The coercive and punitive measures were justified by the national media. Because the government had controlled the freedom of the press. Thus progressive persons were sidelined by the strict use of laws. Only religious and conservative persons were being promoted in every field through selective regulatory mechanisms. The hitherto commitment of the regime to democracy did not fulfil.

The execution of Bhutto-the political popular leader and the major threat of Zia consolidated the military rule. The general elections already scheduled were postponed on the pretext of accountability. Instead of promoting democratic culture in the country, Zia resorted Islamization to create justification for his stay in power. This approach on the part of Zia did not prove rational. It gave the impression of institutionalizing the conservative Islam

on liberal rationality. Islamization was suitable for the Afghan war at that time, but it did not prove the solution of the ethnolinguistic divide in Pakistan. Rather, it widens the ethnolinguistic divide.

The problem with the Islamization program was the lack of an inclusive approach. It highlighted some particular version of religion, and politically it refused to include those ethnic minorities which had already a minimum share of power. Owing to the larger share of Punjabi in the army and its control on affairs of state, other ethnic groups ironically called it Punjabinization ([Shah, A. S. et.al, 2016, pp.260-270](#)).

Including one version of religion justified extremism, violence, and sectarianism in the society. The influx of Afghan refugees and the rural-urban divide on the base of Pakhtuns and Punjabi gave rise to ethnicity in Sindh. Open access to the lethal weapon and availability of the drugs were other dangerous effects of the Jihad in Afghanistan. To sum up, the drastic effects were extremism, ethnicity, open-access of drugs and weapons, and external support gave birth to the culture of organized violence and vast crimes. The subsequent democratic periods had inherited such a culture of extremism and sectarianism under the military regime of Zia.

Generally, the ruling elites focus on the socio-economic progress to stabilize the society. But Zia's ideology was to deal with the internal and external disruptive elements first and socio-economic development later. International trends, during the 1980s were moving from controlled to a free-market economy, So, Zia also liberalized the economy under the influence of western scholars, but did not provoke any socio economic group. The increase growth rates of the economy through liberalization, remittances, and foreign aid could not improve the real economic base in the country ([Zahid, M. A. 2011, pp. 1-27](#)).

In the democratic front, the military regime through fear and coercion was supported by the conservative religious sections, but the democratic awareness in the people at large could not be subdued. Gradually the left leaning politicians started asserting themselves under the platform of the Movement for the Restoration of Democracy (MRD). Outside Pakistan, the human rights organization and pro democrats were pressurizing the regime to introduce democracy. Under the pressure from all sides and cautious tactics of the military leaderships, elections were announced before the MRD get momentum. Contrary to the democratic norms and values, these

elections were announced on a nonparty basis. Thus the new business class of politicians were emerged for their economic benefits.

The new Prime Minister Muhammad Khan Junejo had to satisfy the members through undue economic rewards. This procedural democracy remained functional for a short period. General Zia started forcing the elected parliament to amend the constitution which will ratify his previous actions. He was not in the mood of sharing power to the parliament. The passage of 8th amendment made the president more powerful than the prime minister. His desire of maintaining his grip over the governmental affairs was fulfilled through the induction of article 58 (2) (b). This article empowered the president to dissolve the parliament. But in spite of all the power in the hand of the president, there was insecurity and vulnerability in the constitutional structure. The culture of manipulation and expediency made the elected parliament as a compromised parliament under Zia. Parliament could not give its final decisions in the major national and foreign affairs. Thus the democratic and the rational inclusive ideological culture was derailed and the subsequent governments had to face the music in the form of fragile political system ([Zahid, M. A. 2011, pp.1-27](#)).

The Fragile Democratic Era (1988-1999)

The period of 1988 to 1999 is comprised of civilian rules under Benazir Bhutto and Mian Nawaz Sharif. The political elites of both the main political parties (PPP and PMLN) during this political phase had to face the governance issues same like in the transitional societies. In the general elections of 1988, PPP emerged as the single largest popular political party. There were reservations in the military establishment that the PPP would be the revengeful party, because Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the father of Benazir, was hanged under the military regime of Zia. So, the propaganda campaign was used against PPP before the elections.

Finally, the PPP could not gain a clear majority in the parliament. Ultimately it had to face the manipulations during its period. For instance, Punjab, the largest province was run by Nawaz Sharif, the chief opponent leader of PPP and the opposition party. Further, PPP considered him the agent of military establishment. In this way, the new beginning of the democratic period started with the constraint relationships between the main political leaders. Benazir from the very first press conference, criticized

Nawaz Sharif, and to control him in the Punjab province, she appointed her party person as governor of the Punjab. As a reaction, Nawaz Sharif retaliated with the demand of provincial autonomy. He remained non cooperative throughout the term of PPP ([Shafqat, S. 1996, pp.652-672](#)).

The cordiality of the relationships of Benazir with the military establishment did not last long. The conflict aroused at the time of replacing the ISI Chief. Benazir wanted to replace the ISI chief whom she suspected his involvement in the manipulation of 1988 elections and still was using his influence to destabilize her government. Such practices often create the culture of patronage politics, which ultimately affect the institutions. In the center, PPP had to compromise with the military lines. Benazir had to compromise on Ghulam Ishaq Khan, the acting president at the time of the election, to become president of Pakistan for five years. The other key position in the center was the foreign minister Yahqoob Ali Khan. He was retired general and was working under Zia as a foreign minister. Thus Benazir had to retain him in cabinet simply to oblige the military establishment. V.A Jaffari, the retired bureaucrat was also appointed as financial advisor on the recommendation of the army. Benazir government had to obey the military dictations on the sensitive issues like security and foreign policy. Military retain its dominance on Kashmir, Afghanistan, and nuclear policy ([Shafqat, S. 1996, pp. 655-672](#)).

The role of PPP workers itself was based on irrationality. Most of the PPP workers had a rural background. They were not familiar with the departmental rules and the internal workings of institutions. They had developed in themselves the ideology of people's rules instead of rules and procedures within the institution. They wanted to manage state affairs by themselves; therefore they built personal contacts and favoritism. Rules and procedures, according to them, were the hurdles in the performance of the government ([Ziring, L. 1991, pp. 113-124](#)).

The other irrational tradition developed in the PPP workers was the economic reward by the leadership. They had been long facing economic constraints, and the coming to power provided them the opportunity to boost their economic hardships. In such a situation when there was an environment of manipulation and compromise with the military establishment and with the rival political party along

with the patronizing, it was difficult for PPP to follow the rules and norms, and merits of institutional neutrality ([Ziring, L. 1991, pp. 113-124](#)).

Other measures to strengthen the rule, the PPP government started removing the potential rivals. Benazir had to promote the culture of favoritism and economic rewards. She appointed her mother Nusrat Bhutto as senior minister. She awarded the chairmanship of the Public Account Committee to her father-in-law. All the administrative affairs were handled by her husband, Asif Ali Zardari (Later on became the president of Pakistan). This policy of PPP led to rumors of corruption and scandals. Benazir attempted to temper the state institutions. She tried to extend the service of Lt. General for future COAS. Such types of irrational moves on the part of the prime minister created adverse impacts in the army and presidency. Thus instead of developing the culture of rationality and merit, they promoted the popular culture of rules violation ([Shafiq, S. 2019](#)).

The second democratic term was started by Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. Being an industrialist with urban background, he was to some extent aware of the institutional norms and procedures. Most of his supporters were urban educated commercial class with the bureaucratic background. They were naturally inclined to the rules and merit-based policy. It was generally perceived that PMLN was lesser harmful for the institutions than the rule of PPP. It was also perceived by many analysts that the governance under Nawaz Sharif would prefer efficiency through discipline and merit in the institutions.

But in practice, the situation remained pathetic in the important areas like foreign policy. Particularly, the relations between USA and Pakistan remained at lowest ebb during Nawaz Sharif government. He did not seriously address the USA concerns about transnational militancy. It was due to the clash of interests between military and prime minister. Nawaz Sharif habits of interfering with the internal matters of the army were unexpected. He also reported to the policy of self-reliance, while the army had inclination and dependency on the USA for advanced weapons and training ([Ziring, L. 1991, pp. 113-124](#)).

On the democratic front, Nawaz Sharif could not satisfy the coalitional partners. This coalition had divergent views on most of the government policies. They started to leave the government support at the time of low performance. Strong opposition of PPP was another area of concern for the government.

Several corruption cases were filed against the PPP leadership. Asif Ali Zardari, the husband of Benazir was put in jail by the government.

Sharif could not rationally handled the internal security issues. His dogmatic approach in Sindh operation and sometimes interference in internal matters of military created problems. When the opposition launched a campaign against the government, both masses and army forces were not in the mood to provide him assistance. Though the opposition's long march could not compel the government to resign, but grip of Nawaz Sharif on state affairs started losing. Such type of insecure feelings led him to appoint his favorites on key positions: Brig. Imtiaz as Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief, Gen. Nasir as Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief and his attempt to appoint Gen. Ashraf as the new COAS infuriated the presidency and the military establishment—which were after all the real power centers of the state. A power struggle between PM and president ensued that provided the opportunity to the COAS to play a decisive role that ultimately resulted in the resignation of both the PM and the president ([Yasmeen, S. 1994, p.572-576](#)).

Conclusion

The above discussion reveals the irrationality of the political system in Pakistan. Since 1947, the ruling elites in Pakistan did not seriously address the proper functioning of the institutions. The culture of rule based functioning of institutions has not been promoted. The most striking features of the political setup in Pakistan are favoritism and nepotism. Ideological and social obligations are predominant factors in neutralizing the institutional norms. The only institution in the country having internalized and institutionalized with procedures is military. It has the internal system of limited social interaction with rigorous training and thus less affected by the social interaction. The institutional norms are maintained by the military for the longer period. These characteristics and institutional discipline make the military capable enough to run the state affairs comparatively longer than the civilian regime.

It is evident from the above discussion that rational/inclusive democratic culture could not develop due to the factionalized politicians. The power relations of authoritarian –bureaucratic remained more effective than civilian government. Generally this type of power structure is less dissent and

accommodative. The political elite is sidelined and mostly deprived of the power-sharing. Undemocratic forces in Pakistan used to get democratic legitimacy excluding the main stream politicians which ultimately results in political crisis. The overall discussion lead to the conclusion that the sole reason behind the lack of rational inclusive ideology is evidently the 'will' of ruling elites. The undemocratic ruling elites were not serious about the social reforms and feudal structure. Those politicians and feudal lords were promoted who showed loyalties to the ruling elites. This trend led to the culture of regional politicians instead of national stature. Thus regionalism was rampant in the governmental level. Capacity building programs of national-level were missing in the government. The little bit capacity of democratic values among politicians were eroded by the undemocratic ruling elites. Switching of the loyalties by the politicians for the petty issues has been common in the political

system in Pakistan. Finally, the few suggestions may be helpful for the academia and the policymakers as well.

- To promote the culture of rational inclusive approach, it is imperative for the policymakers and ruling elites to devise social-economic reforms along with institutional reforms.
- The subservient and the factionalized politicians should reconsider the democratic values for the purpose of serving the democratic values.
- The intelligentsia of the society should play a proactive role by providing rational ideology and organizational skills. Politicians should get out of the subservient role of the bureaucracy and focus on capacity building so that they may understand the real public issues and find their solution.

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